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TOP OF THE WEEK / 6
BROADCASTING / 19
CABLE / 25
TECHNOLOGY / 29
INTERNET / 31

HOLLYWOOD REACHES N

DMA RTG W

HIGHEST FEB. RATING IN 10 YEARS!

Detroit	WWJ-TV	7:30 PM
Raleigh	WRAL-TV	10:00 AM
Birmingham	WIAT-TV	6:30 PM
Memphis	WREG-TV	3:30 PM
Austin	KEYE-TV	3:00 PM
Sioux City	KMEG-TV	5:00 PM

HIGHEST FEB. RATING IN 8 YEARS!

Boston	WBZ-TV	7:00 PM
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HIGHEST FEB. RATING IN 7 YEARS!

Harrisburg	WHTM-TV	7:30 PM
Ft. Myers	WZVN-TV	7:30 PM
San Angelo	KLST-TV	9:30 AM

HIGHEST FEB. RATING IN 6 YEARS!

Green Bay	WGBA-TV	6:30 PM
Santa Barbara	KCOY-TV	6:30 PM
Billings	KULR-TV	6:00 PM
Eureka	KAEF-TV	7:30 PM

HIGHEST FEB. RATING IN 5 YEARS!

Seattle	KING-TV	7:30 PM
Miami	WFOR-TV	7:30 PM
Phoenix	KPHO-TV	6:30 PM
Pittsburgh	KDKA-TV	7:30 PM
Sacramento	KXTV-TV	6:30 PM
Hartford	WFSB-TV	7:30 PM
Kansas City	KMBC-TV	6:30 PM
Columbus, OH	WSYX-TV	7:00 PM
Grand Rapids	WZZM-TV	7:30 PM
Dayton	WKEF-TV	7:30 PM
Fresno	KFSN-TV	7:00 PM
Las Vegas	KVBC-TV	4:30 PM
Mobile	WEAR-TV	6:30 PM
Harlingen	KGBT-TV	6:30 PM
Bangor	WABI-TV	7:30 PM

HIGHEST FEB. RATING IN 4 YEARS!

Orlando	WKMG-TV	7:00 PM
Indianapolis	WRTV-TV	7:00 PM
Cincinnati	WLWT-TV	7:30 PM
Greenville	WSPA-TV	7:00 PM
San Antonio	KENS-TV	6:30 PM
Toledo	WTVG-TV	7:30 PM
Lansing	WLNS-TV	7:30 PM
Tallahassee	WTXL-TV	7:30 PM

Source: Nielsen/SNAP, All Feb. sweeps '91-'99 t.p. data.
Nielsen Media Research confirmed data and data descriptive text.

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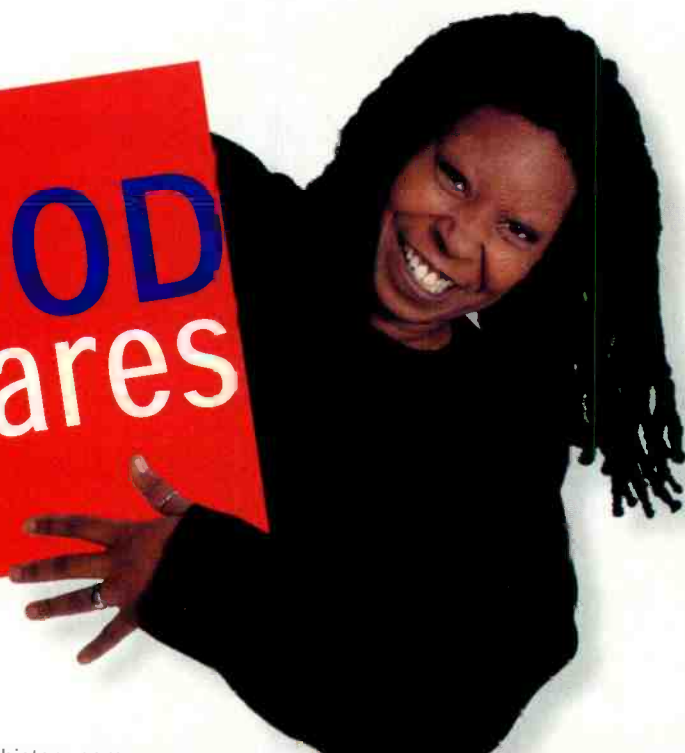
D SQUARES NEW HIGHS!

25-54/FEB.'99

HIGHEST FEB. RATING IN 3 YEARS!

Portland	KGW-TV	7:30 PM	Augusta	WJBF-TV	7:30 PM
Baltimore	WBAL-TV	7:30 PM	Fargo	KVLY-TV	6:30 PM
Wilkes Barre	WNEP-TV	7:30 PM	Charleston, SC	WCIV-TV	7:30 PM
Knoxville	WVLT-TV	5:30 PM	La Crosse	WKBT-TV	6:30 PM
Chattanooga	WRCB-TV	7:30 PM	Bakersfield	KBAK-TV	7:00 PM
Jackson, MS	WAPT-TV	4:00 PM	Erie	WICU-TV	7:30 PM
Youngstown	WKBN-TV	5:30 PM	Idaho Falls	KPVI-TV	4:00 PM
Tyler	KETK-TV	6:30 PM	Zanesville	WHIZ-TV	5:00 PM
Reno	KTVN-TV	7:00 PM			

HOLLYWOOD
squares



TOP OF THE WEEK / 6

Photo: Tom Sobolik / Black Star



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HDTV comes to CBS

To spur set sales, Mitsubishi will pay for 10-15 high-def prime time hours a week this fall

By Glen Dickson

In a major breakthrough for HDTV, CBS says set-maker Mitsubishi will underwrite the cost of broadcasting much of the net's prime time schedules in HDTV this fall.

The deal will enable CBS to deliver *Everybody Loves Raymond*, *Chicago Hope* and other popular shows—up to 15 hours a week—in the high-resolution format throughout the 1999-2000 season.

"CBS is very pleased to have forged this partnership with Mitsubishi that will give American television viewers their first sustained exposure to high definition," said CBS Television President and CEO Les Moonves in a prepared statement. "This agreement...represents the most significant step any network has taken in HDTV and further establishes CBS' leadership in the transition to digital broadcasting."

CBS has been pursuing such an underwriting deal for several months [BROADCASTING & CABLE, April 21], shopping the idea to roughly half a

dozen consumer electronics manufacturers before striking a deal with Mitsubishi. "We offered a variety of manufacturers a variety of options, and Mitsubishi, to their credit, stepped up to the plate in a big way," says CBS Senior Vice President Martin D. Franks.

For Mitsubishi, the availability of regularly scheduled HDTV programming should help sell its HDTV sets. "This assures consumers that they no longer have to be concerned about the chicken-and-egg problem with high definition television," says Bob Perry, director of marketing for Mitsubishi.

CBS expects Mitsubishi to cover from 10-13 hours of programming a week, but Perry says it may pay for as many as 15.5 hours, including some movies.

The HDTV programming will be broadcast over the growing number of CBS owned or affiliated digital TV stations. By Nov. 1, CBS says, more than 40 such DTV stations should be on the air, covering more than 50% of the nation's TV homes.

Neither CBS nor Mitsubishi would

disclose financial details of the deal, under which Mitsubishi will cover the cost of converting shows shot on 35 mm film to HDTV. But assuming conversion costs of \$20,000 per hour, Mitsubishi's bill for the season could be more than \$5 million.

In return for its underwriting costs, Mitsubishi gets a sponsorship identification that will be seen at the beginning of each HDTV broadcast and its analog simulcast on CBS' NTSC network.

Mitsubishi television dealers will also have access to CBS Plus, CBS' cross-media sales unit, allowing dealers to advertise with CBS Television Network, CBS Television Stations, CBS/Infinity Radio Stations, CBS Eyemark, CBS Cable, TDI (CBS's outdoor advertising business) and CBS New Media.

Franks says Mitsubishi's investment in HDTV programming is a "straight cost-for-cost" arrangement with no markup by CBS. "The financial upside for CBS is the opportunity from CBS Plus," says Franks. "Mitsubishi and all the other manufacturers have lots of TV



By Nov. 1, CBS expects its HDTV broadcasts to reach half the living rooms in the country.

sets to sell, and we think that selling them in their native format, i.e. television, and to a lesser extent through radio and billboards, is a better way to do it than a black-and-white newspaper ad."

Mitsubishi's Perry says that CBS and Mitsubishi will work together to advertise programming at the local level and that CBS will have a hotlink on its Web sites to Mitsubishi's Web site. He adds that managers from CBS affiliates and owned stations planned to meet with Mitsubishi dealers at the manufacturer's exhibition in Las Vegas last weekend.

CBS doesn't have a definitive HDTV schedule yet, since it won't unveil its fall prime time lineup until its upfront presentation on May 19. But it says that sports and news programming aren't included in the Mitsubishi deal. Neither are prime time series shot on 16mm film such as *Touched By An Angel* and *Walker, Texas Ranger*.

Franks adds that CBS is continuing to seek additional sponsorships for movies, which require the same film-to-tape transfer process, and sports and news programming, which require new HDTV production equipment.

"We are actively negotiating and we have active conversations under way with other potential underwriters," says Franks. "We wanted to get prime time done first, since we need to give it the longest lead time and we're making the schedule announcement now."

When asked if CBS viewers can expect to see HDTV sports this year, Franks says, "I certainly hope so." In addition to underwriters, he says, the network would need to get permission from the sports rights holders.

"When we explored with them the possibility of [NFL] football games or the [NCAA] Final Four, they were very open to it," says Franks.

Taken in a larger context, CBS' announcement should guarantee that HDTV set owners have some HDTV programming to watch every night. With the help of some Sony production subsidies, NBC is currently broadcasting *The Tonight Show with Jay Leno* in HDTV, and ABC is continuing to show one or two HDTV movies per week, including *The Wonderful World of Disney* on Sunday nights. PBS shows at least one HDTV special per month, as well as some standard-definition widescreen programming. And by next spring, Fox plans to broadcast all of its entertainment series in widescreen DTV, probably in 480p standard definition. ■

The big chill?

By Dan Trigoboff
and Joe Schlosser

Jurors should not, defense attorney James Feeney said in closing arguments, enter deliberations in the multi-million dollar lawsuit against *The Jenny Jones Show* with the idea of cleaning up the talk show industry.

But days later, with a \$25 million verdict against the show late last week, eight of the nine jurors in Pontiac, Mich., courtroom sent a powerful message to talk shows. After six weeks of trial—including several days of testimony by Jones herself—the near-unanimous verdict found the show, its distributor Warner Bros., and production company Telepictures at least partially liable for the death of *Jenny* guest Scott Amedure.

Amedure was killed by Jonathan Schmitz in 1995, three days after Amedure revealed during a never-aired taping on "secret crushes" that he had homosexual fantasies about Schmitz. Schmitz was convicted of murder in 1996, but the conviction was overturned and he is scheduled to be tried again in August.

"We are stunned by the complete disregard for the facts and the law," said Jim Paratore, president of Telepictures Productions, after last week's verdict. "We believe the jury was misled and distracted by the appalling attempts of [plaintiff's attorney] Geoffrey Fieger throughout this trial to appeal to bias and prejudice, to grossly distort and misrepresent the fact, and to rely on irrelevant and inflammatory rhetoric based on total fabrication."

The public "and every single media outlet—entertainment and news alike—should fear the chilling effect this verdict, if upheld, will have on the basic interview process," he said.

Jones, who spent several grueling days on the witness stand sparring with Fieger, said, "I am shocked and saddened by this verdict. However, the only real tragedy here is that Scott Amedure lost his life. I refuse to lose



Despite Jones' testimony, Michigan jury awards \$25 million to slain guest's family.

my faith in the law and in the people I work with, even in the face of this outrageous judgment."

But Fieger appeared to welcome any chill the decision might bring to talk shows. "This type of human exploitation needs to be corralled," he told reporters after the verdict. "This is a renegade business."

Other Hollywood syndication studios decided not to comment on the \$25 million verdict. But Jeff Wald, the executive producer of *The Roseanne Show*, called the verdict "outrageous."

"I'm sure this is going to have an effect," Wald said. "I'm sure the other shows will be a little more cautious in how they go about surprising people. But I feel strongly that the people know what they are getting into when they go up on those shows. They watch these shows and can't wait to get up on television and tell their dirty little secrets."

In more than five weeks of testimony Fieger—who had initially asked for \$50 million for the Amedure family and raised the request to \$71 million last week—presented the Jones show as cold and deceptive, willing to humiliate guests for profit. Fieger said the show put Amedure at risk by failing to screen out a guest with Schmitz' fragile mental state.

The *Jenny* defense eschewed any responsibility for the death of Amedure, laying the blame solely on Schmitz. The defense denied that Schmitz had been ambushed by Amedure's sexual fantasies, and asserted that Schmitz was aware his "secret crush" might not be female. ■

Columbia dishes up soap net

Proposed network will compete for cable carriage with Disney/ABC's entry

By Joe Schlosser

Columbia TriStar Television Group and Disney/ABC executives couldn't agree on a joint soap-opera cable channel. So now they are each launching their own.

Less than a month after Disney/ABC announced plans for a service that is tentatively called All My Soaps, Columbia TriStar executives last week rolled out their own version, coined SoapCity.

Both cable channels are slated to launch next January. The studios say they plan to rely on same-day repeats of network soaps. Meanwhile, both proposed channels are not sitting too well with frightened ABC, NBC and CBS affiliates.

Other key factors also play into the mix, as cable analysts last week said attaining carriage for both channels in today's analog environment will be nearly "impossible." And a number of Hollywood studio sources speculated last week that the soap opera initiative is turning into a game of chicken, that as the projects develop both sides will likely work out their differences and fold their resources into one channel.

Both ABC/Disney and Columbia TriStar executives denied that and said they are moving forward for January rollouts.

ABC, which announced its project just one week after breaking off talks with affiliates in April, is scheduled to air prime time repeats of *General Hospital*, *One Life to Live*, *All My Children* and *Port Charles*.

Columbia TriStar, on the other hand, only holds day-and-date repeat rights to the NBC soap *Days of Our Lives*, which it produces with Corday Productions. The studio also produces the CBS series *Young and the Restless* and partners with Procter & Gamble on the international distribution of the CBS soaps *Guiding Light*, *As the World Turns* and the just-canceled NBC series *Another World*. Columbia TriStar does not currently own the rights to repeat any of those series on the cable channel, but sources say they are "attempting to attain them."

Last week, CTTG president Jon Feltheimer invited NBC and CBS, along



Old favorites such as 'Knots Landing' will be popping up on Columbia TriStar's SoapCity, which launches in January.

with their affiliates, to be "partners" in SoapCity as it goes forward. CBS and NBC executives had no comment.

away to SoapCity anytime soon. The executives say they have a two-year exclusive window on the popular series

"We welcome their participation," Feltheimer says. "We are very sensitive to all the affiliates and their questions about day-and-date exclusivity and I know we are going to have to deal with it... Our sense though, is that day-and-date programming could be a real home run for a cable channel."

CBS executives say they will not let the current soaps on the network slip

Columbia TriStar teams with Grey

Brad Grey and Columbia TriStar Television Group are now open for business.

The Sony-owned Hollywood studio and Grey, the chairman and CEO of Brillstein-Grey Entertainment, have created BGT— a new television development and production studio.

Grey, whose TV division currently has six shows on the air including *Just Shoot Me* and *NewsRadio*, will head up the 50-50 venture from his studio's Beverly Hills offices. Under terms of the deal, Columbia TriStar TV Group will finance new programming developed by BGT and distribute the shows through its domestic Columbia TriStar Television Distribution division and international unit, Columbia TriStar International Television.

"It's an extraordinary opportunity," Grey said last week. "With the marketplace being what it is, we are heavily funded in this venture in that we can continue to produce everything and anything we believe in. So we will endeavor to put the kind of shows we want on the air and hopefully we will entertain with them."

Andy Kaplan, executive vice president of Columbia TriStar Television Group, says the new studio will not cut into Columbia TriStar's network and cable television divisions.

"There are a lot of production companies out there chasing network and cable slots and we have a history here of having multiple labels," Kaplan says. "We have had two labels here historically with Columbia Television and TriStar Television. BGT is going to be a nice extension."

Brillstein-Grey Enterprises, which also runs a top Hollywood talent agency division, ended a three-year development deal with Universal Studios last week. Universal executives also announced that they have worked out a deal with Grey under which Universal will have control of three current Brillstein-Grey series (*Just Shoot Me*, *NewsRadio* and *The Steve Harvey Show*) along with a pilot at CBS entitled *Work With Me*.

—Joe Schlosser

"During the summers when I was 18 and 19, I worked on a freighter and a tanker, traveling the world."

"When I was 17, my father sent me to Iowa to work as a farm hand. I never worked so hard in my life. I grew up on a farm in New Jersey and wanted to travel. During the summers when I was 18 and 19, I worked on a freighter and a tanker, traveling the world. In college, I worked summers as a roughneck in the oil fields of North Dakota."

"I was accepted at Washington and Lee but didn't know what I wanted to study. My father told me if I didn't know, he wasn't going to send me. So, I went to sea instead. When the ship docked in October, he came aboard, said he had enrolled me and asked if I wanted to go. I started a month late and graduated with a degree in economics. After, I joined the Navy for three years, spent 22 years in the Reserves, had command of a destroyer escort and retired as a captain."

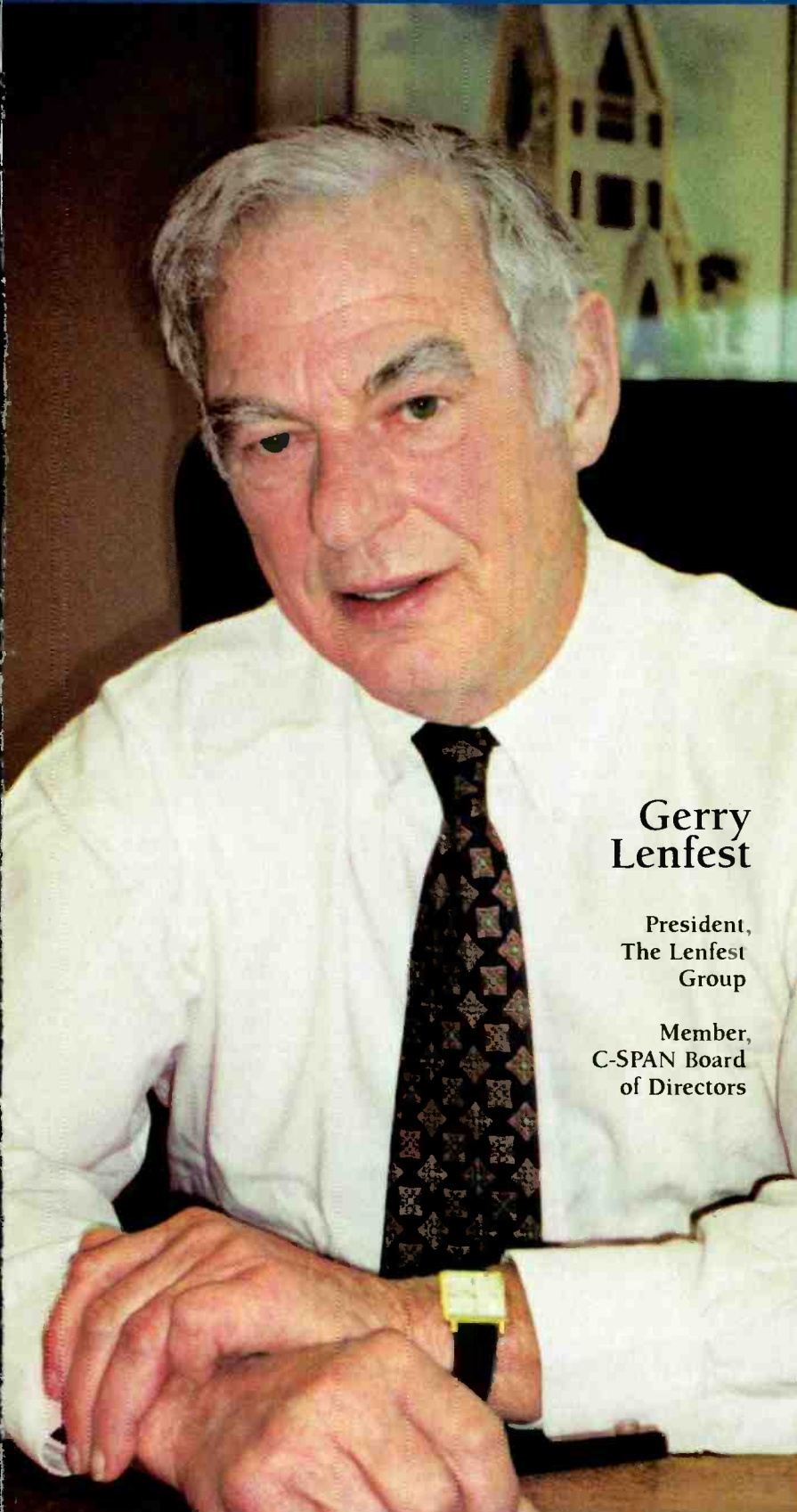
"Two of my strongest traits are an entrepreneurial instinct and a drive for communications."

I worked as counsel for Walter Annenberg who owned Triangle Publications. In 1970, he asked me to head a division consisting of *Seventeen* magazine and cable television. When Walter decided to sell the cable business, he gave me an option to buy. I talked two gentlemen in Lebanon, Pennsylvania into putting up the money, promising them that I would double their investment in five years, which I did. It was my first entrepreneurial venture. I was 44 years old."

"I married my wife Marguerite in 1955; we have three children. Marguerite did all the bookkeeping and correspondence for our first cable systems. She still works at the Sellersville office part-time."

"It's important to give back to society. I donated funding for the library at my prep school, Mercersburg Academy in Pennsylvania. It's dearest to my heart because I went there from the farm. I'd never have made it to college if I hadn't gone there. We also funded a performing arts center at Washington and Lee and a café at Columbia Law School."

"C-SPAN has made a wonderful contribution to the American public and the industry. Programming like the *American Presidents* series gives young people a chance to learn more about their country. Programming like this is enlarging C-SPAN's scope and it's contribution to the American public."

A portrait of Gerry Lenfest, an older man with white hair, wearing a white dress shirt and a dark patterned tie. He is sitting at a desk with his hands clasped in front of him. In the background, a model of a building is visible.

Gerry Lenfest

President,
The Lenfest
Group

Member,
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Young and The Restless. "We have television exclusivity for our soap operas and we don't plan to breach that exclusivity," a CBS spokesman said.

Columbia TriStar also has the rights to another former NBC soap, *Santa Barbara*, which studio executives say they will likely use on SoapCity. SoapCity will also incorporate original game and talk shows based around soap operas, as well as a number of former prime time series from Columbia TriStar's vast archives. Former series like *Dynasty* and *Knots Landing* will also likely pop up on the proposed cable channel, studio executives said last week. And current Columbia TriStar series like *Dawson's Creek* and *Party of Five* may also someday see airtime on SoapCity.

Feltheimer says he has been working

on launching a similar channel for nearly eight years and that talks with ABC/Disney executives just never panned out.

"We actually had several different conversations with ABC, but I don't think we were ever too close," he says. Disney executives did not return calls late Friday. "The bottom line is that we couldn't figure out a way to do it and some of it was probably timing. It's always hard when two large studios try to get together. We do a lot of business with them and they are good partners."

SoapCity is the second cable entry from Columbia TriStar, following the Game Show Network's launch five years ago. The proposed channel will be programmed, distributed and marketed by the Game Show Network's staff, says the

cable channel's president Michael K. Fleming, which will be growing in the coming months.

"We have two different business plans in front of us," Fleming says. "Certainly we will do what it takes to get distribution and in some circumstances I'm sure we will have to pay. Here at the Game Show Network, we have a little over 20 million subscribers and we have paid. But we have not paid for all of our subs and we are not going to be paying for a lot of our subs in the future."

SoapCity, which is also the name of the studio's two-year-old Internet site, will have interactive components tied to the online site that is dedicated to soap opera fans. The Internet site also sells soap opera merchandise, which will likely also be integrated into the cable channel. ■

Affils reject Fox spot grab

Network, undeterred by local partners, plans to install servers to handle seized inventory

By Steve McClellan

Fox's plan to reclaim 22% of the prime time advertising inventory from affiliates has apparently led to a full-scale revolt.

By last week, all affiliates not owned by Fox were said to have rejected Fox's assertion that it has the right to seize the inventory. Sources say members of Fox's affiliate committee have told the net that they refuse its claim to 20 of the 90 prime time spots allotted for local sale. Owners on the committee include Tribune, Meredith, Sinclair, Emmis, Raycom and Clear Channel.

Numerous smaller affiliates were also said to have written similar letters.

That reaction was to a May 6 deadline set by Fox, when affiliates were given the option of losing that inventory or paying Fox to get it back. Such an "inventory take back" could gross Fox between \$100 million and \$150 million in additional revenue, according to industry estimates.

Part of Fox's strategy was to persuade enough affiliates to take the buyback option that they would cover at least 70% of the country. Then, using clauses Fox cites in affiliate agreements as further leverage, the network intended to force the rest of the stations to take the buyback.

Up until last Wednesday, the affiliate

board tried to come up with counter-proposals to the Fox plan. Their last move was an offer to pay \$40 million annually in reverse compensation. Fox rejected it.

Now, the ball is clearly in Fox's court. Fox executives say the network intends to go through with the take back and sell ads regionally and locally. The network would accomplish that by installing customized video servers at each affiliate station. The servers would receive downloaded spots from Fox and have the ability to put the spots on air at the network's command.

Further, Fox has issued a request for a proposal to major video server manufacturers to create a unit that will receive digitally compressed spots via satellite, store them, and play them back under Fox's remote network control.

The local spot servers would allow Fox to offer advertisers a greater degree of localization than the "sectionals," or regional spots, that the network sells today.

"These are sectionals on steroids," says Andrew G. Setos, executive VP of parent company News Corp.'s News Technology Group and the person in charge of the project. "I've been told to prepare for sectionals that go down to one station."

If stations refuse to allow the servers

to be installed, Fox sources say it may replace those stations with FoxNet, the cable/satellite service now serving 2 million viewers that was initially designed to service so-called "white areas." White areas are locales not served by over-the-air Fox affiliates. Fox has been adding syndicated shows to the service and recently moved its base to Los Angeles.

"Our lawyers tell me that when we started sectionals eight years ago, it was explicitly clear—the language was very clear—that we can put any equipment at the affiliate for the purpose of delivering the network feed," says Setos. "That includes satellite receivers, cabling, etc. If a server is part of that, so be it."

Whether affiliates will allow the servers to be installed is another question altogether. "We wonder whether they can actually do that legally," said Murray Green, vice president and general manager, WFLX(TV) West Palm Beach, Fla., and chairman of the Fox affiliate board. Green says the board is mulling a possible lawsuit against Fox on antitrust grounds, among others.

While talks are off for now, more than one affiliate executive last week held out hope that Fox could be persuaded to accept a compromise plan that is palatable to both sides. ■

—with reporting by Glen Dickson

Television under fire again

Littleton prompts calls for probes, safe harbor bills, limited marketing of video games

By Paige Albinak

The V-chip and the TV ratings system have helped shield TV against attacks from policy makers in the wake of last month's shootings at a Colorado high school. Nonetheless, TV may be the first medium to face restrictive legislation.

Sen. Ernest Hollings (D-S.C.) is pushing a bill that would require the FCC to determine which TV programming is violent, and restrict those shows to a "safe harbor"—times when children are less likely to be in the audience. Indecent programming (as defined by the FCC) is now limited to a 10 p.m.-6 a.m. safe harbor.

Hollings last introduced that bill in 1997. But Senate Majority Leader Trent Lott (R-Miss.) and other senators agreed not to move any content-related bills—as part of a deal to encourage the TV industry to add content-based labels to the TV ratings system.

Hollings may add the legislation to a bill on juvenile crime or he may offer it separately. Given the current climate in Congress, lobbyists believe the measure may move through at least the Senate. A companion bill has yet to emerge in the House.

Other parts of the entertainment industry also face legislation, but none so restrictive as Hollings' proposal.

Sens. Orrin Hatch (R-Utah) and Joseph Lieberman (D-Conn.) may offer their own amendment to the juvenile crime bill, which would require the Federal Trade Commission or Department of Justice to look into whether the entertainment industry purposely marketed violence to children.

"The FTC and Congress can subpoena marketing plans and internal memos to find out exactly which distributors are pushing violence to our kids," Lieberman said. "The marketing of these ever more vicious and violent products is making a mockery of the various rating systems, telling parents that these products are inappropriate for children but we're going to sell them anyway, and reminding us of sim-



MPAA President Jack Valenti defends the entertainment industry against Senators and other critics. Among the latter: former Secretary of Education Bill Bennett (on Valenti's right) and Denver Archbishop Charles Chaput (on his left).

ilar behavior by the tobacco industry."

Lieberman said he and Hatch would prefer the industry to voluntarily limit the quantity of violent products. "The far more preferable option would be for each media industry to strengthen their existing codes of conduct to help us better protect our children," he said. Lieberman hopes the industries will start those talks at a White House summit planned for May 10 (see story on facing page).

Hatch also is considering introducing legislation that would "direct the administration to investigate the marketing of violent music and video games to children," he said. "In addition, I am considering an enforcement mechanism for the current [music and video game] ratings systems."

Sens. Lieberman and John McCain (R-Ariz.) as well as Reps. Ed Markey (D-Mass.) and Dan Burton (R-Ind.) also introduced a joint resolution to require the surgeon general to complete within 18 months a study on how violence in the media affects children. The same four lawmakers also called on the White House to hold the May summit.

The broadcast and cable networks so far have not responded to the possibility that Hollings' bill might pass. Most broadcast representatives say that they don't air much violent programming

before 10 p.m. anyway, and Hollings' bill does not apply to premium and pay-per-view cable.

Senators were much more focused, during last week's hearing on marketing violence to children, on violent video games, movies and music lyrics.

Lieberman, who has long fought to get violence and sex off television, said he is backing off TV. "Television, though it is part of the background noise of all of this, is less implicated in my mind," he said after the hearing.

William Bennett, co-director of Empower America, began his testimony by airing bloody scenes from the theatricals *The Basketball Diaries* and *Scream*. Other witnesses showed clips of teenagers playing video games such as *Doom*, *Duke Nukem* and *Mortal Kombat*, in which the player wins more points the more attackers he or she kills.

The lone defender of the entertainment industry at the hearing—Motion Picture Association President Jack Valenti—said the focus should be on "the home, church and school," and suggested such initiatives as developing a curriculum that would teach children ethics. He also said the government should make available to all parents and educators a document jointly written by the Departments of Education and Justice called *Guide to Safe Schools*.

"Mothers, fathers, ministers, rabbis, priests, principals and teachers must construct within the minds and hearts of children an impenetrable moral shield, against which the blandishments of peers, the enticements of the mean streets, clannish cliques and visual and aural images will shatter and break," Valenti said in his testimony. Without that societal support, "no abolition of constitutional rights, no executive order, no congressional law, no fiery rhetoric will ever salvage a child's conduct or locate a missing moral core," he said.

Upon questioning, Valenti admitted that there were some movies—including *The Basketball Diaries*, in which Leonardo diCaprio mows down students with a machine gun during a dream sequence—that he would not

choose to make.

Sen. Sam Brownback (R-Kan.), who chaired the hearing, asked Valenti to "lend his voice" to the rising clamor against violent programming. But Valenti refused. "I'm not going to indict a specific movie because I don't think it's my role," he said. "If I had conclusive evidence that one movie was solely responsible for Columbine High School, I would be against it."

Brownback's hearing is only the first in what looks to be a long series of summits, conferences and hearings focusing on youth violence. This week, Rep. Henry Hyde (R-Ill.), chairman of the House Judiciary Committee, plans to hold oversight hearings starting May 13 on "root causes of juvenile violence in America," he said in a press conference last week. "I think it is vitally important for this oversight hearing to cover a wide range of issues," Hyde said.

Senate Commerce Committee Chairman McCain also plans a hearing on youth violence on May 13, and may take up Hollings' "safe harbor." ■

Media expected at violence summit

The White House today will brainstorm ways to reduce violence among America's youth with about 50 participants from the entertainment industry, gun makers, medical and social experts and politicians. President Bill Clinton, First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton, Vice President Al Gore and his wife, Tipper Gore, will preside.

The summit is a major initiative by the Clinton administration in response to the deadly April 20 rampage at Columbine High School in Littleton, Colo. Fifteen people, including the two teens believed to be the gunmen, were killed. Since then, the media and entertainment industries have come under fire for what many critics charge is the gratuitous use of violence shown on television, movie and computer screens.

Expected to attend: America Online Chairman Steve Case; Motion Picture Association of America President Jack Valenti; National Association of Broadcasters President Eddie Fritts; National Cable Television Association President Decker Anstrom, and Recording Industry Association of America President Hilary Rosen. Bruce Reed, Clinton's domestic policy advisor, said the White House has also asked the House and Senate leadership to send representatives.

The broadcast and cable networks are cooperating with the White House but are nervous that efforts will quickly spin out of control and result in legislation that restricts what they can sell or show.

"You're always going in with your antennae up," said one lobbyist. "But from TV's standpoint, the White House seems to be acknowledging that we've done the V-chip and the TV ratings." —Paige Albiniak

'One click' to safety

Gore offers initiatives for filtering out Web violence, porn

By Bill McConnell

In the wake of the killings in Littleton, Colo., last month, the Clinton administration last week unveiled related initiatives—two from government and one from industry—to help keep violent and pornographic content on the Internet away from children.

Fifteen Internet companies pledged to provide "one click" access from their Web pages to a new Parents' Protection Page that will give Internet users access to as many as 80 separate tools for blocking objectionable content.

"We will ensure that children aren't surfing into dangerous waters when they surf the Web," said Vice President Al Gore at a White House press conference called to announce the initiative.

The page will explain how parents can install software filters that block sexual or violent content, restrict their children's e-mail, limit the amount of time kids spend on the Web and track Internet sites their kids visit.

Plans call for the page, under development by America Online, AT&T, At-Home Network, Bell Atlantic, Com-

mercial Internet Exchange, Disney Online, Excite, Microsoft and others, to be operational in July.

Similarly, the FCC has added a page to its Web site that will assist parents' efforts to guard against unwanted Internet, TV and other content. The site explains how to obtain filtering software, use the V-Chip TV rating system and block "900 number" telephone calls.

"As the government's expert on communication, we see it as our duty—as guardians of the public interest—to make information on innovations like the V-chip and filtering software available to America's parents," he said.

The FCC is also moving forward with a Clinton administration effort to make schools to draw up plans for protecting students from sexually explicit or violent content before applying for federal funds to wire classrooms to the Internet. The plan was first suggested to the FCC in an April 7 letter from Larry Irving, head of the National Technology and Information Administration.

Many schools have already installed "filtering" software that blocks objectionable material, but the administra-

tion says it will not mandate any particular solution. "Absent proof that local decision making is not working to protect our children, the federal government should not mandate a particular type of technology," Irving wrote.

The initiatives should be welcome relief to parents who have wired their homes for the Web, said Joseph Turow, University of Pennsylvania professor and author of a new study on parents' attitudes toward the Web.

The study found that Internet access stirs conflicting emotions among parents who have wired their homes to the Web. "Parents are juggling the dream and the nightmare of the Internet at the same time," Turow said. According to his study, 78% of parents who head online households fear their children might give away personal information or view pornographic content. The Internet might interfere with their ability to teach values and beliefs, said 49% of parents, while 42% believe that excessive Internet use can cause children to develop antisocial behavior.

At the same time, however, most believe the Internet is an essential tool, the study found. Without Internet access their children will be at a disadvantage to other kids, said 59% of parents. The Internet is also a help with homework said 72% of parents, while 75% said the Web helps kids find "fascinating, useful things." ■

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AT&T wins MediaOne fight

But unbowed Comcast walks away with 2 million subs and a plum phone deal

By Price Colman

To win the battle for MediaOne, AT&T had to craft a complex, four-way deal under the toughest of deadlines.

As soon as MediaOne officially accepted AT&T's \$69 billion offer as the "superior" bid on May 1, AT&T executives began a feverish 72 hours of nearly non-stop dealmaking.

By the time it was over last Tuesday, they'd come up with a plan that answered all concerns. First, AT&T would swap and sell Comcast cable systems with 2 million subscribers for roughly \$9 billion dollars in return for Comcast agreeing to withdraw its \$58 billion bid for MediaOne.

Those systems included Lenfest Communications' Philadelphia-area operations with 1.5 million subscribers—properties Comcast had long coveted as additions to its hometown cluster. To set up that deal, AT&T Broadband & Internet Services President Leo Hindery had within a day negotiated to buy the 50% of Lenfest that AT&T didn't already own for an estimated \$2.2 billion in AT&T stock.

In addition, AT&T reversed its previous course, granting Comcast the best terms available for opening up its cable systems to AT&T phone service.

With those pieces in place, the Microsoft quandary remained. Microsoft had been playing both ends against the middle, offering to ally with Comcast to beat AT&T's bid while also negotiating with AT&T. In the end, Microsoft agreed to invest \$5 billion in AT&T, a move that aligns the companies financially and strategically. In return for the investment, Microsoft wins access for its Windows CE operating system to potentially twice the number of set-tops it had under a previous deal with TCI.

When the deals are consummated, AT&T will emerge as the nation's largest cable operator with 15 million cable subscribers—about 23% of the nation's total. Comcast will be a solid No. 3 with 8 million subs.

While the interlocking deals raised regulatory questions, investors are happy with the way it all turned out. "It's what I hoped would happen although I was

worried up to the end," says Gordon Crawford of Capital Research, owner of a sizable chunk of Comcast stock. "It's a very wise move by Brian [Roberts, president/CEO, Comcast]. Comcast is getting 40% of what they wanted for a much lower price. This is a way better transaction for Comcast."

In choosing compromise over combat, Roberts saves Comcast billions of dollars, avoids years of debt burden and the likelihood of diluted control. True, Comcast gains fewer subscribers, but they're more strategically located and they come at a good price. And the

subscriber Comcast would have paid MediaOne. AT&T is paying about \$62.5 billion for MediaOne, or about \$5,000 per subscriber.

Beating AT&T in the bidding war clearly would have enhanced Roberts' standing, but the cost—not just in dollars but in relationships—would have been enormous.

"His conduct greatly adds to his stature in the industry," says one cable industry executive. "He handled the whole thing like a true gentleman."

After AT&T shocked the business world with its April 22 counterbid for MediaOne, Comcast received plenty of offers for help. Proposal after proposal surfaced from companies with keen interest in seeing AT&T fail. Among the bunch: America Online, Bell Atlantic, MCI WorldCom and Microsoft.

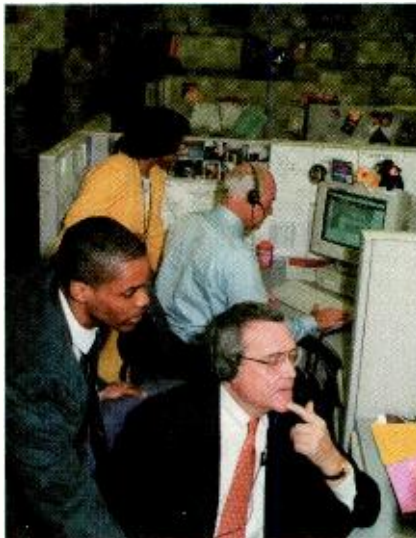
But the offers also came with strings. The eager would-be partners wanted some measure of control of Comcast, something the Roberts family has long eschewed. "It became increasingly clear that none of those [offers] were very happy alternatives," says one person familiar with the situation. "If you ask [Bill] Gates to put \$20 billion to \$25 billion into your company, he isn't going to do it for non-voting shares."

In some cases, the offers to help were largely symbolic. AOL was willing to contribute stock, a move akin to bringing a knife to a gunfight when what Comcast really needed was cash.

Then there was the potential baggage of partnering with an outsider within the insular cable industry. That might have proved as formidable a handicap as Comcast's ownership-dilution issue.

AOL has few friends in cable after its recent unsuccessful attack on TCI and AT&T regarding Internet unbundling. Cable executives were already wary of Microsoft, despite the software company's \$1 billion investment in Comcast and its operating-system pact with TCI.

Alliances with either MCI WorldCom or Bell Atlantic had possibilities, but would have been enormously divisive. By May 2, when MediaOne's board publicly declared AT&T's offer "superior," it was clear that it would take a miracle for Comcast to mount a competing bid.



AT&T's Michael Armstrong (seated at far terminal) and Leo Hindery (at near terminal) will soon run the nation's largest cable company. Here, they participate in the industry's campaign to promote customer service by taking their turns as CSRs in Chicago.

"most favored nation" status on the phone access deal yields financial and other benefits impossible to presently measure.

As important, by agreeing to acquire 2 million subscribers from AT&T, instead of stretching to buy MediaOne's 5 million customers, Comcast prevents internecine warfare in the cable industry.

Factoring in the \$1.5 billion breakup fee Comcast received from MediaOne, Crawford estimates the cost for those 2 million AT&T customers is somewhere between \$3,250 and \$3,500 each, compared to the \$4,500-plus per

At 8 a.m. last Monday (May 3), a group that included Hindery, Roberts, Gene Sykes of Goldman Sachs, and Steve Radner of Lazard Freres & Co., met in the New York offices of Wachtell, Lipton, Rosen & Katz, the law firm advising AT&T. By noon, they had the framework of a deal in place. But there were a few critical details that remained to be hammered out.

"In classic problem-solving between would-be competitors, you list what you want out of the deal and list what you want to avoid," says Tom Eagan of PaineWebber. "Comcast wanted to increase its cable scope but didn't want to have to counterbid and pay more for MediaOne. Comcast also wanted to define a phone strategy. AT&T wanted to complete its footprint for local phone service and increase the footprint of phone affiliation deals, but didn't want to pay more in a counterbid for MediaOne. AT&T also wanted to avoid additional scrutiny from Washington." ■

Gates pays to get inside set-tops

We've been here before: TCI agrees to put Microsoft's Windows CE operating system in 5 million digital set-top boxes.

A deal originally announced in early January 1998 was reprised, in a sense, last week. Maybe Microsoft Chairman Bill Gates should rename the CE operating system "Deja Vu."

This time, the deal is between AT&T Broadband & Internet Services and Microsoft, not TCI and Microsoft. A cosmetic difference? Maybe, but the Michael Armstrong-Leo Hindery team at AT&T is a considerably different animal from the John Malone-Hindery team that directed TCI.

This time around Microsoft must cough up some cash: \$5 billion for a 3% stake in AT&T. In return, AT&T agreed to put Windows CE in 7.5 million to 10 million set-tops, a 50%-100% expansion of the original agreement.

AT&T also agreed to license client/server software developed by Microsoft's WebTV division and use it in two of three deployments in "showcase cities." AT&T and Microsoft aren't naming the three cities, but Fremont/Sunnyvale, Calif., a crucial TCI test market, is a likely candidate.

In Armstrong's somewhat self-serving terms, "It's a smart investment by a smart investor."

AT&T, while willing to deal with Microsoft, isn't about to let itself get boxed in. Armstrong last week repeatedly emphasized that AT&T won't enter exclusive deals with vendors such as Microsoft. Sun Microsystems' PersonalJava will also be used in some set-tops.

—Price Colman

Washington to scrutinize merger

Now that AT&T and MediaOne are joined, it's time for Congressional hearings

By Bill McConnell

Warnings by policymakers that AT&T's purchase of MediaOne Group would give the company too large a share of the country's cable market "violate any rule of reason," officials at the telecommunications giant said last week.

In comments to reporters Friday, AT&T General Counsel James Cicconi said that despite concerns raised in Washington, the company's ownership interest in cable systems around the country is below any limits that should be set by the FCC.

But FCC Chairman William Kennard and key lawmakers last week insisted that AT&T's \$69 billion acquisition of MediaOne Group is not a sure bet to win regulators' approval.

"This is a complex transaction," Kennard said in a prepared statement Friday. "Because of its size and reach and the many novel legal and policy issues involved, this proposed merger warrants very careful scrutiny."

On Capitol Hill, the reaction was more critical, and some lawmakers are now questioning the three-year-old law

that loosened telecommunications ownership restrictions. "The 1996 Telecommunications Act has failed miserably," said Senate Commerce Committee Chairman John McCain (R-Ariz.). "Rather than promoting competition in the industry, the Act has led to a flood of megamergers." McCain has scheduled a June 17 hearing to examine the merger.

The Senate Antitrust Subcommittee and the House Telecommunications Subcommittee will also hold hearings on the deal.

The FCC and AT&T appear split over how large a share of the business the company would hold if the MediaOne deal goes through. According to the FCC's numbers, the company would have the potential to serve nearly two-thirds of the country's households—well above the 30% cap regulators set in 1993. AT&T figures its household reach would be only 38%, close enough, they hope, that the company could tweak its investments to satisfy new limits the FCC is expected to issue within the next four months.

But there's no guarantee the FCC's new rules will satisfy AT&T's needs or that new rules will be issued in time.

The FCC has voluntarily suspended enforcement of the 30% cap, pending the outcome of the cable industry's court challenge. But the FCC's General Counsel office says the agency could reinstate compliance requirements before the court decision comes down. The court is expected to rule during the first quarter of 2000.

AT&T officials are counting on new rules that would no longer count minority investments on other cable systems as if they were wholly owned. To not do so "would raise serious questions again about whether the rule comports with congressional intent," Cicconi said.

The FCC also is likely to examine other aspects of the merger, including whether consumers' access to high-speed data will be harmed if AT&T controls both major cable Internet providers—its own @Home service and MediaOne's Road Runner. Also on the agency's list: whether AT&T will have the power to decide the fate of new cable channels and whether its new partnership with Microsoft will give the companies power to dominate the market for cable set-top boxes. ■



All for just

\$5,000

Buyers' faith in new services has doubled the per-subscriber price of cable systems in the past year

By John M. Higgins

Cable industry executives howled during last year's auction of Marcus Cable Corp. Low-tech, laden with debt and short on fat major-market system clusters that operators prize, Marcus Cable Chairman Jeffrey Marcus was publicly belittled for seeking \$3 billion, about \$2,500 per subscriber.

Leo Hindery, then president of TeleCommunications Inc. and a bidder, dismissed Marcus' asking price as "absurd." He told a group of Texas cable managers, "We know it ain't \$3 billion, so what is it?"

Marcus came very close. Multibillionaire Paul Allen startled the market by preempting the auction with a bid of \$2.8 billion, or \$2,313 for each cable subscriber. Clearly a high price—at the time.

Today, the thought of selling a sizable cable system for \$2,300 per sub is a different kind of joke. Systems are now regularly selling for more than \$4,000 per sub. Via new employer AT&T Corp., Hindery's own \$69 billion pursuit of MediaOne Group Inc. values MediaOne at \$4,700 per subscriber. Even the normally conservative Cox Communications Inc. is racing in, buying Media General cable operations for \$1.4 billion, or a screaming \$5,400 per customer.

These aren't day traders pumping up

the stock of some anonymous Internet stock. These are major media players paying, in many cases, actual cash and not just their own highly inflated shares.

It's no mystery what's going on here. Cable operators have started to believe their own boasts, rooted in promises dating back more than 20 years. Subscribers will be able to do something other than merely watching *The Sopranos* and the World Wrestling Federation. Through their cable converters, they'll pluck sports scores or news while watching a basketball game. They'll e-mail friends during *Friends* from their living rooms, tap the Internet at incomparable speeds from their bed-

rooms, and call for Chinese take-out via cable from their kitchens.

The question is whether the financial equation works? Will consumer demand be high enough to raise revenues and lower costs enough to make a cable home worth \$5,000?

The nearly uniform answer of most industry executives and analysts is positive. While the core basic- and pay-movie channel business has slowed, the various new products are seen as lucrative enough to allow a decent return on operators' investments even in the face of soaring takeover costs. Penetration levels of various new products are expected to vary, with bulls seeing up to 50% of subscribers taking digital cable's fat packages of dozens of new channels and bears seeing as few as 10% taking high-speed Internet service.

At the same time, operators contend that their heavy capital spending cycle is abating. Rebuilding plants to prepare for new services has ballooned many operators' annual capital spending from \$80-\$120 per customer in 1995 to \$180-\$220 in 1998. That plant spending will ease as major reconstruction projects to expand 70%-90% of their systems to the industry standard 750 MHz capacity are completed.

"The reason people were paying \$2,000 per sub is that's the net present value of \$40 in cable revenue a month in perpetuity," said PaineWebber cable analyst Tom Eagan. "But it isn't just the \$40 any longer. It's also \$45 for Internet, and maybe \$70-\$80 for telephone."

The risk is that operators don't deliver as promised. Already, some companies' core business is weakening with AT&T/TCI and MediaOne posting little or no cash-flow growth and even highly regarded Cox slipping. TCI is so far behind in rolling out high-speed Internet service @Home that parent AT&T may have to surrender some @Home stock in exchange for a distribution commitment.

Complaints come from both customers and operators. Advanced digital cable converters—the extra smart ones that are the cornerstone of many promised services, including Net surf via tele-

Cable subscriber of the future

Estimated 2002 monthly revenue per subscriber

	Rev/sub	Penetration	Avg. rev/sub
Basic Cable	\$34.36	100%	\$34.36
Pay Cable	\$8.65	70%	\$6.06
Advanced Analog	\$10.40	10%	\$1.04
PC Online	\$36.92	10%	\$3.69
Set-tops Online	\$6.37	3%	\$0.19
Digital Cable	\$11.91	20%	\$2.38
PPV	\$2.50	75%	\$1.88
Local Ads	\$4.02	100%	\$4.02
Telephone	\$55.00	20%	\$11.00
Total	\$170.13*		\$64.62

*Assumes the unlikely: that subscriber buys every product

Source: 'The Digital Decade' from Morgan Stanley Dean Witter

vision sets, video-on-demand, interactive advertising—have been delayed for months. Cable modems are plentiful, but the industry still hasn't introduced promised equipment that subscribers could buy at CompUSA and install themselves. That would let operators roll service out much more quickly and cheaply.

Less fancy digital converters have been available for almost two years, but Morgan Stanley Dean Witter media

analyst Richard Bilotti counts just three large operators deploying them. Because of shortcomings in their systems, AT&T/TCI has been particularly aggressive in rolling out digital, securing 900,000 digital customers. But the other two, Comcast and Cox, have just 100,000 digital units each.

And while AT&T is pinning its hopes on cheap and efficient IP (Internet Protocol) telephone services over cable, industry executives see deployment of the technology at least two years away. That's the same time frame AT&T Chairman Mike Armstrong predicted when he cut a deal to buy TCI last June.

And it's going to take plenty of cash to launch services. Operators are springing \$350-\$450 for digital converters and \$275 or more for cable modems, plus more for installation labor and marketing. Telephone gear is currently another \$400-\$500 per home. Modems and set-tops are supposed to become consumer electronics items that customers pick up and pay for at Circuit City, eliminating the operators' cost. But some analysts expect operators to wind up subsidizing that equipment the way cellular and DBS operators spend hundreds of millions of dollars paying manufacturers and dealers of phones and satellite dishes.

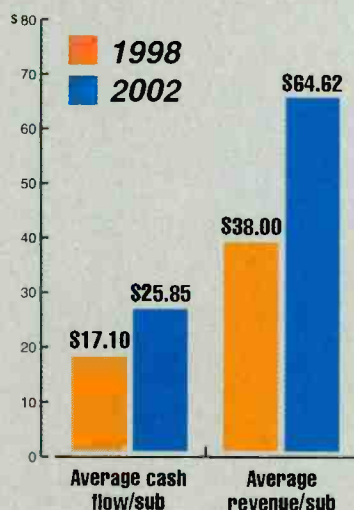
One major media money manager heavily invested in cable is getting worried about the "penthouse prices" operators are paying. "I think they're running around doing land grabbing," the money manager said. "Just getting all the systems and software to talk to each other is going to be huge, monumental task....Now's the fun of all the announcements, but execution is going to be tough."

"There's huge execution risk," said Marcus, who has started a media investment fund, Marcus Partners. "There's going to be some slips. But at the end of the day, cable has the superior infrastructure."

AT&T's Armstrong last week acknowledged he faces skepticism about whether "all this investment [will] pay off. Will this work in bringing these digital services to millions of

Cable's promise

If operators deliver as promised, each cable subscriber could be generating a lot more cash.



Source: 'Digital Decade,' Morgan Stanley Dean Witter

consumers? How will it be implemented? Will it be popular?"

But he dismisses the doubters. The two deals AT&T cut last week—systems from MediaOne and \$5 billion-plus investment and technology from Microsoft—will allow the company to "make it work and be as popular as its potential," he said.

Wall Street executives cite two major factors affecting pricing. Bear, Stearns & Co. media analyst Ray Katz said that after years of talking the talk about new revenues, buyers suddenly began to walk the walk. The sale price of any business is based on future revenues and cash flow that a buyer expects, but for years cable operators got nearly zero credit for new businesses. "People decided to put into that number all the new services," Katz said. "A year ago people weren't paying for the new services. Today people are."

A second factor is that the big players aren't looking to make as much money as their predecessors. From 1996 through early 1998, system deals were driven largely by institutional buyouts seeking 30%-35% annualized returns to keep their clients happy. Paying a lot up front makes it tougher to make a good return.

But today's biggest buyers—

Microsoft co-founder Paul Allen and AT&T—are different types of players. Industry executives said that Allen's Vulcan Ventures, armed with \$22 billion, doesn't set the bar that high. Further, AT&T is desperate to secure an avenue into the local phone business to offset its increasingly sour long-distance business. "Expected returns have come down across the board," said one financier. "They're willing to pay up."

But the economics underlying the system are there, analysts said. In his recent, exhaustive report on new media, *The Digital Decade*, Bilotti sees nine sources of revenue from cable systems, six of them created by or dramatically enhanced by new technology. Hooking PCs to the Internet should bring \$37 a month, and Web TV-like service should bring another \$6 or so. Telephone service should add \$55 a month.

Not all subscribers will take every service. But by 2002—fairly early in the rollout—Bilotti estimates that average revenue per subscriber will rise from \$38 monthly today to nearly \$65. Average cash flow per subscriber should rise almost 50%, from \$17 to almost \$26. In another three years, Bilotti sees average revenues per customer going to more than \$90 and cash flow to \$36.

Still, \$5,000 per subscriber is "pushing the envelope," Bilotti said. Operators paying that kind of price must be able to generate tremendous cost efficiencies for several years and maintain cash flow margins in the 40%-45% range most cable operators generate today.

Katz breaks a cable home down into its appetite for each product. A subscriber taking plain old cable is worth around \$2,500, about what it was a year ago. But the expectation of even partial penetration of new products adds a lot of value. The ability to sell that home digital cable is worth another \$800, Katz says. Even splitting revenues and profits in a telephone venture with AT&T would add around \$500. High-speed data adds another \$675. Video-on-demand adds \$250. Even the reduced churn from customers hooked on bundled cable, phone and Internet services create around \$150 in new value per subscriber.

After subtracting roughly \$500 per basic subscriber in capital on average to make the new services happen, Katz readily gets to \$4,500 in total value per basic subscriber.

"Are they out of their minds?" Katz asked. "No, they're not. It's a question of whether the demand is there. Then it's a question of can they execute?" ■

New hope for overbuilders?

Cable operators face a downside in their lust for new revenues. If there really is enough cash to justify a \$5,000 valuation for a cable subscriber, the financial picture suddenly brightens for another group of players: overbuilders.

Despite the vast wealth created by cable, operators have largely been immune from direct competition because there hasn't been financial room for two players in a market. Cable is a capital-intensive business, requiring an operator to pull a piece of copper down every single street in a town before lighting the system up. One operator can thrive on the industry average of 65% penetration of homes passed. But upstart overbuilders who try to challenge operators' local monopolies have to split the market, usually ending up with much less than half, and have often run into a cash squeeze.

Building a suburban or urban cable system can cost \$700-\$1,200 per home passed. Basic penetration of 20% means construction costs \$3,500-\$4,500 per subscriber. Boosting penetration to 30%—a difficult task—lowers costs to \$2,100-\$3,600 per subscriber. That's a tough equation when cable revenues only support a valuation—for a monopoly system—of \$2,000-\$2,500 per sub. (An established system facing competition drops in value 30%-40%.)

But multiple revenue streams could give competitors a lot more breathing room. If telephone and high-speed Internet revenues can really lift average revenue per

subscriber from \$40 or so today to \$75 or more in five years, as some analysts expect, overbuilders with just 20% penetration may have a healthy business.

Overbuilders are happy with the sudden price spike. "In our mind it completely validates what we always knew. Building a broadband pipe into the home is a valuable business," said Michael Maloney, president of RCN Corp., which has raised \$2.5 billion in recent months to build out systems.

"I don't want to speculate whether \$3,000-\$5,000 is the right number for a cable subscriber, but the activity does seem to justify this kind of investment," said Ali Shadman, president of Ameritech New Media, which has overbuilt cable operators in the Midwest with systems passing 1.3 million homes.

Ameritech, backed by the financial clout of a Baby Bell, is the most aggressive combatant, securing franchises in more than 100 towns primarily around Chicago and Detroit. That puts the telco up against operators like AT&T, Comcast, MediaOne and Insight Communications Inc. Of course, the cable operator isn't going into the phone business against its parent.

RCN, spawned from traditional MSO C-Tec Corp., is building systems in New York, Boston, Washington and San Francisco. At the end of 1998 the company passed 304,000 homes and had 60,000 customers, for a penetration rate of 20%. Each of those customers on average buys two of the three services.

—John M. Higgins

Officials: local TV saved lives

Stations' tornado warnings in Kansas, Oklahoma pushed populace to seek shelter

By Elizabeth A. Rathbun

The tornadoes that swept across Oklahoma and southern Kansas last Monday killed 41 people as of last Thursday. Some 100 were still missing.

But without the media, those numbers could have been much higher, according to government officials and members of the media.

Without the on-the-spot tracking of the local television stations and the immediate dissemination of National Weather Service warnings, "we probably would have lost a lot more lives," said Rick Buchanan, press secretary to Oklahoma Gov. Frank Keating.

Oklahoma City Police Chief M.T. Berry took time at a news conference to praise the local stations. "People had great warning. People took heed to what you said and I think that's why we had so many survivors," he said, referring to Associated Press stories.

The market's TV stations were able to pinpoint the biggest storm in advance of its hitting, giving viewers ample time to find cover or flee. The stations "have unbelievable technology at their disposal" with Doppler radar, satellite trucks and the ability to send video over cellular telephones, Buchanan noted. He should know; he tracked storms as a past employee of all Big 3 affiliates in Oklahoma City.

At 8 p.m. last Monday, 72.4% of homes using TVs were tuned in, according to Nielsen. KFOR-TV held a 42.8 rating/59 share; KWTW had 23.9/33, and KOCO-TV was at 9.1/13.

The media indeed are being credited with saving lives, but "this is why we're here," said KFOR-TV General Manager Tim Morrissey. "This is truly the mission of a local television station." As the numbers show, people tuned in and when told to "take cover, they [took] it very seriously."

An NBC affiliate, KFOR-TV started tracking the storm nonstop at 4:45 p.m., 15 minutes into its early-evening newscast. "We just went straight through," commercial-free, until 1:15 a.m. After picking up again at 5 a.m. Tuesday, storm programming continued virtually



Koco-TV broadcast its first warning at 4:40 p.m. last Monday and provided near continuous coverage for more than 24 hours.

commercial-free until 7 p.m., he said.

In his 27 years as weatherman for KWTW—the first to use Doppler, in 1981—Gary England said he never before had to tell viewers that an underground shelter was the only place to survive a tornado in the tornado-familiar state.

But he did this time and as a result, he has received happy "e-mails and calls by the hundreds."

England also gave credit to area residents, who know how to respond to a tornado. "If they had not responded, the fatalities could've been in the hundreds," England noted. He related the tale of one young couple who planned to take shelter in their doublewide trailer. When they heard England's warning to go underground, the husband turned to his wife and said, "We ain't stayin' here." When they returned, England reported, their trailer was gone.

KWTW turns over all its employees to England when a big storm looms, said News Director Joyce Reed. The station went with England at about 4:30 p.m. last Monday and stayed commercial-free with tornado stories until 11:00 the following night. Even after other stations stopped continuous programming, KWTW stuck with its coverage because "we felt like the story was just beginning at that point," Reed explained.

Since late Tuesday, the station has been offering "Storm Recovery Updates" every half hour. The updates

last anywhere from 30 seconds to several minutes and longer, if warranted. As part of the updates, viewers are told what they can do to help. Nine tractor-trailer trucks outside the station were filled with food, clothing and other supplies, Reed said.

The goal at KOCO-TV was "to inform the public as quickly as possible," said General Manager Joe Hengemuehler. One way the station got the word out was via pager. Subscriptions for "Weather Warn 5"

are available over the station's Web site. The total number of subscribers was not immediately available.

On-air, KOCO-TV broadcast its first warning at 4:40 p.m. last Monday. Commercial-free coverage continued until 1:15 a.m. Tuesday with updates offered the rest of the night. Local news came on at 5 a.m. Tuesday and local coverage—virtually ad-free—continued until 7:00 that night. "We blew out everything," Hengemuehler said.

Since the storm, the station has collected eight trucks' worth of food and \$10,000 for Oklahoma City-based Feed the Children.

A telephone call to KFOR-TV was not returned. However, Renda Broadcasting's four radio stations in Oklahoma City simulcast with that TV station last Monday night, according to General Manager Vance Harrison. "The coverage was so incredible" on all Big 3 affiliates, he said. "They have built their stations around weather. ... If this was in the '50s, thousands would be dead." As it was, "you could watch this devastation come across." Renda donated the vacant former home of one of its stations as a shelter for about 100 people that night. With its 50,000-watt generator, "it was the only building in Moore [Okla.] with electricity."

"All credit truly should go to the TV stations," said Chris Baker, operations manager for Caribou Communications' five Oklahoma City radios.

Gumbel returns to early rising

CBS puts top talent to use in morning show; must convince affils to clear first hour

By Steve McClellan

CBS affiliates say it's great that the network is spending upward of \$20 million on revamping its morning news show. And they like the new host, \$5 million-a-year Bryant Gumbel, and the plan for a new state-of-the-art, street-level studio looking out on New York's Central Park. But whether they actually clear the first hour of the new two-hour broadcast (set to start Nov. 1) is another story altogether.

Three years ago, CBS gave stations the option of programming the first hour (7-8 a.m.) of *This Morning* with local news. That plan was implemented out of affiliate frustration with the network's consistently poor performance in the morning hours.

The latest plan to reinvent the show calls on stations to give back most of the first hour. But many affiliates have invested huge sums ramping up their newscasts in the time period and have reaped huge profits and are not ready to give it up.

"It's our intention to stay with the format as it is laid out now," says Paul Karpowicz, executive vice president, LIN Television and chairman of the CBS affiliate board of advisers. Karpowicz says the investment LIN and other groups have made in local early-morning news is paying off in higher ratings and more revenue than the stations would earn taking the first hour of the network morning show.

"Morning news in general is quite profitable," says Karpowicz. And LIN's CBS affiliates (in Indianapolis, Buffalo, N.Y. and Fort Wayne, Ind.) generate ratings that beat the network telecast by a wide margin, he says.

Karpowicz says he's glad CBS is "getting aggressive about programming the morning daypart." If the revamped show comes out of the box doing a huge number, stations may just decide it's more efficient to let CBS program the entire two-hour block. "I think you'll find stations saying, 'Well, let's wait and see how it does.' If it comes out doing a 5 rating that would get people's attention."

"It's going to be a difficult decision for lots of stations," says Christopher Rohrs, vice president, sales and marketing, Post-



CBS News President Andrew Heyward (l) hopes that Gumbel will help CBS close early-morning viewer gap with NBC and ABC.

Newsweek Stations. The group's CBS affiliates in Orlando and Jacksonville, Fla., "stepped up very aggressively" to build a local news presence at 7 a.m. when CBS ceded the time period, he said. For stations that have done well with local news in the time period, a ratings drop after switching to Gumbel "is a very real possibility," he says. "They're watching because it is local."

Four days into the May sweeps, says Al Bova, vice president and general manager, Meredith-owned WFSB-TV Hartford-New Haven, the station's morning newscast is running just a couple of tenths behind time-period leader *Today*—a performance the station would not be matching with the full *This Morning* broadcast on CBS.

"Our approach will be to continue with the present format," says Bova. "I'm not sure, if we can continue that growth, we'd want to give it up."

Morning news is big business, for both local stations and networks. And it's one of the few broadcast TV dayparts that is growing significantly. Researchers say that the level of homes using television from 7 a.m. to 9 a.m. has grown 11% over the past five years, while daytime, prime time and late night audiences continue to shrink.

CBS' investment in the morning is relatively small compared to the poten-

tial upside. According to Nielsen's Monitor Plus ad tracking service, *Today* racked up almost \$189 million in profit in 1998. *Good Morning America* earned about \$85 million and *This Morning* earned about \$22 million.

Andrew Heyward, president of CBS News, says he would present affiliates a plan for reverting back to a full two-hour network broadcast at the network affiliate conference next month (June 2-3) in Las Vegas. "That will be the appropriate time for this discussion," with the affiliates, he said.

Alan Bell, president of the broadcasting division of Freedom Communications Corp., agrees with other affiliates who credit CBS for finally mustering the big name talent—in Gumbel and Steve Friedman, who will co-create and oversee the new broadcast—to at least have a chance to be competitive. "The landscape is so cluttered that unless you do something of size, no one notices you," says Bell. "This is something of size."

Gumbel's skills as a morning show anchor are generally considered second to none. Those skills stood the test of time at NBC, where he co-anchored *Today* for 15 years (until January 1997), dominating the competition for much of that time. But some observers, both inside and outside CBS, worry that the CBS audience doesn't appreciate his skills. His prime time

magazine show on the network, *The Public Eye*, was a flop. But as Gumbel says, his skills are best suited to live television, despite his declaration, after leaving *Today*, that he'd rather be "shot in the head" than return to morning TV.

"It is a grind," he says. "I enjoy live TV and the morning is the best place to do that." Asked at a press conference last week if he thought returning to his old stomping grounds was a "come-down," Gumbel responded: "I'm not sure I'd ever view two hours [a day] of live TV as a comedown."

Meanwhile, Friedman, station manager at WCBS-TV New York, who produced *Today* during most of Gumbel's tenure there, will start work on the new show next month. He, Gumbel and Al Berman, *This Morning's* current executive producer, will spend three months developing the new show. "By the end of the summer we'll know what we want to do," Friedman says. As to the naysayers who look at CBS's past dismal record in the morning, Friedman quips: "You can either look at it as we're doomed or we're due. I choose to say we're due." ■

Downs to leave '20/20,' ABC

Legendary ABC host Hugh Downs will leave *20/20* and ABC News at the end of the current broadcast season, after a 21-year stint with the program and the network.



Downs joined ABC in 1978.

Downs, 78, said he was leaving the show to pursue other interests, in the new-media area. Sources at ABC said the move was initiated by Downs and not the network. A decision about who will replace him as co-anchor on *20/20* is expected in two weeks, when the network's new prime time schedule is announced.

Downs' broadcasting career spans 60 years—he started as a radio announcer in Lima, Ohio, at the age of 18. He joined NBC in Chicago, after a tour of duty in the U.S. Army. In 1954, he moved to the network's New York headquarters to join *The Home Show*. In 1956, he was announcer for Sid Caesar's *Caesar's Hour*. He helped launch *The Tonight Show* as Jack Paar's sidekick in 1957, staying with the show for five years. He became the host of daytime TV's *Concentration* in 1958 and in 1962 started a nine-year stint as co-host of *Today* with Barbara Walters.

In 1971, he left *Today* to lecture, write and teach. He also started a private communications consulting firm. He joined ABC in 1978 when the network launched *20/20*, once again teaming with Walters.

In a statement, Downs said simply it was "time to move on." As to his new-media project, he said: "This fast moving cybernetic age holds such challenge and opportunity that I now find it irresistible." No details were available at deadline.

—Steve McClellan

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STATION BREAK

By Dan Trigoboff

Tampa's most wanted

Sometimes, as news staffers at WTVT(TV) Tampa, Fla., discovered, you become the story. Last Monday night the station led its late news with the story of a baby, who until recently had lived in the



WTVT Tampa gets an unexpected visitor, and an unexpected scoop.

area, who apparently had been kidnapped by family members in a bitter custody fight.

The next morning, four-month-old Kiana Todd, accompanied by a frightened, trembling grandmother, showed up in WTVT's lobby. Police believe that the baby was taken the week before from her mother's car in Haverhill, Mass., by her father's sister and a friend. The father was arrested in Massachusetts the night the baby disappeared. The aunt and friend were reported still at large and wanted for kidnapping, after they brought Kiana to her paternal grandmother in Tampa. The grandmother, who lived near the station, sought help there. Police were summoned, and they used the station's conference room in their investigation. The baby was taken by local social services, and reunited with

her mother, who flew down from Massachusetts.

"Sometimes it just drops into your lap," said news director Phil Metlin.

Although Metlin said he sympathized with colleagues from competing stations, who waited for hours

in the WTVT parking lot to get some video, only to have police take the baby out the station's back door, he noted their creative ways of avoiding using his station's name. "It's May sweeps," he said, "and I feel for them. But this is part of the who, what, when, where

and why."

Longer lenses in Denver

Denver TV stations last week agreed to pull back as Littleton, Colo., students returned to classes following the massacre at Columbine High School. Local school officials had raised the issue, news directors said, and the stations agreed. "It felt like the right thing to do," said KUSA-TV news director Patti Dennis. "These kids have had cameras and mikes in their faces for two weeks. Going back to school is going to be difficult enough."

"We thought it was the appropriate thing to do," said KMGH(TV) News Director Diane Mulligan. "If someone wants to talk with us, we're not going to get in their way. But the whole idea is to cover the story but show viewers we're not the crass journalists they've



WRC-TV Washington reporter Shari Macias (r) and videographer/editor Kendal Bush cover the arrival of refugees from Kosovo at Fort Dix, N.J. Macias and Bush began their reporting on relief efforts from Albania last month.

come to know and love."

Local news officials say the pool approach used last week might remain in use through Columbine's graduation, and later on when the school reopens.

Anchors away in Dallas

The 25-year relationship between WFAA-TV and anchor Tracy Rowlett ended in acrimony as the anchor left the station abruptly last week. The matter of his contract could be settled in court. Rowlett was taken off the air after reaching a multimillion-dollar deal with rival KTVT(TV) and later was reassigned to anchor the station's *Midday* news at noon. Rowlett refused, and left the station abruptly.

The big question now is when Rowlett can return to Dallas airwaves, since a term in his contract with WFAA-TV prohibits him from working for any other station for a year after his contract expires, and could keep Rowlett off the air until July 2000. But Rowlett and his attorney, Stephen Malouf, contend

that the station breached its contract with him when it took him off the late news, and that he is no longer bound by its terms.

Rowlett said that the reassignment to the noon program, "was trying to revive a corpse. They already killed the contract" when the station took him off the air. Moreover, he added, "I'm a 10 o'clock anchor. The reassignment was punitive." Rowlett said he'd hoped to work out his career at WFAA-TV, but the station didn't offer him much reason to stay, and KTVT

offered him considerable incentives to leave.

Rowlett unsuccessfully sought a temporary restraining order against WFAA-TV enforcing the noncompete, and will continue to seek to enjoin enforcement. WFAA-TV general manager Kathy Clements-Hill denied that the reassignment was punitive, and said that the station expected Rowlett to abide by his contract.

Face-off in Boston

Boston TV cameras were allowed last week into the trial of a reputed gang leader accused of killing a state prosecutor. However, Suffolk County Judge James McDaniel said the cameras may not focus on the faces of witnesses unless they are called as experts. Defendant Jeffrey Bly is accused of killing Paul McLaughlin at a train station in 1995 as the attorney was about to prosecute Bly.

All news is local. Contact Dan Trigoboff at (301) 260-0923, e-mail dtrig@erols.com or fax (202) 463-3742.

A little less local

Paramount stations move to centralize operations

By Joe Schlosser

Two years ago, Paramount Stations Group executives attempted something at their Miami station that had never been done before in local TV.

Paramount executives moved the master control of their West Palm Beach, Fla., station WTVX-TV down the road 120 miles to WBFS-TV Miami and started running both stations out of the single facility. WTVX-TV West Palm Beach kept its advertising sales force, its community relations staff and a skeleton engineering crew on board. But the day-to-day programming operations and broadcast feed were moved to Miami.

Miami and West Palm Beach, as it turns out, were the test markets for a much larger plan from executives at Los Angeles-based Paramount Stations Group. Paramount executives have taken the Miami-West Palm Beach strategy into four other markets since 1997 and say they are looking to program all of their owned-and-operated stations out of one facility by about 2005.

PSG currently owns 17 stations, runs two others and covers 25.6% of the country via the 19 stations. Each station carries UPN in prime time and all have come under Paramount ownership within the last eight years. The move to consolidate station resources is nearly parallel to what Barry Diller's USA Broadcasting is also currently attempting and somewhat similar to Lowell "Bud" Paxson's PAX-TV local station philosophy.

Over the last year and a half, Paramount Stations Group has phased out local news at all but two of its owned and operated stations (WKBD-TV Detroit and KMAX-TV Sacramento, Calif.) in an effort to cut costs. Paramount Stations Group president Tony Cassara says the overall consolidation efforts within the division are much more than a play to Wall Street analysts.

"What we are trying to do here is look beyond this quarter's earnings reports and beyond the end of our noses at what is going on," Cassara says. "We want to look five years down the road and say what's the world going to look like. Who are our competitors going to be and what are their advantages and how



Cassara: 'We want to look five years down the road and say what's the world going to be like.'

will that affect us? One of the things that we have realized is that technology gives us the ability to work with less people, but with more highly qualified people." Last year, Paramount's Boston station WSBK-TV assumed the programming control of its Providence, R.I., outlet WLWC-TV and earlier this year the company's flagship station WPSG-TV Philadelphia began feeding newly acquired WNPA-TV Pittsburgh's programming. Cassara says the station group will add another couple of markets to the consolidation plan within

the year, but wouldn't comment specifically on which markets.

Most of the Paramount stations currently carry a mix of off-network and first-run syndicated products, movies, UPN in prime time and local sports—a mix, Cassara says, that will likely remain the diet for Paramount stations into the future. Any notion of buying the same product for all 19 markets is not a likely option, he adds.

"We want to remain a local product even if the signal is coming from outside the individual market," he explains. "In some markets a show like *Sister, Sister* is a better show in the ratings than say *Everybody Loves Raymond*, even though *Everybody Loves Raymond* is a much bigger hit nationally. We have to program to our local market and we can't become a national program service."

USA Broadcasting is attempting to establish a very localized format with its stations, buying the rights to local sports franchises and working with local publications and outlets for TV programming. ■

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APRIL 26-MAY 2

Broadcast network prime time ratings
according to Nielsen Media Research



PEOPLE'S CHOICE

The buoyant first half of NBC's 'Noah's Ark' took the top slot, giving the network an assist to win Week 32 as the May sweeps began.

Week 32	abc	CBS	NBC	FOX	UPN	WB
	6.9/11	8.5/14	7.5/12	8.2/13	1.7/3	3.4/5
MONDAY	8:00 27. 20/20 8.3/14	35. Cosby 7.6/13	61. Caroline in City 6.3/10	73. Melrose Place 5.5/9	107. Dilbert 2.0/3	87. 7th Heaven 4.1/7
		31. King of Queens 8.0/13			113. Home Movies* 1.4/2	
	9:00 62. ABC Monday Night Movie—Mr. Murder, Part 1 6.2/10	9. Ev Lvs Raymd 11.1/17	66. Mad About You 5.9/9	10. Ally McBeal 11.0/17	112. Star Trek: Voyager 1.7/3	98. Rescue 77 2.8/4
	9:30	16. Becker 9.4/14	58. Mad About You 6.4/10			
	10:00 35. L.A. Doctors 7.6/13		13. Dateline NBC 9.9/16			
TUESDAY	8:00 33. Home Imprvmt 7.8/14	8.0/13	7.1/12	5.7/9	1.8/3	2.9/5
	8:30 55. The Hughleys 6.6/11	13. JAG 9.9/17	69. 3rd Rock fr/Sun 5.8/10	73. King of the Hill 5.5/10	109. Moesha 1.9/3	98. Buffy the Vampire Slayer 2.8/5
	9:00 35. Spin City 7.6/12		65. NewsRadio 6.0/10	58. Futurama 6.4/10	106. Moesha 2.2/4	
	9:30 35. Sports Night 7.6/12	49. CBS Tuesday Movie—The Patty Duke Show 7.0/11	40. Just Shoot Me 7.4/12	71. The PJs 5.6/9	109. Malcolm & Eddie 1.9/3	95. Felicity 3.1/5
	10:00 11. NYPD Blue 10.8/18		80. Evrythng's Relativ 5.3/8	73. Futurama 5.5/9	115. Clueless 1.3/2	
WEDNESDAY	8:00 43. Dharma & Greg 7.3/13	7.0/12	8.8/15	6.4/10	2.6/4	3.8/6
	8:30 57. It's Like, YKnow 6.5/11	71. Ev Lvs Raymd 5.6/10	17. Dateline NBC 9.2/16	66. Beverly Hills, 90210 5.9/10	109. 7 Days 1.9/3	87. Dawson's Creek 4.1/7
	9:00 32. Drew Carey 7.9/13	76. Payne 5.4/9				
	9:30 34. Norm Show 7.7/12	24. 60 Minutes II 8.5/13	30. World's Most Amazing Videos 8.1/13	53. Party of Five 6.8/11	94. Star Trek: Voyager 3.4/5	92. Charmed 3.6/6
	10:00 12. 20/20 10.4/17	47. Chicago Hope 7.2/12	17. Law & Order 9.2/15			
THURSDAY	8:00 4.7/8	7.1/11	15.1/24	8.0/13	4.0/6	2.8/5
	8:30 82. America's Funniest Home Videos 4.7/8	47. Promised Land 7.2/12	4. Friends 13.9/24	35. Robbie Knivel 7.6/13		103. Wayans Bros 2.4/4
			8. Will & Grace 12.1/20		116. WWF Smackdown 4.0/6	98. Jamie Foxx 2.8/5
	9:00 82. Mr. Murder, Part 2 4.7/8	49. Diagnosis Murder 7.0/11	3. Frasier 15.1/23	25. World's Scariest Police Chases 8.4/13		97. Steve Harvey 2.9/5
			7. Veronica's Clist 12.3/19			96. For Your Love 3.0/5
FRIDAY	8:00 7.6/14	6.8/13	8.4/16	3.6/7	1.3/2	
	8:30 66. Home Imprvmt 5.9/12	54. Kids/Darndest 6.7/13	22. Providence 8.9/17	93. Guinness World Records 3.5/7	113. Am Greatest Pets 1.4/3	
	9:00 64. Boy Meets Wrld 6.1/12	58. Candid Camera 6.4/12			115. Am Greatest Pets 1.3/3	
	9:30 49. Sabrina/Witch 7.0/13	55. Funny Flubs & Screw Ups 6.6/12	21. Dateline NBC 9.0/16	90. Millennium 3.7/7	117. Love Boat: The Next Wave 1.2/2	
	10:00 23. 100 Years of Great Women 8.8/16	43. Nash Bridges 7.3/13	40. Homicide: Life on the Street 7.4/14			
SATURDAY	8:00 5.6/11	6.9/14	4.8/10	5.4/11	KEY: RANKING/SHOW TITLE/PROGRAM RATING/SHARE • TOP TEN SHOWS OF THE WEEK ARE NUMBERED IN RED • TELEVISION UNIVERSE ESTIMATED AT 99.4 MILLION HOUSEHOLDS; ONE RATINGS POINT IS EQUAL TO 994,000 TV HOMES • YELLOW TINT IS WINNER OF TIME SLOT • (NR)=NOT RANKED; RATING/SHARE ESTIMATED FOR PERIOD SHOWN • *PREMIERE • SOURCES: NIELSEN MEDIA RESEARCH, CBS RESEARCH • GRAPHIC BY KENNETH RAY	
	8:30 76. ABC Saturday Night Movie—Happy Gilmore 5.4/11	76. Early Edition 5.4/11	81. The Pretender 5.2/11	85. Cops 4.5/10		
				76. Cops 5.4/11		
	9:00 62. Bloopers 6.2/12	52. Martial Law 6.9/13	82. NBC Movie of the Week—Bulletproof 4.7/9	69. AMW: America Fights Back 5.8/11		
		25. Walker, Texas Ranger 8.4/16				
SUNDAY	7:00 7.8/13	11.2/18	13.5/22	6.4/11		2.3/4
	7:30 40. Wonderful World of Disney—Phenomenon 7.4/12	6. 60 Minutes 12.5/24	86. World's Most Dangerous Magic 4.2/8	90. World's Funniest! 3.7/7		104. 7th Heaven Beginnings 2.3/4
	8:00	5. Touched by an Angel 12.7/21	28. Dateline NBC 8.2/13	43. The Simpsons 7.3/12		101. Sister, Sister 2.6/4
	8:30			43. Family Guy 7.3/12		101. Smart Guy 2.6/4
	9:00 15. CBS Sunday Movie—The First Wives Club 9.8/15		1. NBC Sunday Night Movie—Noah's Ark, Part 1 20.9/32	28. The X-Files 8.2/12		107. Zoe Dunc Jack Jn 2.0/3
	10:00 17. The Practice 9.2/14					104. Unhap Ever After 2.3/3
WEEK AVG	7.1/12	8.1/14	9.5/16	6.3/11	2.3/4	3.0/5
STD AVG	8.2/14	9.0/15	8.9/15	7.0/12	2.0/3	3.2/5

ESPN, baseball square off

Feud centers on sports network's right to shift late-season games to ESPN2

By Deborah D. McAdams

ESPN last week asked a federal court to enforce its rights agreement with Major League Baseball in an escalating feud over late-season games.

At issue is ESPN's decision last year to shift three Sunday night baseball games to ESPN2 to make room for National Football League telecasts. ESPN claims it has contractual rights to switch the games to ESPN2 from ESPN, which has a higher viewership. Baseball officials, already annoyed by the pre-emptions, were further rankled by ESPN's plan to do the same thing again this fall.

MLB notified ESPN April 21 that it considers the pre-emptions a breach of contract, presumably releasing baseball from its \$455 million deal with ESPN after this season. The deal is supposed to run through 2002.

ESPN filed suit May 4 in U.S. District Court in New York. It seeks to hold Major League Baseball to the contract that expires in 2002. ESPN is also seeking restitution for any profit the league might generate by taking its games to another network for the remaining time the ESPN contract would have been in effect.

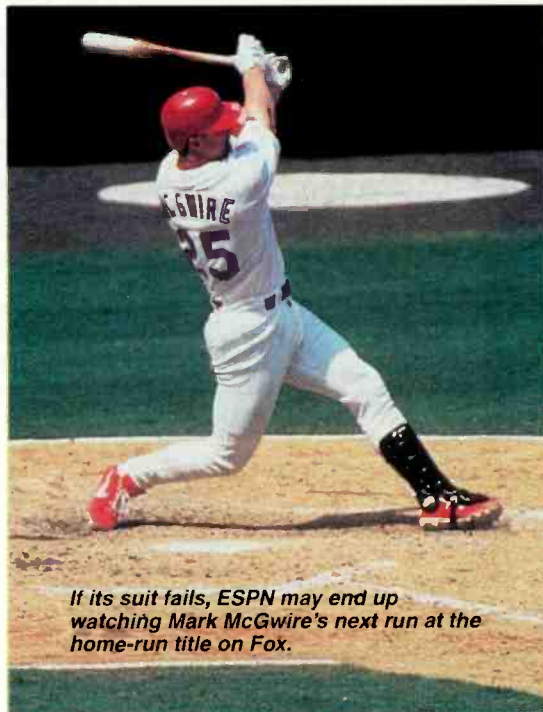
No hearing has been scheduled.

Meanwhile, some industry executives suggest that Fox is waiting in the wings to offer MLB a better deal.

But at least one network executive wondered if a better deal could be found. With rights to games spread across cable networks and local broadcast affiliates, fans have access to 300-400 games a year, he noted.

"There's a glut of baseball on the market," said the executive, requesting anonymity. He added that ESPN is paying "fair market value" for the sport.

Fox cable networks FX and Fox Sports already have 26 Saturday night and 26 Thursday night games, while Fox broadcast network has a Saturday afternoon package. Those contracts run through the end of next season. Fox



If its suit fails, ESPN may end up watching Mark McGwire's next run at the home-run title on Fox.

executives would neither confirm nor deny that they are negotiating for MLB games.

A spokesman for Turner, another possible contender, said his network has "had no discussions with Major League Baseball as of yet."

In the last year, both ESPN and MLB have tried to work out the pre-emption problem without success. ESPN claims its contract allows 10 bumps a year, with league approval, for

"events of significant viewer interest." The league has granted a total of 16 preemptions for past events, including a College Baseball World Series game, an auto race, golf tournaments and National Hockey League playoff games, according to ESPN's lawsuit.

ESPN's reasoning: Since NFL games generate nearly four times the ratings of the baseball games, the football games were of "significant viewer interest."

A baseball spokesman counters that no pre-emptions were ever granted for Sunday night events in baseball's history with ESPN.

Last year when the network said it intended to run the three games on ESPN2, which reaches 64 million homes, compared to ESPN's 76 million, baseball balked and unilaterally pulled the network's rights to air them.

"We are extremely disappointed with baseball's action and completely disagree with their assertions," says ESPN President George Bodenheimer. "ESPN has the right under our agreement to televise these three Sunday night baseball games on ESPN2. By refusing to permit this, MLB has violated its obligations to ESPN."

The climax of the conflict comes less than a week after ESPN announced it would raise subscriber fees by 20%. ■

USA sinks teeth into 'Nash Bridges'

USA Networks finally closed a deal worth upward of \$50 million on the Rysher Entertainment series *Nash Bridges*. Rysher and USA have been in negotiations for more than a month, and published reports put the per episode price at \$500,000. Beginning in September 2000, USA will have the rights to 100 episodes produced over four years. Rysher will syndicate the series on weekends during the first two years of the deal, which includes the rights to both USA cable and select USA broadcast stations. When USA takes exclusive rights to the series, all USA stations will be able to run episodes. *Nash Bridges* was recently picked up for a fifth season on CBS, where it draws about 12.5 million viewers on Friday nights. *Walker, Texas Ranger*, another off-CBS series, is one of USA's consistently best-rated programs after wrestling.

—Deborah D. McAdams

Rocco connects again with Triax

Mediacom doubles subscribers at below-market prices

By Price Colman

If Mediacom CEO Rocco Commisso is feeling on top of the world right now, he has good reason.

Commisso last week cemented the \$740 million acquisition of Triax Midwest Associates, doubling Mediacom's subscriber base to about 700,000. He's paying about \$2,200 per subscriber in a market where prices of \$3,000 to \$4,500 per subscriber are common.

That leaves him plenty of cash to rebuild the Triax systems and launch new services. Meanwhile, mega-mergers elsewhere in cable are likely to spawn some attractive deal opportunities down the road.

There's also the hint of an initial public stock offering, which would provide Mediacom with cash for other, perhaps even bigger acquisitions on the horizon.

And even though Commisso calls the acquisition of 342,000-subscriber



Commisso: 'Within the context of this marketplace, this is the last remaining sizable acquisition at this price.'

Triax "the biggest deal of my life," it also requires a footnote—"Subject to sudden change."

He notes: "Within the context of this marketplace, this is the last remaining sizable acquisition at this price."

Other properties that would fit with Mediacom's strategy of buying into non-metropolitan markets are either gone or too expensive. At least for now. That's likely to change as larger operators such as AT&T, Time Warner, Comcast, Cablevision Systems and Adelphia begin to digest recent acquisitions and decide some systems don't fit with their clustering strategies.

Good as the deal is for Mediacom, it's also a positive for Denver-based Triax, which is cashing out of cable. Triax paid an average of \$1,200 per subscriber for the properties in Arizona, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota and Wisconsin that are being sold to Mediacom, sources say.

"This is a very important transaction for Rocco," says a source in the investment community. "It gets him to a size where he can consolidate around some of these markets. It's a very, very sound strategy."

Middletown, N.Y.-based Mediacom, not quite four years old, has grown quickly.

Like some in its peer group of mid-sized operators, Mediacom has purposely focused on secondary markets,



CABLE'S TOP 25

PEOPLE'S CHOICE

The Kids Choice Awards, Nickelodeon's annual salute to kid-friendly celebrities and their adoring fans, ranked No. 3—with an 8.4 share—in last week's ratings.

Following are the top 25 basic cable programs for the week of April 19-25, ranked by rating. Cable rating is coverage area rating within each basic cable network's universe; U.S. rating is of 98 million TV households. Sources: Nielsen Media Research, Turner Entertainment.

Rank	Program	Network	Day	Time	Duration	Rating Cable U.S.	HHs (000)	Cable Share
1	WWF Wrestling	USA	Mon	10:00P	65	6.1 4.7	4627	9.6
2	WWF Wrestling	USA	Mon	9:00P	60	5.8 4.4	4403	8.2
3	Kids Choice 99	NICK	Sat	8:00P	90	4.4 3.1	3278	8.4
4	WCW Monday Nitro Live!	TNT	Mon	8:00P	60	4.3 3.3	3291	6.7
5	WWF Wrestling	USA	Sun	7:00P	60	4.0 3.0	2998	7.1
6	WCW Monday Nitro Live!	TNT	Mon	9:00P	60	3.9 3.0	2941	5.5
7	WCW Monday Nitro Live!	TNT	Mon	10:00P	66	3.4 2.6	2615	5.4
8	Rugrats	NICK	Sat	9:30A	30	3.3 2.5	2465	11.3
8	South Park	CMDY	Wed	10:00P	30	3.3 2.0	1942	5.1
10	Rugrats	NICK	Sat	9:00A	30	3.2 2.4	2388	10.9
11	WCW Thunder	TBS	Thu	9:11P	63	3.0 2.3	2274	4.5
11	Rugrats	NICK	Thu	7:30P	30	3.0 2.3	2253	5.6
11	Rugrats	NICK	Wed	7:30P	30	3.0 2.3	2238	5.4
14	Hey Arnold	NICK	Wed	8:00P	30	2.9 2.2	2209	4.9
14	Walker, Texas Ranger	USA	Wed	8:00P	59	2.9 2.2	2205	4.7
14	Walker, Texas Ranger	USA	Mon	8:00P	60	2.9 2.2	2188	4.5
14	Rugrats	NICK	Sun	10:00A	30	2.9 2.2	2179	8.9
14	Wild Thornberrys	NICK	Sat	10:00A	30	2.9 2.2	2143	9.8
19	Spongebob	NICK	Sat	9:30P	30	2.8 2.1	2136	5.1
19	Rugrats	NICK	Mon	7:30P	30	2.8 2.1	2101	5.0
19	Walker, Texas Ranger	USA	Tue	8:00P	60	2.8 2.1	2088	4.4
19	Hey Arnold	NICK	Mon	8:00P	30	2.8 2.1	2088	4.5
19	Rugrats	NICK	Tue	7:30P	30	2.8 2.1	2087	5.0
19	Road Rules VII	MTV	Mon	10:00P	30	2.8 2.0	2005	4.2
25	Wild Thornberrys	NICK	Tue	8:00P	30	2.7 2.1	2038	4.5
25	Wild Thornberrys	NICK	Sat	10:30A	30	2.7 2.1	2033	9.6
25	Hey Arnold	NICK	Sat	11:00A	30	2.7 2.0	2011	9.7
25	Cousin Skeeter	NICK	Tue	8:30P	30	2.7 2.0	1988	4.1

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picking up properties that larger operators such as TCI, Cablevision Systems, Cox and Jones Intercable were pruning.

Commisso has a history of buying systems at attractive prices. Two years ago, he acquired several Cablevision Systems properties at about \$1,200 per subscriber when comparable systems were selling at \$2,000 per sub. By buying smaller properties, typically at attractive prices, then using fiber optic lines to connect them, Mediacom gains the ability to achieve solid economies

of scale in smaller markets.

The fiber "interconnects" permit reduction of headends and consolidation of management. Another advantage of smaller markets is that competition often is nearly nonexistent. That reduces pricing, marketing and operational pressures on companies such as Mediacom, Bresnan, Classic Cable, Insight and Falcon that are focusing on such markets.

Commisso's priorities for Mediacom are: 1) "Buy right, because if you don't

buy right you don't have any money left" 2) rebuild to add analog channels 3) launch digital cable 4) provide high-speed data 5) offer Internet protocol telephony as the technology and economics become practical.

"Never in a million years did I project those kind of [subscriber] numbers," he says. "We need to do a lot of work to make it worth more...But I think this is an absolutely ideal transaction for us in creating value for consumers and investors." ■

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Sprint buys more wireless spectrum

By Price Colman

With its latest acquisition of wireless spectrum in half a dozen markets, Sprint Corp. once again has beaten its rival, MCI WorldCom. Sprint is paying about \$210 million for wireless spectrum in the six markets—San Francisco/San Jose; San Diego; Seattle; Spokane, Wash.; Tampa, Fla.; and Greenville, S.C.

Most of the spectrum was owned by Canadian cable operator Le Groupe Videotron. (A U.S. partner, Transworld Telecommunications, holds 37.5% of Groupe Videotron subsidiary Wireless Holdings.)

Aggressive as Sprint has been in the wireless feeding frenzy, its spectrum holdings are in markets considered not as attractive as those that MCI WorldCom is getting with its nearly \$1 billion CAI Wireless/CS Wireless acquisition.

The flip side is that both long-distance companies have been outdistanced by AT&T, says one analyst.

"In a sense, they're already both losers," says Jim Trautman, vice president at the Denver-based research and consulting firm Bortz & Co.

"They're both trying to play catch-up to AT&T. These companies have come to the realization AT&T's moves could have a significant impact on them, and they need to do something to get back in the game."

Sprint and MCI WorldCom are buying the wireless spectrum as a way of gaining access to consumers and businesses without having to pay the Baby Bells for access to their networks. ■

Tribune's Web-controlled video

Networked system to be installed at stations, newspapers and bureaus

By Glen Dickson

Tribune has created a Web-based control system that will allow producers at one Tribune location to control video equipment at another.

With the "Tribune Control System," producers can remotely control cameras, switchers, lighting, tape decks and video servers at TV stations, newspapers and news bureaus.

The new control system is written in the Java programming language and works with standard Web browsers such as Netscape or Internet Explorer. It relies on Tribune's existing WAN (Wide Area Network) between company locations. An Oracle database tracks all system users, the configuration of devices within the system and the status of those devices.

"The big difference is completely writing it in Java," says Jeff Gear, development manager of Tribune Company's Advanced Technology Group and the architect of the system. "The idea is that the system is not intended as a replacement for existing control systems in stations—a lot of companies do that well. This is designed for gaining access to resources between stations, so if you're sitting anywhere in Tribune with a Web browser and a network connection you can get in and control equipment.

"For example, we have a news bureau in D.C., the Tribune Media Center, from which we get a lot of video on a daily basis. If KTLA [Los Angeles] wants to get video from the routing switcher in D.C., instead of calling somebody up to dub a tape and send it FedEx, by using remote control through the system they can route the video out to Vyvx and get it to L.A. That can all be done by one person in L.A."

The new system is already in use at WGN-TV Chicago, local cable network ChicagoLand Television, and the *Chicago Tribune* newspaper. Tribune plans to install it at the rest of its television stations and newspapers by the end of 1999. Sites that are currently being fitted with the system, which costs less than \$5,000 (not counting video equipment, of course), include WXMI-TV Grand Rapids, Mich.; Central



Tribune wants to add a video capture feature to the control system.

Florida News in Orlando, Fla., and the *Sun-Sentinel* in Fort Lauderdale, Fla.

In Chicago, the system has allowed Tribune to set up a video production center at the *Chicago Tribune* that can be controlled by WGN-TV and ChicagoLand staffers.

"If somebody at the Tribune is work-

ing on a breaking story, WGN-TV can cut live to the the Chicago Tribune newsroom and talk to the reporter there," says. "As long as the reporter knows how to sit down, WGN-TV can do everything else—turn on the lights, focus the cameras, route to the TV station, and record on the Profile [video server]. Nobody on site has to do anything except clip a mike on the reporter."

Gear emphasizes that the system doesn't only benefit Tribune stations, but will also aid its Web production and newspaper operations. Gear is currently developing the capability to capture video from servers and encode them for Internet streaming as either RealVideo or AVI files. He says the system will also allow newspapers to grab video clips from stations and run them as photos on their pages. ■

Cable HDTV coming

Time Warner to offer high-def HBO in Tampa, Fla.

By Glen Dickson

Following successful tests, Time Warner Cable in Tampa, Fla. will soon begin delivering HDTV full-time to upgraded areas.

For the tests, Time Warner used 256 QAM modulation to transmit the HDTV HBO programming to a Scientific-Atlanta Explorer 2000HD set-top. The test marks the first time HBO's HDTV feed has been delivered over a cable system using 256 QAM modulation, which can fit two HDTV channels in one 6 mhz cable channel.

Using 256-QAM would be a significant improvement over the way Time Warner currently carries HDTV in New York. It delivers HBO HDTV and WCBS-DT HDTV signal by sending unencrypted 8-VSB signals over its cable pipes. The MSO also uses 8-VSB to carry KCBS-DT in Los Angeles. Using 8-VSB kills two cable channels per hi-def signal, since early HDTV sets don't tune to cable's frequency plan, and it also doesn't provide conditional access

for HBO (customers simply plug the cable into the antenna jack on the HDTV set).

"The short-term measure is using 8-VSB, but that's certainly not the long-term plan," says Jim Chiddix, chief technical officer for Time Warner Cable. Chiddix says Time Warner's next step will be to deploy the HDTV-capable Scientific-Atlanta set-tops to customers who ask for them. Those set-tops function like a normal Explorer digital set-top but have an additional circuitboard that decodes an HDTV signal and outputs a baseband analog signal that can be fed into an HDTV set for display.

Chiddix doesn't say when HBO's HDTV service will launch in Tampa, but he says it "will happen soon." That's because Time Warner is already rolling out standard-definition digital set-tops in Tampa, one of its most advanced plants. Chiddix says that Time Warner's upgrade in New York is 50% done and that it will be the next market to launch the HDTV set-tops. ■

Fox examines SeaChange

Network sees servers as facilitating 'pass thru' of DTV programming in any format

By Glen Dickson

Fox Broadcasting is evaluating video servers from SeaChange International in the hope of using them to record and play out DTV programming.

According to Fox and SeaChange, SeaChange's Broadcast MediaCluster server can output a true ATSC-compliant MPEG-2 stream. That capability would eliminate a station's need to decompress DTV signals to baseband and then recompress them before feeding them into a digital transmitter. It would also require less bandwidth to move DTV signals around a plant and smaller servers to store them.

"What SeaChange has is a working device that stores MPEG-2 fields ready for broadcast," says Andrew G. Setos, executive vice president of News Corp.'s News Technology Group. "This could be a very efficient process that makes the servers and the bandwidth required to pass the signal before the transmitter as compact as can be."

With the server, Setos says, all 18 DTV formats can be stored and transmitted using the same facility, as opposed to having baseband routing and a separate 480p or 720p switcher.

He adds that he expects other server manufacturers to have similar capability in the near future.

What Fox is exploring is similar to the "pass-thru" model for DTV that the Big Four networks were originally interested in, but which has only been implemented by PBS. With DTV pass-thru, networks were supposed to send pre-encoded feeds that O&O's and affiliates would simply feed into their transmitter. The problem with pass-thru is that it doesn't allow for local manipulation of the signal and makes switching to local commercials without going to black very difficult.

Setos acknowledges that manipulating transmission-quality MPEG-2 video is a challenge Fox will need to address. "There are technologies being investigated that will allow for limited manipulation at distribution-quality data rates," says Setos. "This is the next level of implementation of digital TV."

Setos adds that SeaChange servers may also have an application for Fox's cable properties,

which are already distributed using MPEG-2 satellite transmission. "If you were a programmer for cable, such as [Fox] Sports Net, and you're doing shows and sending them out, your plant would not be SDI [serial digital at 270 Mb/s]. It would be MPEG. You're not reducing quality, you're just bringing MPEG compression back into the server environment. As long as you're just cutting and splicing, the operational costs are lower [than SDI]."

SeaChange's Broadcast MediaCluster with DTV capabilities will become commercially available in third-quarter 1999. It will support both standard definition and high definition ATSC formats, multiplexing and de-multiplexing of multi-program transport streams, and storage and splicing of individual program streams up to a maximum encoding rate of 50 Mb/s per stream. ■



Fox is testing the Broadcast MediaCluster's ability to output ATSC compliant MPEG-2 streams.

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Universal makes Web move

By Richard Tedesco

Universal Music Group became the first major record label to chart its digital music marketing plans last week, indicating it will start selling tunes online this year.

The outline of Universal's game plan came with its announced alliance with InterTrust Technologies Corp., which will help create e-commerce applications to enable digital music downloads. Universal plans to start selling digital music this year.

A Seagram's unit, Universal also is reportedly seeking online music alliances with AT&T and Matsushita. AT&T has its own a2b digital music software and Matsushita could produce portable digital players.

All that will likely occur in advance of digital music download standards to be set by the secure digital music initiative (SDMI), an effort initiated last year by Universal and four other major record labels. But all parties involved are proceeding with their respective plans to start selling music online on ostensibly parallel tracks.

"They have to consider which is worse: getting ahead of the SDMI or getting too far behind MP3," says Jim Penhune, media analyst with The Yankee Group. "They need to get off the dime and do something right away."

MP3 is the popular music format that currently enables PC users to make legal or illegal music downloads online in the absence of security software features that curb audio piracy.

Universal had already made one preemptive move in the online music space, forging an alliance with arch-rival BMG Entertainment to co-develop GetMusic.com as a music marketing/community that will eventually enable digital downloads.

"Their big fear is not their conventional competitors," says Penhune. "Their big fear is piracy."

Penhune noted that Warner Music and Sony Music may be slowest to conceive digital music plans, facing the question of how that fits with online marketing efforts of their respective parent companies. Sony is working with IBM on digital music development, including a Walkman-like portable player.



Universal Music will likely use GetMusic.com for digital music downloads with BMG.

All five major labels, including EMI Recorded Music, are participating in a music downloading trial with IBM over the high-speed Road Runner Internet access service in San Diego this summer.

So is RealNetworks, which pushed the process along last week with its release of RealJukebox, its vehicle to enable access to digital music for down-

loads into the MP3 or RealAudio formats. RealJukebox is supporting AT&T's a2b software and the Liquid Audio format, two of the other popular online digital music formats.

While it too is cooperating with the SDMI effort, RealNetworks' release of RealJukebox only aggravates the major labels' fears of losing music sales to Web pirates since it too is vulnerable to illicit downloads in its current format. "Those guys are playing both sides of it," Penhune says.

Thomson Multimedia unveiled plans last week to produce a portable digital player, the RCA Lyra, to enable playback of RealJukebox music, for about \$200.

More than 30 content sites are working with RealJukebox along with more than 60 content artists. One of those, rap artist Chuck D of Public Enemy, lauded the open online music environment and offered his own take on the digital scrambling among the major labels: "It's a last-minute offense. They're down with seconds to go, and you better Doug Flutie your ass off." ■

CNNfn forges link with WomenConnect

By Richard Tedesco

CNNfn struck a strategic pact with WomenConnect.com last week, with plans to exchange content online and create programming on-air.

CNNfn takes a minority stake in the women's business information site, the latest such move it's made as it builds its online profile toward an anticipated IPO.

Meanwhile, CNNfn will seed three areas of WomenConnect.com with financial news and fashion a special area of CNNfn.com with content from the women's site. Links to each site will be featured on the other.

CNNfn plans to create an on-air programming segment based on its WomenConnect.com relationship

sometime this year, according to Lou Dobbs, CNNfn president.

Dobbs calls professional women "a natural and important" component of its audience, and says, "Our partnership will give us a better understanding of the [online] space."

WomenConnect.com targets businesswomen aged 34 to 50, according to Susan Williams Defife, WomenConnect.com president, who says the deal "really expands the ability for us to reach a larger audience and an audience similar to our own."

CNNfn has equity and content deals in place with NewsReal and PCQuote, and also has partnerships in place with Intuit and Inktomi for software. The CNNfn Broker Center on CNNfn.com also offers access to Discover Brokerage and E*Trade. ■

iFilm streams screenings

By Richard Tedesco

This summer, some New York film fans can catch indie films screened in Tribeca, and if they leave the screenings early, they can catch the endings streamed online.

That's because iFilm is streaming films online as they premiere on the silver screen, and seeking cable and theatrical distribution deals afterwards. Each film will be archived for two weeks on iFilm's site (www.ifilm.com) after its debut.

Last week iFilm presented *Dead Broke*, a feature film starring Paul Sorvino, on the Web and simultaneously on a big screen in the Tribeca Film Center.

The 97-minute black comedy is the first of four monthly movie premieres iFilm plans to screen on the Net and at Robert DeNiro's Tribeca Film Center. Writer/director Edward Vilga hopes to next negotiate a deal for *Dead Broke* with HBO or Showtime, according to Rodger Raderman, iFilm founder and CEO. Raderman will retain TV/theatrical distribution rights for some future releases. "We're really hoping to help

get them picked up by a traditional distributor," says Raderman.

Raderman's hoping for word-of-mouth mileage among audiences that will initially preview films online and pursue them in traditional venues later. "A huge audience will watch a portion of a 97-minute film," he says.

Next up in iFilm's electronic cinema premiere series is *Chalk*, a film about pool hustlers by Robert Nillson, due in June, to be followed by Nick Davis' 1999, a comedy set on New Year's Eve 1999, and a fourth film to be announced.

The series is being produced in cooperation with Tribeca Film Center, Globix Corp., a technology supplier to iFilm, and Microsoft, an iFilm sponsor which lends its Windows Media streaming software.

Raderman readily acknowledges that many of the 125 short films on his site aren't ready for prime time; the main objective is to give young directors exposure. "It's the most democratic medium in history," says Raderman. "We accept films from anyone as long as they're not pornographic." ■

SITE OF THE WEEK

www.kfog.com



KFOG(FM)
San Francisco,
Adult alternative rock,
104.5 MHz

Site features: KFOG world service, including 24-hour streaming of alternative rock programming and 20 to 30 live webcasts carried annually; links to databases of artists and artists on tour from Pollstar, music news from Tunes.com, theater and music club directory and Best of the Bay site; information on special station events, including Kaboom fest; ticket swap area for users to exchange local concert tickets; KFOG program guide

Site launched: January 1996

Site director: Jude Heller, KFOG promotions director

Number of employees: 6

Design: Aspen Media, San Francisco

Streaming technology: RealAudio

Traffic generated: 250,000 page views monthly

Advertising: banner ads

Revenue: N/A

Highlights: Growing audience, including listeners abroad, with nearly 90,000 tuning in for live webcasts each month

—Richard Tedesco

Discovery's discovery

By Richard Tedesco

Discovery Channel's mission to recover the Liberty Bell 7 Mercury spacecraft met with limited success last week. The expedition found the capsule but couldn't immediately recover it.

But PC users got the first glimpse anyone's gotten of the star-crossed Mercury capsule in the 38 years since it sank into the Atlantic Ocean on Discovery's Web site (www.discovery.com). The site also carries the story of how the capsule sank, nearly taking astronaut Gus Grissom with it, when the hatch prematurely blew open after its brief sub-orbital flight from Cape Canaveral.

After discovering the capsule three miles beneath the ocean surface off the Florida coast early last week, the tether between the recovery ship and its remote-controlled Magellan submersible vehicle was severed.

Online reports on the expedition will resume when expedition leader Curt

Newton and his crew return to the recovery site this week with another submersible to retrieve the Magellan and Liberty Bell 7.

Retrieval of the capsule could resolve the controversy over what happened when Grissom splashed down on July 21, 1961. It was supposed at the time that he panicked and blew the capsule hatch himself. Grissom died five years later in a launch pad fire aboard the Apollo 1 capsule. ■



Discovery is tracking its expedition to recover Liberty Bell 7 online.

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We offer an attractive compensation package, incl paid bnfts (medical, dental, optical & life) & a company matched 401(k) plan. Please fax resume with salary history to our corporate headquarters at 203-656-3459 or mail to: QUANTEL, 28 Thorndal Circle, Darien, CT 06820. Attn: Michelle Gallagher.



EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER

Paramount Stations Group is looking for an Account Executive for WLWC/UPN28 in Providence, RI. WLWC is an UPN/WB combo that has doubled its audience share from a year ago. Be part of Providence's growth station Now. Knowledge of Scarborough, TV Scan, and the local advertising community is a plus. Contact: Corey Lewis, GSM, WLWC/UPN28, 10 Dorrance St., Suite #805, Providence, RI 02903. EOE.

National Sales Manager: WKCF-TV, Orlando, a top rated WB affiliate, is looking for an individual who knows the difference between selling and servicing, leading and managing. If you know the difference, and you want to work with a dynamic sales team at a growing station, reply now! Ideal candidates must have a college degree, 3-5 years national rep. firm experience, and a thorough knowledge of marketing, broadcasting and promotions. Send resume to: HR/NSM, 31 Skyline Drive, Lake Mary, FL 32746. Fax: 407-647-4163. No Phone Calls Please EOE.

National Sales Manager/WCWB Resp. for sale of WCWB-TV to Nat'l clients thru rep firm (HRP). Adm. and coord Nat'l accts within WCWB. College degree pref, min 2 yrs spot sls at TV station or rep side of bsns. NYC exp key. Inventory & pricing control knowledge. For immediate consideration pls apply on-line www.sbg.net. No Calls. Resume to: Richard Engberg, Dir of Sls, WPGH Fox-53, 750 Ivory Ave., Pgh, PA 15214. EOE/MF.

Fax your classified ad to *Broadcasting & Cable.*
(212)206-8327

HELP WANTED SALES

Media General Broadcast Group WJTV-TV. General Sales Manager to oversee sales and departmental functions and goals, including sales revenue for the Company. Manage National and Local Sales staff. Prepare and comply with departmental budgets. Oversee contract compliance for contracted sales, sets rates and responds to issues of coordination with contractors. Plan and execute sales strategies, pricing, packaging. Maintain visibility in the community. Formal education equivalent of BS degree in Sales, Marketing or related field. Related experience will be evaluated by management. Knowledge of broadcast sales policies and ethics. Knowledge of marketing concepts as they relate to broadcast sales. Ability to travel. Effective oral and written communication skills. Send resume to Human Resources Dept., 1820 TV Road, Jackson, MS 39204-4148. EOE M/F. Drug Screening.

Local/Reg'l Sales Manager at KECI, KCFW, KTVM-TV Missoula, MT, a strong NBC affiliate group in beautiful western Montana. Seeking dynamic, enthusiastic person with excellent communication skills, strong interpersonal skills, proven skills in new business development. Responsible for supervision, training, motivation of 11 account executives at multiple locations. Media sales experience a must, working knowledge of TVWorks and Bias preferred. Travel required. Contact Keith Sommer, KECI-TV, Box 5268, Missoula, MT 59806. EOE.

Local Sales Manager Position WB39 WBZL Miami-Ft.Lauderdale. Let's cut through it! Great station, growing network, news, best syndicated product and, lest we forget, booming market! Only very sharp candidate who possesses great people skills and can be a team builder need apply. Excellent salary with exceptional benefits for the right person! Local Sales Manager experience required. Fax resume to Cindy Lapp 954-921-6186. Tribune Broadcasting Company. We are an equal opportunity employer.

General Sales Manager: Media General's NBC station in beautiful Charleston, SC seeks a General Manager to supervise local, regional and national sales. The duties also entail controlling inventory and traffic and providing timely and accurate research reports to corporate and the station managers. The candidate should be highly motivated, well-organized with strong negotiation and presentation skills. Previous successful TV sales or Rep experience required. Send or fax resume and references to: WCBD-TV, Attn: General Manager, 210 West Coleman Blvd., Mount Pleasant, SC 29464. M/F EOE Final applicants drug screened.

Free job link...PeopleLink!

On-line database for on and off-air broadcasters. Managers, Sales, Promotion, Producers, Photographers, Engineers, Anchors, Reporters, Weather, Sports. www.talentedynamics.com

Account Executive: Prefer at least five years major and/or local television sales experience. Strong communication skills, both oral and written, are required. Responsibilities include the development of new business and expanding existing business. Please send resumes to: Scott Simensky, WABC-TV, 7 Lincoln Square, New York, NY 10023. No telephone calls or faxes please. We are an Equal Opportunity Employer.

HELP WANTED SALES

Assistant Sales Service Manager- WTVD-TV, An ABC owned and operated station in Raleigh-Durham, NC has an immediate opening in the traffic/sales department. Applicants should have 2-5 years experience in radio or television traffic/sales service. Applicants must be proficient in daily log procedures with specific responsibility of generating a daily operating log. Applicants must be detail oriented and possess organizational skills with the ability to coordinate sales and program information with specific deadlines. Please forward all resumes and inquiries to Marie Brown, Sales Service Manager, WTVD-TV, 411 Liberty Street, Durham, NC 27702. We are an EOE employer.

Account Executive Seattle: KWPX T.V. in Seattle is seeking an experienced account executive with a minimum of two years experience, applicants must be motivated, persistent, organized and be able to develop new business. Great company with many benefits. Salary plus commissions. Send resumes to Kevin Mashek/KWPX T.V., 18000 International Blvd., Suite 513, SeaTac, WA 98188 or Fax (206)246-5940.

HELP WANTED TECHNICAL

Telemundo Network Group LLC is looking for a Chief Engineer. Duties include: daily oversight of Engineering Operations and Broadcast Equipment Maintenance, budget responsibilities and assistance to Director of Engineering. Skills required: excellent people skills to handle culturally diverse staff, good technical skills as well as good admin. abilities. Exp. with C-band and Uplinks is important. A General Class FCC license and/or SBE certification a plus. EOE. Send resumes to: Telemundo Network Group LLC, Human Resources, 2290 W. 8th Ave., Hialeah, FL 33010, Fax: 305-889-7079.

TV/Video Engineer: Responsible for the long-term design and engineering of television facilities on campus. Responsibilities include providing maintenance and operational support for academic television, including maintaining TV studio and remote equipment; and providing expertise as the technical and maintenance engineer for all computer hardware in Multimedia Lab. Bachelor's degree in broadcasting or equivalent plus professional television engineering experience required. Certification by Society of Broadcast Engineers preferred. Send letter of application and resume to: Director of Human Resources Management, 107 Administration Building, Northwest Missouri State University, Maryville, MO 64468. Application Deadline: June 11, 1999 or until filled. Northwest is an Equal Opportunity Employer and encourages women and minorities to apply.

Post Production Editor. Senior editor for Quantel Edit Box Magnum. Minimum 5 years editing experience. Experience in editing hard-hitting news and image marketing spots is a plus. Non-linear experience is preferred. Send resumes to: Roxann Nelson, WSOC-TV, Dept. 95, 1901 North Tryon Street, Charlotte, NC 28206. Experienced candidates are encouraged to call (704) 335-4823. EOE M/F

HELP WANTED TECHNICAL

Maintenance Technician Position: WKBN-TV has an opening for a Maintenance Technician. Candidates should have an Associate degree in Electronics, at least 5 years experience in Broadcasting and RF transmitter experience. The successful candidate will be responsible for the installation, repair and maintenance of all station technical facilities and transmitters. Shifts may include nights, weekends and holidays. Submit all resumes before May 17, 1999 to WKBN-TV, Chief Engineer., 3930 Sunset Blvd., Youngstown, OH 44512. EOE.

Maintenance Engineer. KCEN-TV, Temple/Waco Texas, is seeking an individual to troubleshoot and to perform preventive maintenance on all broadcast equipment. Minimum of two years of broadcast maintenance experience a must. Applications accepted through May 14, 1999. Send salary requirements and resume to: KCEN-TV, Personnel Dept. 24, P.O. Box 6103, Temple, TX 76503. Equal Opportunity Employer.

Maintenance Engineer. WFLA-TV (Media General Broadcast Group), the #1 station in the 14th market, is looking for an experienced maintenance engineer. Come assist in the building and implementation of our new DTV broadcast center. Applicant must be self-motivated and have a minimum of five years maintenance experience in a broadcast or production facility. FCC, SBE certification and VHF transmitter experience a plus. Send resume to: WFLA-TV attn: HR, 905 E. Jackson St., Tampa, FL 33602, No Phone Calls! EOE, m/f, pre-employment drug screen.

Free job link...PeopleLink!

On-line database for on and off-air broadcasters. Managers, Sales, Promotion, Producers, Photographers, Engineers, Anchors, Reporters, Weather, Sports. www.talentedynamics.com

Entry Level Position. Will perform basic building maintenance jobs. Also operates Technical Broadcast Equipment, including video tape, satellite and computer systems. Applicants should have or be working towards an Associates Degree in Electrical Engineering, and must have valid driver's license with good driving record. Send resumes to: Personnel, WISH-TV, PO Box 7088, Indianapolis, IN 46207. No phone calls, please. M/F Equal Opportunity Employer.

HELP WANTED NEWS

HOST/ANCHOR

Seasoned host/anchor wanted for unique, fast-paced broadcast network information program, launching this Fall. Must be a good storyteller, good writer, credible and able to handle wide variety of stories and move program along. Send confidential resume, reel and salary requirements to:

Box 01543
EOE

You can simply fax your classified ad to
Broadcasting & Cable
at (212)206-8327.

HELP WANTED NEWS

SINCLAIR COMMUNICATIONS, INC.'s TV stations cover over 25.9% of the U.S. and its top ten radio division operates in 10 separate markets. Sinclair's TV group includes affiliates with all 6 networks. As our phenomenal growth continues, we seek the one element which gives us the edge on the competition and the power to stay on top - the best people in the business. If you are a motivated team player with a successful track record, an opportunity may await you at Sinclair.

KVWB-TV, The WB affiliate in Las Vegas, NV is launching the market's very first hour long 10 PM newscast! We are looking for energy driven journalists who can think and execute in a style that clearly differentiates from the norm. If you are an executive producer, news or sports anchor, general assignment reporter, producer, photographer, assignment editor that meets these criterium then send your resume and/or VHS tape to Marc Weiner, News Director, KVWB-TV, 3830 South Jones Blvd., Las Vegas, NV 89103.



Sinclair is proud to be an
EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER
and a DRUG-FREE WORKPLACE
WOMEN AND MINORITIES ARE ENCOURAGED TO APPLY

Producer - Are you the best producer in your market? FOX O&O station in St. Louis has an immediate opening for a newscast producer. Producer must have excellent news and tease writing skills. You must also have excellent knowledge of current events! Producer must also have a creative flair and the ability to quickly solve problems. Show stackers need not apply. No phone calls please. Minimum of two years experience of producing a newscast. For consideration send resume and letter to: KTVI/Fox2, Human Resources Director, 5915 Berthold Ave., St. Louis, MO 63110. An Equal Opportunity Employer.

Photographer: Top rated Gulf Coast Fox station. Good eye, creative flair, excellent news judgment and editing skills required. We've got the tools. Show us what you can offer. Resumes/tapes to Al Tuggle, Chief Photographer, WALA-TV, 210 Government Street, Mobile, AL 36602. EOE, M/F.

NewsChannel 5/WTNF, Nashville needs an Assignment Manager. This leader oversees newsgathering operations and assignment editors. NewsChannel 5, a top CBS affiliate, needs a hands-on, experienced journalist who is a great organizer, planner, and communicator. Send resume to Doug Johnson, Managing Editor, NewsChannel 5 Network, 474 James Robertson Parkway, Nashville, TN 37219. EOE.

HELP WANTED NEWS

Nightside News Manager: WTVD-TV, the ABC owned station in Raleigh-Durham, North Carolina is searching for a Nightside News Manager. Successful candidate will supervise Reporters, Photographers/Editors and Live Truck Technicians working for the 11p.m. newscast. Responsibilities include developing compelling story content working with Reporters and Photographers to ensure creative story production, and effectively managing substantial resources including multiple live trucks and NewsChopper 11, to produce the most up to the minute newscast in our highly competitive market. This is a job for an experienced manager who is passionate about news and production and wants to make a big impact. Send resumes and references to Rob Elmore, News Director, WTVD-TV, 411 Liberty Street, Durham, NC 27701. No phone calls please. EOE

News Producer: WSOC-TV is looking for a strong storyteller who loves live News and winning. This is a number one shop that loves to rock 'n roll on breaking news. Two to three years previous experience required. If you like to win and want to learn in one of the best shops in the country, send tape and resume to: Mike Goldrick, News Executive Producer, WSOC-TV, Dept. 95, 1901 N. Tryon Street, Charlotte, NC 28206. EOE M/F.

News Producer: WESH-TV, Orlando's NBC affiliate, is seeking an additional producer for our expanded weekday Sunrise news. Applicants must have at least three years experience in line producing, script writing and demonstrated news judgement in the preparation and production of regularly scheduled newscasts. Must be familiar with the internet. Must be able to work flexible hours and under deadline pressure. College degree in broadcast journalism is preferred. Send resume and non-returnable show tape immediately to: Russ Kilgore, News Director, WESH-TV, P.O. Box 547697, Orlando, FL 32854. No Phone Calls, please. An Equal Opportunity Employer.

News Photojournalist. WNDU-TV is looking for a creative, energetic photojournalist who loves his/her work. We need a photojournalist who likes doing packages with a reporter and alone, comes up with story ideas, and wants to be part of an award winning team. One year experience shooting news required. College degree preferred. Send resume and non-returnable tape to: WNDU-TV, Position #00245, Attn: Human Resources Manager, P.O. Box 1616, South Bend, IN 46634. Or e-mail your resume to JOBS@WNDU.COM No phone calls, please! WNDU-TV is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

News Executive Producer: WSOC-TV is looking for a creative leader who knows News and loves to win. We are a demanding number one shop with very high expectations...if you are an experienced Senior producer, or are already in the management ranks but looking to grow, then please contact us right away. In addition to directing editorial content of shows, you'll be responsible for crews, copy editing, and high production values. You must be able to grasp "the big picture" as well as solve little problems quickly and efficiently. If you're interested send tape and resume to: Vicki Montet, News Director, WSOC-TV, Dept. 95, 1901 North Tryon Street, Charlotte, NC 28206. EOE M/F.

HELP WANTED NEWS

News Director - Medium market, East Coast station needs an experienced and motivated manager with a can-do attitude. Ideal candidate is a small market ND or medium market asst. w/ knowledge of news related software and ability to maximize existing staff and resources. Submit resume, salary requirements and letter explaining why you should get the job. Reply to Box 01544 EOE.

News Director: KVII-TV, the ABC Station in Amarillo, Texas, is looking for an innovative News Director. Should be a gifted manager who can teach, lead and inspire. You must be a team player who works well with other departments. Candidates must have strong writing and producing skills and know the importance of marketing, working with consultants and following a strategic plan. Please rush tape and resumes to: Mac Douglas, General Manager, KVII-TV, One Broadcast Center, Amarillo, Texas 79101. EOE.

News Director: Dominant small market news operation is looking for a strong news room leader who is a creative outside-the-box thinking motivator of people. Great opportunity for a proven producer to take this market leader to new levels of accomplishment. Excellent location in growing market with established company. Send resumes to: Ray J. Chumley, VP/GM WTOK-TV, P.O. Box 2988, Meridian, MS 39302. Equal Opportunity Employer.

Meteorologist: spirited, experienced, credible A.M.S. to visualize New England's exciting weather in one of the highest-rated regions for lifestyle. Use brand-new, state-of-the-art weather graphics to make our weather the best in the market. Do the weather outside and seize the lead in severe weather situations. Send non-returnable VHS to Ken Schreiner, News Director, WVNY, 530 Shelburne Rd., Burlington, VT 05401.

KMOL-TV 4 wants two full-time Assignment Editors who can think like Producers and act like Reporters. Send resumes to Diane De Los Santos, Assignments Manager, PO Box 2641, San Antonio, Texas 78299. An Equal Opportunity Employer.

General Assignment Reporter: ABC affiliate looking for a strong, take-charge, individual to work Wednesday through Sundays as general assignment reporter. College degree in Journalism or related field. Send tape, writing examples and resume to Kathleen McLain, WMDT-TV, 202 Downton Plaza, Salisbury, MD 21801. An Equal Opportunity Employer.

Free job link...PeopleLink!

On-line database for on and off-air broadcasters. Managers, Sales, Promotion, Producers, Photographers, Engineers, Anchors, Reporters, Weather, Sports. www.talentedynamics.com

Executive Producer: We need a tiger who can teach, lead and inspire a staff of 60 pros. This dominant news operation delivers a fast-paced, video and graphics rich, widely imitated but never equaled product. Previous EP or big market line producing skills a must. Rush tape, resume and news philosophy to: Bob Longo, News Director, Channel 7/WKBW-TV, 7 Broadcast Plaza, Buffalo, New York 14202. No phone calls please. EOE.

You can simply fax your classified ad to
Broadcasting & Cable at (212)206-8327.

HELP WANTED NEWS

Field Producer - WTVT, the FOX owned station in Tampa, FL is looking for an individual to research and produce a daily segment for an anchor. Will work with one photographer as a team. Must be a great storyteller and have the ability to marry picture and sound in order to create compelling stories. Demonstrable skills in time management and overall organization required. Minimum of three years experience as a field producer or reporter preferred. Send letter of interest, resume and non-returnable tape showing your best work to: WTVT-FOX13, HR Department, 3213 W. Kennedy Blvd., Tampa, FL 33609. No phone calls or faxes please. EOE/M/F/D/V.

Director: ABC affiliate by the beach seeks experienced director/supervisor for our studio and location newscasts. Knowledge of all studio operations and equipment (Grass Valley 250) and related news operations (AP NewsWire System). Strong leadership skills to train and motivate personnel. Computer graphics experience a plus. Send tape and resume to: John Cannon, Operations Manager, WMDT-TV, 202 Downtown Plaza, Salisbury, MD 21801. WMDT-TV is an equal opportunity employer.

Commercial Producer/Director: WTVR-TV, a Raycom Media station, in Richmond, VA has an immediate opening for a creative, enthusiastic, detail oriented Commercial Producer/Director. Must be able to interact well with sales department and clients. Ability to manage multiple projects on tight deadlines is critical. Experience in non-linear and linear editing and field production helpful. Degree in Mass Communications, Marketing or related field desired. No Beginners. Please send resume and non-returnable VHS tape to: Matt Heffernan, Director of Operations & Technology, WTVR-TV, 3301 W. Broad Street, Richmond, VA 23230. WTVR-TV is an EOE M/F. Pre-employment drug screening required. No phone calls please.

Bureau Reporter/Photographer: WSOC-TV is looking for a multi-talented storyteller to run one of our bureaus. This person is responsible for making contacts and generating story ideas from this area of our market. This person should be able to shoot & edit as well as deliver on-camera. If you can do the job, please contact: Robin Whitmeyer, Senior Executive Producer News and Special Projects, Dept. 95, WSOC-TV, 1901 N. Tryon Street, Charlotte, NC 28206. No phone calls please. EOE M/F.

Anchor: Main event anchor position in the 76th market. You'll produce and anchor your own show, co-anchor another. Minimum 3 years of broadcast experience and 2 years of anchoring. Send VHS or 3/4" tape to Don Brown, News Director, WSIL-TV, 1416 Country Aire Dr., Carterville, IL 62918. EOE.

Anchor/Reporter: WSOC-TV is looking for a weekend morning anchor who wants to grow with the number one station in Charlotte. We're looking for an energetic player who enjoys the street as much as the anchor desk. Previous full time anchoring experience. No beginners. Send tape and resume to: Vicki Montet, News Director, Dept. 95, WSOC-TV, 1901 N. Tryon Street, Charlotte, NC 28206. EOE M/F.

HELP WANTED NEWS

Anchor/Reporter: WSOC-TV is looking for a weekend anchor who still enjoys being on the street and working the lead story. Previous full-time anchoring experience required. This is not for beginners. We want a seasoned storyteller who wants to make a commitment to Charlotte, and the number one News operation in town. Send tape and resume to: Vicki Montet, News Director, WSOC-TV, Dept. 95, 1901 North Tryon Street, Charlotte, NC 28206. EOE M/F.

AM Co-Anchor/Producer: ABC affiliate looking for a strong talent to help produce and co-anchor weekday morning newscasts. Some reporting required. College degree in Journalism or related field. Send tape, writing examples and resume to Kathleen McLain, WMDT-TV, 202 Downtown Plaza, Salisbury, MD 21801. An Equal Opportunity Employer.

5PM News Anchor--- For dominant NBC Affiliate in 93rd Market. Successful candidate will have previous television anchoring and reporting experience plus strong, creative writing skills. College degree preferred. Tapes/Resumes to Judy Baker, WCYB-TV, 101 Lee Street, Bristol, VA 24201. No phone calls. EOE/M/F/H/V

Weather Anchor needed for weekend/weekday newscasts in small market ABC affiliate. Meteorologist preferred, but experience is necessary with a personable on-air manner. Community involvement in this market and help in promoting the growth of the station is a must. Send resume and tape to Box 01541 EOE.

We need energetic, enthusiastic storytellers for our brand new 6pm newscast at KMOL-TV in San Antonio, Texas. We're hitting the air in September and need (2) anchor/reporters, 1 Producer, and Associate Producer, Photojournalist and Tape editor. Send resumes and tapes to Nell Sanchez, Asst. News Director, PO Box 2641, San Antonio, Texas 78299. An Equal Opportunity Employer.

TV News Producer. We need an experienced TV News Producer. Large CBS affiliate in dynamic Charlotte, NC is looking for a line producer with strong writing, excellent news judgement and great people skills. We have all the toys, and a talented staff. We have a rich tradition and an emphasis on quality. If you know how to put together a show that informs, entertains and moves people, send us a tape of your last newscast. Minimum 2 years experience preferred. Cathy Cloud, WBTV, One Julian Price Place, Charlotte, NC 28208. (no phone calls please) Jefferson-Pilot Communications Company is an equal opportunity employer.

Reporter/Photographer: Television news reporter for entry-level NBC affiliate in a growing, diverse market. Journalism degree and some experience preferred. Employee will cover local stories. Must be prepared to shoot, edit, and write news stories. Drug screen required. Please send cover letter and resume to NBC 25, Dept. W, 13 East Washington Street, Hagerstown, MD 21740. Quorum Broadcasting is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

HELP WANTED PROMOTION

WWHO-UPN53 is looking for a dedicated Promotion Manager to lead a successful creative services department in Columbus. Candidate should have at least 2 years experience in television promotion, including production, maintenance of on-air logs and inventory, contesting, and exposure to co-op advertising. Please - No Beginners! If you are a team player and take a personal interest in the success of a station, this position is for you! Send resume, cover letter, and reel to: Promotion Manager, c/o WWHO, P.O. Box 5300, Columbus, Ohio, 43216. E.O.E. and smoke-free environment.

News Promotion Director. WBTV, CBS affiliate in Charlotte, NC, seeks creative, hands-on talent to lead our great team of news promotion producers. Need strategic thinker with solid marketing judgement, strong conceptual, writing and producing skills, and good sense of graphic design. Must have good people skills and collaborative communication style. Great station, great town, great opportunity to grow. For employment consideration at WBTV, a superb technical facility and one of the nation's premiere CBS affiliates forward resume to Cathy Lockhart Cloud, WBTV, One Julian Price Place, Charlotte, NC 28208, fax 704-374-3626, ccloud@jpc.com. Jefferson-Pilot Communications is an equal opportunity employer.

Free job link...PeopleLink!

On-line database for on and off-air broadcasters. Managers, Sales, Promotion, Producers, Photographers, Engineers, Anchors, Reporters, Weather, Sports. www.talentedynamics.com

HELP WANTED ADMINISTRATION

Sales Assistant: Looking for a Sales Assistant to work for three (3) Account Executives at WABC-TV Sales. Heavy phone contact with major advertisers/buyers. Processing of orders and makegoods. Heavy paperwork, typing and filing. Requires excellent organizational skills and computer skills. Please send resumes to: Scott Simensky, WABC-TV, 7 Lincoln Square, New York, NY 10023. No telephone calls or faxes please. We are an Equal Opportunity Employer.

HELP WANTED PUBLIC RELATIONS

Publicity Coordinator - Religion & Ethics NewsWeekly, the award-winning Thirteen/WNET news magazine program for PBS, seeks individual to provide promo/adm support, asst in promo campaigns, coordinate awards submissions, provide wkly listings info to TV press, oversee mailing & maintain press list database. 1-2 yrs exp, good oral/written skills, WP & database exp. BA in Journalism/Eng or rel field pref. Fax/send resume w/ sal req'ts to: Religion & Ethics NewsWeekly, Attn: Director of Communications, 1333 H Street NW, 6th Fl., Washington, DC 20005. Fax: (202) 408-0608. No Phone Calls Please. EOE M/F/D/V.

You can simply fax
your classified ad to
Broadcasting & Cable
at (212)206-8327.

HELP WANTED CREATIVE SERVICES

Senior Producer, Creative Services: Talk about an opportunity! Disney-owned ABC affiliate in beautiful top 30 southeast market looking for up-and-coming promotion superstar. You need to be a strong writer, an experienced editor, and a maniac for promoting a hard-hitting, award-winning, as-good-as-it-gets local News product. You'll work with dual Avids, HAL, and one of the best-run Newsrooms in the business. Interested? Rush your tape and resume to Director of Creative Services, WTVD, 411 Liberty Street, Durham, NC 27701. EOE.

Graphic Designer-Thirteen/WNET seeks seasoned designer with broadcast/print design exp to create on-air I.D.s/promos, opening title sequences, logo design, posters, press kits, mkt materials & corp identity projects. Min of 3 yrs prof exp in broadcast/print design. QuarkXpress, Photoshop, Illustrator & Aftereffects. Fax/send resume + sal req'ts to: Thirteen/WNET, Attn: Mgr. Comp & Staffing, 450 West 33rd St., 6th flr, NY, NY 10001. Fax (212) 560-1314.

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HELP WANTED PRODUCTION**BROADCASTING DIRECTOR**

The PGA TOUR, Inc., headquartered in Ponte Vedra Beach, FL, has an outstanding career opportunity for a Director of Broadcasting. This new position will manage the SENIOR PGA TOUR broadcasting relationships with our television partners and event management teams and oversee the day-to-day program scheduling and administration for the SENIOR PGA TOUR. 8-10 years sports television programming experience; strong business, computer and research skills; and familiarity with all aspects of PGA TOUR, SENIOR PGA TOUR and NIKE TOUR business required. Live broadcast and/or production experience desirable. Bachelor's degree in Communication, Business Management or a related field required.

This challenging position offers professional growth opportunities, a competitive salary, performance bonus, excellent health benefits, pension, 401(k), and family membership to the TPC at Sawgrass. For consideration, please mail or fax your resume to: **PGA TOUR, Attn: HR-DB, 100 PGA TOUR Blvd., Ponte Vedra Beach, FL, 32082; Fax (904) 273-3588.** No phone calls please.

EOE, M/F/D/V

**HELP WANTED PRODUCTION****Experienced Talk Show Producers Needed**

Chicago-based syndicated talk show seeking segment producer. Must have at least 2 years national talk show experience. Booking skills and creativity. Must be highly motivated and a self-starter. Reply to Box 01522.

Free job link...PeopleLink!

On-line database for on and off-air broadcasters. Managers, Sales, Promotion, Producers, Photographers, Engineers, Anchors, Reporters, Weather, Sports. www.talentedynamics.com

Television/Video Producer/Editor. Michigan State University CANR seeks creative, talented person to produce video news releases and instructional/feature videos. Experience in daily news reporting/development and scripting/producing/editing of videos, essential; non-linear editing and use of distance technology, desired. Ability to lead teams and work with variety of people. Position funded for two years with strong possibility of continuation. For application, call MSU Employment at 517/432-1662. Refer to posting #P80747. Closing date May 30. MSU is an affirmative action/equal opportunity institution.

HELP WANTED PRODUCTION

Television Production Assistant: WTVD is looking for a team player. Applicant should have a minimum of one year's professional broadcast television production experience. Experience should include character generate, studio camera and audio console operation during live newscasts. Send resume to Jeffrey Hester, Production Manager, WTVD Newschannel 11 ABC, PO Box 2009, Durham, NC 27702. No Phone Calls. EOE

SITUATIONS WANTED NEWS

Highly creative photographer with 15 years experience (including major market) seeks vacant position in 10-20's market-specialty is feature stories. For resume/reel, call Phil at 334-365-0760.

SITUATIONS WANTED PRODUCTION/TALENT

Producer to create, produce, AP and/or Host local programming, kids and teen shows. Segment Produce/AP/Audience Coordinator on talk shows and highly experienced Studio Audience Warm-up. Any market. MSG: 718.379.8751 PGR: 888.369.0357

TV RESUME TAPES

Career Videos prepares your personalized demo. Unique format, excellent rates, coaching, job search assistance, tape critiques. Great track record. 847-272-2917.

CABLE**HELP WANTED TECHNICAL****TURNER STUDIOS****DIRECTOR OF TECHNICAL OPERATIONS**

Reports to VP of Engineering for Turner Studios. Responsible for technical readiness of Turner Studios. Must have proven engineering management skills and ability to consolidate varied Turner Studios Engineering departments and activities. Ability to manage an overview of Turner Studios Engineering global needs, and present strategic and unified solutions. Must have the ability to create engineering project budgets and timelines, and track related accounting details. Experience in the television systems design/installation, and television systems engineering/maintenance a must.

Minimum of five years experience at network level television engineering or post-production engineering, with a minimum of a two-year associate degree in electronic technology or equivalent. Must be a resourceful self-starter with ability to make decisions. Must have ability to find creative solutions to television problems. Must possess good organizational skills and be capable of reviewing and supervising management-level engineers.

Please send all contact information to:

Kevin B. Shorter
Vice President of Engineering
Turner Studios
1050 Techwood Drive NW
Atlanta, GA 30318

HELP WANTED NEWS

Not All Production Jobs are in LA!

COMMERCIAL PRODUCER/DIRECTOR

We are raising the bar in cable advertising production! CableRep Advertising, a COX Communications Company, has an immediate opening for an experienced full-time producer to join our professional media organization in Orange County, CA. If you prefer to manage projects from concept development and scripting through shooting and editing, then we have a great opportunity for you. Specifically looking for a strong creative writer who can create distinctive concepts for our advertising clients. Five years experience in script writing and production required; AVID editing experience also required.

PROGRAM PRODUCER/EDITOR

We are developing an exciting new 30-minute real estate magazine show and need the right person to help us create and produce it. Top candidates will be creative thinkers, highly organized in fast-paced environment and multi-talented, with proven ability to write, shoot and edit this weekly program with a minimal crew. Must have experience producing magazine format programming, managing field shoots and polished client service skills. AVID editing experience required and After Effects proficiency preferred. Program to air on HGTV and Cox Channel 3. Great opportunity to create and be creative.

If you're interested and can hit the ground running, send your resume, salary history and reel to CableRep Advertising, Attn. Wendy, 2381 Morse Avenue, Irvine, CA 92614. EOE.

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Nancy Lucas, Vice President
TBS Superstation Research
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The New York Ad Sales Research group at Discovery Networks seeks an experienced Ad Sales Research Manager

As research manager, you will be an active team member, providing senior research management and ad sales with creative and strategic positioning information. Responsibilities include overseeing two research analysts in analysis and interpretation of data obtained from a variety of sources, including Nielsen Media Research and syndicated studies, as well as development of special custom analyses.

Qualified applicants will have 6+ years experience in national media/ad sales research at a cable network or similar media property, with a minimum of 1 year of managerial responsibilities. Knowledge of Nielsen Media Research products (Client Cume System, AdViews, Galaxy, etc.) MRI/Simmons, Intelliquest, Yankelovich and other applicable industry reports required. The ideal candidate will possess strong communication skills and the ability to interact confidently with sales as well as other DCI departments.

For consideration, please send resume and cover letter with salary requirements (a must to be considered) to:



Elizabeth Manjarrez
Discovery Communications, Inc.
641 Lexington Avenue
New York, NY 10022

HELP WANTED PRODUCTION

Manager of Post Production Facilities Discovery Communications Inc., Bethesda, MD.

Discovery Communications, Inc. is seeking a manager for linear videotape editing and tape transfer operations. This individual will orient and support freelance linear editors, supervise and develop a staff of technicians and provide front line technical support.

Requirements: Expertise with all aspects of video editing and duplication, five or more years of post-production experience, proven leadership qualities, excellent communications and organizational skills, and the ability to perform in a dynamically changing environment.



Contact David Shapiro
Director of Post Production Facilities,
Discovery Communications Inc.
7700 Wisconsin Ave.
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E-mail: david_shapiro@discovery.com
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Court TV's On-Air Promotion Dept. is seeking an inspired, very inspired Graphic Designer to create campaign logos, show opens, title pages, lower thirds, bugs, and art direct live-action film shoots.

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**DIRECTOR
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ENTERTAINMENT
TECHNOLOGIES**

ID# I-35021. Miami Dade Community College located in Miami, Florida is seeking a Director for the School of Entertainment Technologies. The Director will be an academic professional with multi-campus responsibilities for coordinating the development and implementation of curricula and course schedules, as well as, budgets and programs for several related programs, including radio, television, film, video, and sound recording. A primary responsibility of the Director is to collaborate and interact with business and industry to identify and meet the training and educational needs of the workforce. This position requires a Master's degree in an appropriate discipline or a combination of appropriate educational and professional experience. Experience in a relevant business or industry is essential. The Director must be skilled at management and able to work effectively in a multi-cultural, multi-ethnic environment. The salary for this position is \$80,000 with an excellent benefits package. Applications will be accepted through May 31, 1999. Starting date is July 1, 1999.

Liberal Employee Benefit Program. Formal application is required for all positions unless otherwise stated. Call: (305) 237-2050 for an application and instructions on how to apply. Human Resources web page: www.mdcc.edu. Copies of transcript(s) MUST accompany the application for positions requiring a degree. Applicants must submit an original application and a copy for each position they are applying to: M-DCC Human Resources and Employee Relations, Kendall Campus, 11011 S.W. 104 Street, Miami, FL 33176-3393. For special accommodations, call the FL Relay Service TDD 1-800-955-8771. M-DCC hires individuals authorized for employment under the IRCA guidelines. Only completed application packages will be considered. E/EO Employer.

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For Sale: C.2FM West Texas rated market \$895,000. Contact John Saunders at (713)-789-4222.

For Sale, 6000 watt fm with 50,000 watt upgrade on Florida gulf coast. \$425,000 cash. Contact The Connelly Co. (813)-991-9494.

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CHANGING HANDS

The week's tabulation of station sales

TV

KVVV(TV) Bay Town/Houston, Texas

Price: \$28 million

Buyer: Pappas Telecasting Co., Visalia, Calif. (Harry Pappas, president); owns 18 other TVs
Seller: ValueVision International Inc., Eden Prairie, Minn. (Gene McCaffrey, chief executive); no other broadcast interests

Facilities: Ch. 57, 5,000 kw, ant. 1,919 ft.

Affiliation: Independent

Broker: Gammon Media Brokers LLC

COMBOS

KMVI(AM)-FM Pukalani/Wailuku/Honolulu and KNUI(AM)-FM Kahului, Hawaii

Price: \$2.875 million

Buyer: Lahaina Broadcasting Co. Ltd., Lahaina, Hawaii (Richard C. Bergson, president); owns KPOA(FM) and KLHI-FM Lahaina

Seller: Community Airwaves Corp., Minneapolis, Minn. (Christopher T. Dahl, chief executive); owns

PROPOSED STATION TRADES

By dollar volume and number of sales; does not include mergers or acquisitions involving substantial non-station assets

THIS WEEK

TVs ■ \$28,000,000 ■ 1
 Combos ■ \$4,203,333 ■ 5
 FMs ■ \$85,550,000 ■ 8
 AMs ■ \$5,000,000 ■ 1
 Total ■ \$122,753,333 ■ 15

SO FAR IN 1999

TVs ■ \$1,355,619,005 ■ 33
 Combos ■ \$622,270,030 ■ 55
 FMs ■ \$541,112,213 ■ 91
 AMs ■ \$85,884,500 ■ 73
 Total ■ \$2,604,885,748 ■ 252

KNUI(FM) Paauilo, Hawaii

Facilities: KMVI(AM): 550 khz, 5 kw; KMVI-FM: 98.3 mhz, 50 kw, ant. 102 ft.; KNUI(AM): 900 khz, 5 kw; KNUI-FM: 99.9 mhz, 100 kw, ant. -540 ft.

Formats: KMVI(AM): adult pop standards; KMVI-FM: classic rock; KNUI-AM-FM: AC

WHIY(AM)-WXKI(FM) Moulton, Ala.

Price: \$775,000

Buyer: Hundley Batts and Virginia Caples, Huntsville, Ala.; own WEUP(AM) HUNTSVILLE, ALA., WEUP-FM Minor Hill, Tenn.

Sellers: Moulton Broadcasting Co. Inc. (WHIY) and Lawco FM Ltd. (WXKI), Moulton (Ray Wallace, principal). Wallace owns 20% of Hobson City Broadcasting Inc., which owns

WHOG(AM) Hobson City, Ala.

Facilities: AM: 1190 khz, 2.5 kw; FM: 103.1 mhz, 6 kw, ant. 328 ft.

Formats: Both country

Broker: Thorburn Co.

WBTO(AM)-WQTY(FM) Linton/Evansville/Terre Haute, Ind.

Price: \$350,000

Buyer: Original Co. Inc., Vincennes, Ind. (spouses Mark R. Lange [president] and Sandra K. Lange, each 50% owners); owns WUZR(FM) Bicknell, WREB(FM) Greencastle, WPCO(AM)-WBLZ-FM Mt. Vernon and WZDM(FM) Vincennes, Ind. Langes each own 25% of Old Northwest Broadcasting Inc., which owns WAOV(AM) Vincennes and WWBL(FM) Washington, Ind., and WVMC(AM) Mt. Carmel, Ill.

Seller: Linton Broadcasting Co. Inc., Linton (Robert M. McDaniel, president); no other broadcast interests

Facilities: AM: 1600 khz, 500 w day, 32 w night; FM: 93.3 mhz, 12 kw, 475 ft.

Formats: AM: religion; FM: adult pop standards

KRVZ(AM)-KQAZ(FM) Springerville-Eagar, Ariz.

Price: \$175,000

Buyer: William Konopnicki, Safford, Ariz.; owns one other AM and two other FMs

Seller: Double Z Enterprises Inc., Springerville (Theodore M. Barbone, president); no other broadcast interests

Facilities: AM: 1,400 khz, 1 kw; FM: 101.7 mhz, 3 kw, ant. -97 ft.

Formats: AM: CW; FM: classic rock

KMIN(AM) and co-located KAIU(FM) and KQEO(FM) Grants, N.M.

Price: \$28,333

Buyer: Palmer Radio LLC, Salt Lake City (Gaylen and Laurel Palmer, managing members); no other broadcast interests

Sellers: KMIN: Davis Broadcasting Co. Inc. (Dorothy Davis, 55% owner; Don Davis, president/45% owner); KAIU:

NEW WAVE BROADCASTING

has acquired

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KPOI-FM KHUL-FM

Honolulu, Hawaii

from

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for

\$7,500,000

The undersigned acted as exclusive broker in this transaction and assisted in the negotiations.



Kalil & Co., Inc.

3444 North Country Club Tucson, Arizona 85716 (520) 795-1050

Philip D. Vander Hoof; KQEO: Don Davis; all Albuquerque, N.M. Sellers have no other broadcast interests
Facilities: KMIN: 980 khz, 1 kw; KAIU: 92.7 mhz, 1.7 kw, ant. 230 ft.; KQEO: 100.7 mhz, 1.7 kw, ant. 194 ft.
Formats: KMIN: oldies; KAIU: AC; KQEO: AC

FMS

WBLM(FM), WCYI(FM) and WJBQ(FM) Portland, Maine, **WCYY(FM)** Biddeford/Portland, **WCLZ-FM** Brunswick/Portland and **WHOM(FM)** Mount Washington, N.H./Portland, Maine, and **WOKQ(FM)** Dover, **WXBP(FM)** Hampton/Dover, **WXBB(FM)** Kittery, Maine/Dover and **WPKQ(FM)** North Conway, N.H.

Price: \$63.5 million

Buyer: Citadel Communications Corp., Bigfork, Mont. (Lawrence R. Wilson, president); owns/is buying 35 AMs and 73 other FMs

Seller: Fuller-Jeffrey Broadcasting Co. Inc., Newburyport, Mass. (Robert Fuller, president); owns WCLZ(AM) Portland and WJAE(AM) Westbrook, Maine

Facilities: WBLM: 102.9 mhz, 100 kw, ant. 1,460 ft.; WCYI: 93.9 mhz, 27.5 kw, ant. 633 ft.; WJBQ: 97.9 mhz, 16 kw, 889 ft.; WCYY: 94.3 mhz, 12 kw, ant. 472 ft.; WCLZ-FM: 98.9 mhz, 48 kw, ant. 400 ft.; WHOM: 94.9 mhz, 48 kw, ant. 3,760 ft.; WOKQ: 97.5 mhz, 50 kw, ant. 492 ft.; WXBP: 102.1 mhz, 3 kw, ant. 328 ft.; WXBB: 105.3 mhz, 2.2 kw, ant. 371 ft.; WPKQ: 103.7 mhz, 22.5 kw, 3,870 ft.

Format: WBLM: AOR; WCYI: alternative rock; WJBQ: CHR; WCYY: modern rock; WCLZ-FM: AAA; WHOM: easy listening; WOKQ: country; WXBP: classic rock; WXBB: rebroadcasts WXBP; WPKQ: rebroadcasts WOKQ

Broker: Kalil & Co. Inc.

WJEN(FM) and WJJR(FM) Rutland and **WJAN(FM)** Sunderland/Manchester, Vt.
Price: \$6.25 million (\$1.919 million for WJEN; \$2.806 million for WJJR; \$1.525 million for WJAN)

Buyer: Albany Broadcasting Co. Inc., Latham, N.Y. (James J. Morrell, owner); owns two AMs and three other FMs. Morrell also owns Pamal Broadcasting Ltd., which owns two AMs and two FMs

Sellers: WJEN: Cumberland Blues Co., Rutland (Kathryn Adams, president/60% owner); WJJR: Peak Communications Inc., Rutland (Ronald A. Morlino, president/50% owner/owner of WJAN); WJAN: Radio New England Ltd., Manchester, Vt. (Morlino, president/owner). Morlino also is 40% owner of Cumberland Blues Co. Inc.

Sellers have no other broadcast interests

Facilities: WJEN: 94.5 mhz, 6 kw, ant. 389 ft.; WJJR: 98.1 mhz, 1.15 kw, ant. 2,591 ft.; WJAN: 95.1 mhz, 96 w, ant. 2,398 ft.

Formats: WJEN: rebroadcasts WJAN; WJJR: AC; WJAN: country

WLSY(FM) New Albany, Ind./Louisville, Ky., and **WRVI(FM)** Valley Station/Louisville, Ky.

Price: \$5 million

Buyer: Salem Communications Corp., Camarillo, Texas (Edward G. Atsinger III, president); owns/is buying 13 other FMs and 32 AMs, including KGME(AM) Glendale/Phoenix, Ariz. (see item, below). Atsinger owns 50% of Sonsinger Inc., which owns KKOL(AM) Seattle

Seller: Cox Broadcasting Inc., Atlanta (Nicholas D. Trigony, president; Robert F. Neil, Cox Radio Inc. president); owns/is buying 11 TVs, 17 AMs and 37 FMs

Facilities: WLSY: 94.7 mhz, 3 kw, ant. 328 ft.; WRVI: 105.9 mhz 1.9 kw, ant. 413 ft.

Formats: WLSY: rock & roll; WRVI: rock/AC

WORC-FM Webster, Mass.

Price: \$3.5 million

Buyer: Montachusset Broadcasting Inc., Worcester, Mass. (Robin B. Martin, president). Martin owns 25% of Burlington Broadcasters Inc., which owns WIZN(FM) Vergennes/Burlington, Vt., and 67% of RJ Broadcasting Co. LLC, which owns 33.33% of WFAL(FM) Falmouth, Va.

Seller: Chowder Broadcast Group LLC, Ft. Washington, Pa. (Eric H. Seltzer, president); owns WGFP(AM) Webster and WORC(AM) Worcester
Facilities: 98.9 mhz, 3 kw, ant. 410 ft.
Format: Classic rock

WKPE-FM Orleans/Cape Cod, Mass.

Price: \$2.8 million

Buyer: Charles River Broadcasting Co., Waltham, Mass. (William Campbell, CEO); owns WFCC-FM Chatham/Cape Cod and WCRB(FM) Waltham/Boston

Seller: Gramcam Communications Inc., Stoneham, Mass. (David A. Roth, president); no other broadcast interests

Facilities: 104.7 mhz, 50 kw, ant. 504 ft.

Format: Active rock

Broker: Chaisson & Co. Inc.

WKCD(FM) Pawcatuck/New London, Conn.

Price: \$2.05 million

Buyer: Back Bay Broadcasters Inc., Providence, R.I. (Peter Ottmar, chairman/director); owns WAKX(FM) Narragansett Pier, WLKW(AM)/Pawtucket and WWKX(FM) Woonsocket, all Providence, R.I.

Seller: SaltAire Communications Inc., Stonington, Conn. (spouses Lois and Gary Girard, owners); no other broadcast interests

Facilities: 107.7 mhz, 1.85 kw, ant. 400 ft.

Format: New AC

Broker: Media Services Group Inc.

KAIO(FM) Randolph/Salt Lake City, Utah

Price: \$1.5 million

Buyer: Maximum Broadcasting Co. LLC, Chicago, Ill. (Deer Valley Broadcasting LLC, 110% owner; Bruce Buzil, manager). Buzil is manager of Marathon Media LLC, which owns nine AMs and 23 other FMs

Seller: Randolph Broadcasting LLC, McLean, Va. (Victor A. Michael Jr. and Todd P. Robinson, each 50% owner). Michael also owns 50% of Mountain States Radio Inc., which owns three FMs, and 45% of Michael Radio Enterprises of Colorado Inc., which owns one AM and one FM
Facilities: 102.3 mhz, .48 kw, and 1,032 ft.

Format: Dark

WRVX(FM) Lynchburg, Va.

Price: \$950,000

Buyer: Travis Media Corp. LLC, Roanoke, Va. (Robert Travis and Karen Travis, owners); no other broadcast interests

Seller: Shircliff Partnership Ltd., Lynchburg (James V. Shircliff, president); no other broadcast interests

Facilities: 97.9 mhz, 3 kw, ant. 240 ft.
Format: Lite contemporary

AMS

KGME(AM) Glendale/Phoenix, Ariz.

Price: \$5 million

Buyer: Salem Communications Corp.; is buying two FMs in Louisville, Ky. (see item, above)

Seller: New Century Arizona License Partnership, Bellevue, Wash. (Michael O'Shea, president); owns KDDJ(FM) Globe, KHOT-FM Paradise Valley and KEDJ(FM) Sun City, all Phoenix, Ariz. O'Shea is a principal of New Northwest Broadcasters Inc., which owns five AMs and 10 FMs

Facilities: 1,360 khz, 50 kw, 1 kw night
Format: Sports

Broker: Gary Stevens & Co.

—Compiled by Alisa Holmes

FATES & FORTUNES

BROADCAST TV



Witko

Ron Witko, VP, North American sales, Chyron Corp., New York, joins Pilot Broadcast Systems there as VP, U.S. operation.

Jim Donnelly, president, Donnelly Group/Sandler Sales Institute,

Cincinnati, joins Paxson Communications Group, West Palm Beach, Fla., as director, sales and marketing, Pax TV.

Thom Watson, director, Web resources, Association of American Medical Colleges, Washington, joins PBS, Alexandria, Va., as director, electronic communications.



Granger

Mason Granger, executive VP/general manager, WMC-TV Memphis, joins WDSU-TV New Orleans as president and general manager.

Eduardo Fernandez, station manager, WXMI-TV Grand Rapids, Mich., named VP/general manager.

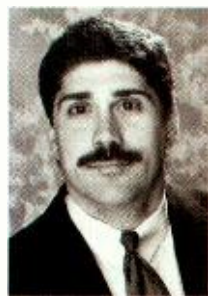
Darryll Green, VP, broadcast, WGRZ-TV Buffalo, N.Y., named president and general manager.

John Seabers, general sales manager, KMOL(TV) San Antonio, joins KABB(TV) there as general manager.

David Harbert, general sales manager, WIS(TV) Columbia, S.C., joins KIVI(TV) Boise, Idaho, as president and general manager.

Brenda Kuberek, national sales manager, WECT-TV Wilmington, N.C., named local sales manager.

Stephen Shelton, VP, internal audit, Skytel Communications, Dallas, joins Belo Corp. there in same capacity.



Fernandez

Kevin Connor, controller, WGNO-TV New Orleans, joins Tribune Broadcasting Co., Chicago, in same capacity.

Appointments, WNDY(TV) Indianapolis: **Bruce Stone**, director, creative services, named director, programming/promotions; **Bruce Stickle**, senior account representative, Tour Design, Indianapolis, joins as local account executive.

PROGRAMMING

Appointments, Jim Henson Co., Los Angeles: **Ritamari Peruggi**, VP, production worldwide, Jim Henson Co., Los Angeles, named senior VP; **May Chin**, licensing coordinator, named account manager, consumer products division.

Andy Schreiber, VP, new business and divisional marketing, Playboy Entertainment Group, Beverly Hills, Calif., named VP, international home video.

JOURNALISM



Huntington

Jim Huntington, producer, KABC-TV Los Angeles, joins KNBC-TV there as managing editor.

Natalie Ziegler, editorial producer, CNN, Atlanta and Washington, joins Forum Network, Arlington, Va., as senior producer.

Frank Buckley, general assignment reporter, KCAL-TV Los Angeles, joins CNN, New York, in same capacity.

Diane Rappoport, executive producer, *The Howie Mandel Show*, Burbank, Calif., joins *The Montel Williams Show*, Hollywood, Calif., in same capacity.

Marc Lotter, producer, WRTV(TV) Indianapolis, joins WXIX(TV) Cincinnati as executive producer.



Wingo

Melanie Wingo, reporter, *Newswatch*, KDRV(TV) Medford, Ore./KDKF(TV) Klamath Falls, Ore., named news anchor.

Mark Ginther, managing editor, Eyewitness News, KSTP-TV Min-

neapolis/St. Paul, named assistant news director.

Wes Hohenstein, evening meteorologist, KLFY-TV Lafayette, La., named meteorologist, *Passe Partout* morning program.

RADIO



Blue

Frankie Blue, program director, WKTU-FM New York, named VP, operations and programming.

Sil Scaglione, VP and general manager, WJIZ-FM Philadelphia, joins WIOQ-FM and WYXR-FM there as

general manager.

CABLE

C.J. Kettler, president, Sunbow Entertainment, New York, joins Oxygen Media there as president, sales and marketing.



Lemon

Kim Lemon, VP, research, Showtime Networks, New York, named senior VP.

Courtenay Purcell, public relations manager, Cartoon Network, Atlanta, named director, public relations.

Appointments, Scripps Networks, Knoxville, Tenn./Los Angeles: **Stephanie Davis**, senior marketing manager, Discovery Networks, Bethesda, Md., joins as director, national accounts, Western region; **Doug Marrone**, regional manager, Western region, becomes director, new market distribution; **Mark Quinn**, director, national accounts, Southeast region, named director, national accounts, East. He will be based in Knoxville. **Steve Newman**, senior VP, ad sales, Home & Garden Television, becomes senior VP, ad sales. He will be based in Knoxville.

Kathy Quattrone, executive VP, programming services, PBS, Alexandria, Va., joins Discovery Health Media, Bethesda, Md., as senior VP, program-

ming and production.



Graff

William Graff, director, programming, WPIX-TV New York, joins Animal Planet, Bethesda, Md., in same capacity.

Elizabeth Ross, account executive, Katz Media, New York, joins Discovery Networks,

Bethesda, Md., as director, Northern region, affiliate sales and marketing.

Terry Cecil, VP, expositions, IMG, Cleveland, joins Home & Garden

Television, Knoxville, Tenn., as VP, ad sales marketing.

Appointments, The Box, Miami Beach, Fla.: **Rochelle Berger**, manager, national music advertising and promotions, named director, music ad sales; **Joel Genove**, project manager, named field marketing senior manager, Eastern region affiliates sales and marketing. He will be based in New York.

Victoria Hoffman, manager, direct marketing, named director, direct marketing ad sales.

ADVERTISING/MARKETING/ PUBLIC RELATIONS

Susan Mason, account executive,

DZN, Los Angeles, joins Creative Domain Design there as director, client services.



Mersky

Mark Mersky, VP, affiliate marketing, A&E Television Networks, New York, joins Adlink there in the Los Angeles Interconnect's client services division.

Appointments, Bates USA, New York: **Chris Harden**, VP, associate creative director, named senior VP; **Mark**

Rege Cordic, the man of the 85 share

An appreciation by Arthur Greenwald

If you owned a radio in Pittsburgh in the '50s or '60s, then mornings began on KDKA, with a shaky trombone rendition of "Up A Lazy River."

"Hello there, you lovers of good music you ..."

The rich baritone voice dripped with self-parody.

"And welcome to yet another chapter of the day-by-day, week-by-week, true-to-life adventures of *Cordic & Company*."

The host was Rege Cordic. The Company was Bob Trow, Karl Hardman, Bob McCully, Charlie Sords, Sterling Yates and engineer Bill Stefan. During most of their 22-year run, they commanded a staggering 85 share in morning drive.

Rege Cordic's marvelous voice was silenced by cancer on April 16. But not entirely. Pittsburghers still mimic their favorite Cordic characters: atrocious punster Carman Monoxide; Louie Adamchevitz, the philosophical Slav garbageman; tipsy golf pro Max Korfendigas; and Omicron, the bottle-shaped Venutian bureaucrat, so indignant when Earthlings returned him for the deposit.

Rege presided with a self-mocking tone that David Letterman would envy. His historic timing was just as good. He migrated from WWSW to KDKA in 1954. Pittsburghers had just cleaned up their sooty air, so they resented outdated "Smoky City" gags. With *Cordic & Company*, we were in on the jokes. You could almost believe Pittsburgh was the hip place to live.

Cordic's pranks and promotions were legendary. He established Brick Throwing as a sport, replete with fan rallies, a "Miss Brick" contest, and an official magazine, *Thud*.

There was Olde Frothingslosh, "the Pale Stale Ale—so light the foam is on the bottom." The gag proved so popular that Iron City Beer was repackaged annually in collectible Frothingslosh cans.

But Cordic's masterpiece was inspired by near-tragedy. One December night in 1964, a wayward Pitt student zoomed off the end of the incomplete Fort Duquesne bridge, miraculously landing unhurt on the Allegheny riverbank. Within weeks, hundreds of thousands of cars



L-r: Cordic, Trow, Stefan and Hardman gather around the sound effects console as they prepare for a skit.

bumpers were labeled "Official Entry, Cordic & Company Bridge Leap Contest." Taking no chances, the cops sealed off the bridge with giant concrete barriers.

Always eager to stretch his performing skills, Cordic couldn't resist KNX's 1966 invitation to succeed Bob Crane. The comedy transplant didn't take, but Cordic remained in Los Angeles, building a solid career as a supporting player in films and TV—and as a top voice talent for KABC, HBO, and in dozens of cartoons. Still, Cordic never lost touch with Pittsburgh. For years he pretaped movie intros for WTAE-TV on whose AM station he reprised *Cordic & Company* in 1970, where as a high school student, I saw him work. Cordic's widow, Cathy, recalls with pride that he maintained his sense of humor through the worst of his illness. "You've got to have laughs," he told her, "or what's the point?" So it's fitting that the tears at Forest Lawn were those of laughter.

Those of us lucky enough to be from Pittsburgh invite you to join us as we raise a mug of Olde Frothingslosh to toast one of the greats.

Greenwald is a TV writer and producer who, like Cordic, migrated from Pittsburgh to Los Angeles.

Kelly, senior art director, named VP; **Julie Heaven**, VP, named senior VP, management representative; **Julika Englert**, account supervisor, named VP; **Ajay Nair**, account supervisor, named VP.



Clark

Chris Clark, executive VP, Bates North America, New York, appointed director, business development.

Appointments, Kelly Michener Advertising, Lancaster, Pa.: **Cindy Epley**, media supervisor, McCann-Erickson, Washington, joins as strategic media planner; **Chuck Fischer**, account executive, Lyons Marketing Communications, Wilmington, Del., joins as senior account executive.



Mergentime



Stiegemeier

Andrea Mergentime, director, marketing, Lee Hunt Associates, New York, named executive director, global development.

Larson Stiegemeier, account supervisor, D'Arcy Masius Benton & Bowles, St. Louis, elected VP.

Patti DeGroot, senior writer, Bader Rutter & Associates, Milwaukee, named account executive.

TECHNOLOGY

Brian Roberts, president, Comcast Corp., Philadelphia, elected chairman, Cable Television Laboratories, Louisville, Colo.

Randy Brinkley, senior executive, National Aeronautics and Space Administration, Washington, joins Hughes Space and Communications, a unit of Hughes Electronics Corp., El Segundo, Calif., as senior VP, satellite programs.

Susan James, counsel, Wagner, Johnston & Rosenthal, Atlanta, joins Crawford Communications there as VP and

general counsel.



Fader

Ellen Strahs

Fader, VP, corporate communications and investor relations, Katz Media Group, New York, joins Metromedia International Group, Metromedia Fiber Network and Big City Radio Inc.

there as VP, investor relations.

Ed Moloney, production director and writer, Jonathon Brandmeier Radio Showgram, Los Angeles, joins DMX Listening Room, a subsidiary of TCI Music, Los Angeles, as executive producer.

Joseph LoGrasso, director, U.S. sales, IMMAD ECVS Broadcast Services, Boonton, N.J., joins SeaChange International, Maynard, Mass., as director, Eastern U.S. broadcast sales.

Helen Najarian, product manager, Thermo Environmental Instruments, Franklin, Mass., joins Device Technologies, Marlborough, Mass., as regional sales manager, New England.

INTERNET

Philip Laxar, senior VP, programming, Jones Intercable, Englewood, Colo., named chief operating officer of Jones Internet Development Group.

Jason Revzon, editorial producer, Digital City Boston division, America Online, Boston, joins WLVI-TV there as online producer.

ALLIED FIELDS

George Gubert, senior VP, research, Rysher, Los Angeles, joins SNAP Software—which processes and analyzes Nielsen sweeps ratings data—Los Angeles, as president.



Evans

Phillip Evans,

free-lance designer, Santa Monica, Calif., joins Taffetdesign, a design studio specializing in broadcast design and promotion, Santa Monica, Calif., as senior designer.

Julian Davis, senior account executive, Arbitron Co., Atlanta,

named director, urban radio marketing.

DEATHS

Douglas Manship Sr., 80, president emeritus, Capital City Press, died April 26 after a lengthy illness. Manship held many positions at Capital City Press, from reporter to publisher to president. In the early 1960s, he founded WBRZ-TV Baton Rouge, La., and worked for racial harmony at the station. He later served as chairman of the board of WBRZ-TV and Mobile Video Tapes, which owns and operated KRGV-TV Weslaco, Texas. Manship was a veteran of World War II. He is survived by a daughter, three sons, grandchildren and step-grandchildren.

Ray Stanfield, 71, president, Stanfield and Associates media brokerage firm, died April 24 of cancer. Stanfield's career in broadcasting spanned 55 years, beginning during World War II when he was a staff announcer with WFBC(AM) and WESC(AM) in Greenville, S.C. Following his service with the U.S. Navy he returned to broadcasting, working at WIS(AM) and WIS-TV in Columbia, S.C., and WIST(AM) in Charlotte, N.C. He later served as VP of Metromedia Inc. and general manager of KMBC(AM) and KMBC(FM) Kansas City, Mo., and KLAC(TV) and KMET(TV) Los Angeles. Stanfield also was an associate CEO and owner of the national media brokerage firm Chapman Associates from 1975 until 1990. He is survived by his wife, four daughters and eight grandchildren.

Robert R. Scherer, 57, vice president and market manager for Clear Channel Broadcasting, died May 4 of cancer. Scherer was hired by WHAS Inc. in 1963. He was an account executive, sales manager and general manager for WHAS(AM)-WAMZ(FM) Louisville, Ky., radio until September 1996, when WHAS Inc. was sold to Clear Channel Broadcasting. At Clear Channel, Scherer was named vice president, and added market manager to his responsibilities in 1998. In 1997, Scherer received the Al Temple Award for outstanding contributions to the Kentucky Broadcasters Association. The following year, he was honored by the Society of Professional Journalists for a lifetime of distinguished service. He is survived by his wife and three children.

—Compiled by Mara Reinstein
mreinstein@cahners.com

Kennard's No. 1 choice fills top slot

When FCC Chairman William Kennard needed to pick a new chief of staff last fall, guessing who made the short list of candidates was a favorite pastime of agency staff members.

But Kennard says his list was shorter than most staffers imagined. He had one person in mind for the job: Kathryn Brown, then chief of the FCC's Common Carrier Bureau and the agency's top telephone regulator.

Brown, he decided, could add some sorely needed administrative talent to an office that had been criticized as long on policy and legal expertise but short on management skills. The trick was convincing Brown to take a job with demands that are second only to the chairman's.

After a month of lobbying her for the job, Kennard swayed Brown by arguing that the chief of staff position would allow the best use of her combination of management talent and roughly a dozen years' worth of telecommunications-policy experience.

"I identified her early on as someone who I would like to have as a chief of staff," Kennard says. "Kathy has a terrific presence. She can walk into a room full of people divided over contentious issues and get them working toward a consensus."

For her part, Brown says she was attracted to the agency's top staff role as the FCC shepherds the telecommunications industry through a period of extraordinary change.

When Brown replaced Chief of Staff John Nakahata in October, her to-do list was long. She was charged with improving relations with Capitol Hill and speeding the flow of commission rulings, merger approvals and other decisions. She also took it upon herself to increase the amount of contact between the agency's various bureaus—a change she felt was necessitated by convergence of business sectors. The agency's senior managers now meet twice weekly.

"She's gotten senior staffers talking to each other much better than before," Kennard says. "At an agency like this where there are many different bureaus, there's a danger of reverting to fiefdoms that don't talk to each other."

Though relations with the Hill are still thorny, Brown gets high marks from industry officials and Washington regulatory attorneys for her efforts to reach out to commercial interests. "Even though the



Upon joining the FCC, "I had a...feel for the pressure industry is under."

Kathryn Cambone Brown

Chief of staff to FCC Chairman William Kennard, Washington; b. June 22, 1952, Bronx, N.Y.; B.S., psychology, Marist College, Poughkeepsie, N.Y. 1974; J.D., Syracuse University, N.Y., 1980; chief legal assistant, New York State Court of Appeals, Albany, N.Y., 1980-87; litigation attorney/managing attorney, New York State Public Service Commission, Albany, 1987-92; director of consumer services, N.Y. Public Service Commission, 1992-95; associate administrator, domestic policy, National Technology and Information Administration, Washington, 1995-98; chief, FCC Common Carrier Bureau, June-October 1998; current position since October 1998; m. Steve Brown, July 27, 1975; two daughters: Kaitlin, 13, and Meghan, 10

broadcasting community didn't know her well when she came on board, she has made an effort to get to know people in the industry and find out what their concerns are," says David Donovan, lobbyist for the Association of Local Television Stations.

"Kathryn Brown genuinely tries to find solutions that work for both industry and the consumer," says Bruce Jacobs, telecommunications attorney for Fisher Wayland Cooper Leader & Zaragoza.

The most daunting part of her job is managing the flow of traffic into Kennard's office—and her own.

Despite work days that can last 14 hours, she finds the job invigorating. "I have the best job in Washington," she says. "Most days I have fun."

Brown's journey to the chief of staff post has been a natural progression from state court and regulatory work to the National Telecommunications and Information Administration to the FCC. "The theme has been trying to find a way to work through industry and technological transition in a way I hope is beneficial to consumers, as well as to understand the pressures that companies are facing."

As chief of the Common Carrier Bureau for just five months, Brown says she at least was able to set the agenda for 1999. During her tenure, the bureau spelled out how local phone companies open their markets to earn the right to enter long-distance markets; completed reform of access charges, the rates telcos can charge for access to their networks; and launched a review of universal service charges, which customers pay to assure that services are accessible in rural and low-income areas.

At NTIA, where she worked for three years, she was the administration's point person on implementing the 1996 Telecommunications Act. She also focused on digital television, spectrum auctions, Internet telephone service, local competition, universal service and access-charge reform.

She considers her time at NTIA a watershed in her career, because she had to be more than just an industry regulator. "I was watching the industry in a very different light. Then when I came to [the FCC], I had a better feel for the pressure industry is under and what's happening in a pretty rough-and-tumble competitive environment."

— Bill McConnell

Direct competition in the cable industry keeps price hikes in check but is not preventing consumer costs from rising, according to the FCC's annual survey of industry prices released Friday. In areas where cable customers have a choice of providers, the average monthly rate rose 5.8% from 1997 to 1998. Basic tier rates were \$28.71 and \$30.53, respectively. During that time the average rate in noncompetitive areas climbed 6.9%. The FCC also found that the average number of channels in competitive areas was 54 while noncompetitive areas averaged 50 channels. Still, few cable customers were able to enjoy the benefits of choosing from two or more cable providers. Only 246 service areas out of 30,000 designated areas in the country meet the FCC's legal definition for effective competition.

Wall Street valued Radio One Inc. at \$604.3 million on the minority-owned radio-group owner's first day of trading last Thursday. The Lanham, Md.-based Radio One had been expected to be valued at around \$401 million. The company went public with 6.5 million shares at \$24 each, reflecting avid interest in "the urban radio specialist," which had initially planned to offer 6.2 million shares at \$17-\$21. That raised \$156 million for about 37% of Radio One, \$55 million more than expected. The stock price then closed at \$34.625, up 44%. Upon completion of pending acquisitions, Radio One will own/operate 25 radio stations.

Frank Washington is back, this time in a company that is buying radio stations in mid-sized to smaller

markets. Washington's partner in his latest venture is radio veteran Frank D. Osborn, who sold his stations to Capstar Broadcasting Corp. in February 1997. Together they have formed Aurora Communications LLC, of which Osborn is president and Washington is a board member, Osborn says. Last week they agreed to pay \$66 million to I. Martin Pompadur for the leading combo in Connecticut: WICC(AM) Bridgeport and WEBE(FM) Westport/Bridgeport. Later in the week they signed on for Capstar's WFAS-AM-FM White Plains and WZZN(FM) Mount Kisco, N.Y. The price there was \$20.25 million. Expect another deal shortly, Osborn says. "We've got a nice start," going after stations that the mega-groups can't buy or can't hold onto for regulatory reasons, he says. Washington could not be reached for comment.

Thursday, Cox Radio Inc. said it will pay \$78 million cash for just one radio station: WNGC(FM) Athens, Ga. The deal with Clarke Broadcasting Corp. includes a construction permit to relocate and build a new radio tower that will allow the station to reach the valuable northeast Atlanta market, Cox Radio President Robert F. Neil said in a news release. Cox already owns or operates four radio stations in its home market of Atlanta and one more station does not hit the FCC's ownership cap of eight. However, Cox Radio's parent, Cox Enterprises Inc., also owns WSB-TV Atlanta and the city's daily newspaper, *The Atlanta Journal-Constitution*. Cox Radio CFO Maritza Pichon says there should be no overlap issues: For FCC purposes, WNGC's new signal will not overlap with the TV station's. As far as the newspaper, WNGC's new signal will not reach the entire Atlanta metro area, she says. Including WNGC and other pending deals, Cox says it will own or operate 58 radio stations.

No more delays of the FCC's low-power-radio proposal, the Minority Media

Telecommunications Council urged last week. The group opposes a request by the National Association of Broadcasters to delay the comment deadline on the plan from June 1 until August 1. MMTC rejected the broadcasters' contention that the extra time was needed to complete studies of potential interference to existing full-power stations that would be caused by allowing low-power outlets. "Most of the relevant

ABC dubs Pollock stations group chief

Lawrence Pollock, longtime president of the ABC stations group, is moving up to become chairman of the division.

Walter Liss, chairman of Buena Vista Television, succeeds Pollock as president and day-to-day head of the group. Liss will remain in Burbank, Calif., where several hundred senior ABC managers will be relocating in the next 18 months.

Pollock will remain in Philadelphia. Speculation within ABC is that Pollock will retire when the move to Burbank is completed. In a press release, Robert Callahan, president, broadcasting, ABC, said the appointments "assure an orderly transition in the years ahead."

Alan Wurtzel, senior vice president, media development, brand management and research at ABC, joins NBC as president, research and media development, reporting to NBC Television President Randy Falco. The appointment is effective May 10.

—Steve McClellan



Pollock and Liss assume their new jobs May 10.

issues in this proceeding will not be addressed by the NAB's research," wrote MMTC executive director David Honig.

Reps. Bob Goodlatte (R-Va.) and Rick Boucher (D-Va.) last week introduced two bills that would allow regional telephone companies to offer data services across state lines, and also would strongly encourage large cable companies to open their networks to competitors who want to offer high-speed Internet access. Cable was against the plan, while telephone companies supported it. "We strongly oppose this legislation," said NCTA President Decker Anstrom. "The last thing the dynamic new Internet market needs is government regulation." U.S. Telephone Association VP Timothy McGivern noted: "USTA members support delivering high-speed Internet access to customers across the country, but our companies have been stifled time and again by onerous FCC regulations."

UPN is bringing hockey to its summer lineup. The network has ordered 13 episodes of the action series *Power Play* from Alliance Atlantis Communications and will unveil the series on Monday, June 14. *Power Play*, which is based on a New York sports agent who returns to Canada to run a professional hockey team, is the first of a number of original series UPN executives say

they will air during the summer.

Panasonic received orders for its DVCPRO HD equipment from more than 70 stations at April's NAB, the company announced this week. Panasonic is looking to capture the budding high-definition production, acquisition and playback market with the 100 Mb/s DVCPRO HD format. The new format debuted at NAB '99 with the introduction of the AJ-HDC10 and AJ-HDC20 camcorders, priced respectively at \$65,000 and \$75,000, and the AJ-HD150 studio VTR, which will sell for \$65,000. The AJ-HD150 offers backward compatibility with DVCPRO 25 Mb/s and 50 Mb/s and offers a path to HDTV with an internal format upconverter that converts 480 or 480p material to 720p, 1035i or 1080i high-definition formats for playback. It also allows for simultaneous SD and HDTV feeds from the unit so a station can

Affiliates on counteroffensive

Last Thursday NAB TV Board Chairman Jim Yager and Vice Chairman Ben Tucker led an affiliates' assault on Capitol Hill to lobby to keep the TV ownership cap. The cap limits station groups to covering no more than 35% of the nation's TV homes. The affiliates went to Washington in response to the networks' unified effort last month to push Congress and the FCC to raise the cap.

Cox Broadcasting Exec. VP Andy Fisher, LIN TV VP Paul Karpowicz, NAB President Eddie Fritts and NAB Exec. VP Jim May joined Yager and Tucker in meetings with key House and Senate lawmakers, including House Commerce Committee Chairman Tom Bliley (R-Va.), House Telecommunications Subcommittee Chairman Billy Tauzin (R-La.) and Rep. Cliff Stearns (R-Fla.). No Fox representatives will be on the tour, said Murray Green, VP of Miami Fox affiliate WFLX-TV. Fox affiliates made their Washington rounds last month, Green said, and now are embroiled in negotiations with the network over their relationship. Yager, president of Benedek Broadcasting, and Tucker, president of Retlaw Broadcasting, also were in town for an NAB executive board meeting.

broadcast a 480i NTSC signal while simulcasting a 720p or 1080i HDTV feed.

FX doesn't have wrestling, but it now has 'The Original Toughman Contests.'

The cable channel reached an agreement with Litton Syndications and Adorable Promotions last week for the exclusive TV rights to the long-running pseudo-boxing events. The *Toughman* series will debut on FX this summer and it's tentatively slated for Friday nights at 10 p.m. ET. *The Toughman Contest*, which is credited with bringing Mr. T, Butterbean and a number of other fighters to national prominence, features everyday men battling throughout the year in regional contests for the title of "the toughest man alive."

Lockheed Martin Corp., Telecom Italia and TRW Inc. say they plan to invest \$900 million in Astrolink LLC, a venture

that plans to use satellites for high-speed communications and Internet access. Lockheed Martin, the second-largest U.S. aerospace company, will own 46% of Astrolink, investing \$400 million. Telecom Italia, Italy's largest phone company, and TRW, a U.S. aerospace and vehicle-components maker, will invest \$250 million each. Astrolink, like competitors Teledesic LLC and Hughes Electronics Corp.'s Spaceway project, plans to use satellites for linking computer networks worldwide. Astrolink plans to launch its first satellite in 2002 and begin commercial service in 2003.

Correction: In the May 3 Fifth Estater, Jay Robert Feldman's name was incorrectly transposed as Robert Jay.

Correction: The May 3 In Brief section incorrectly listed the new theme of The Box network. It is "Control Your Music."

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Incorporating The Fifth Estate TELEVISION Broadcasting

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Shuffling deck chairs

The total deregulatory issue was joined in Washington last week as a delegation of network affiliates followed their network leaders to town to argue their side of things. To review the bidding: the networks are asking for total deregulatory relief on ownership issues so that they can compete with all the relatively unhindered media—cable, satellites, telephones, the Internet—in the rapidly changing media marketplace. The affiliates want to keep the 35% national cap on TV ownership, which acts most importantly to keep the networks in line. There are many other ownership dereg issues on the table, but the cap is where the rubber meets the road.

In the long run what is at stake is the continuation of free, over-the-air broadcasting. In the short run this is a battle over program compensation: the affiliates wanting to continue the present system, the networks determined to end it. It's clear to us that something has to give. The networks, essentially, are loss operations; only one is truly profitable in any given year. If they don't get relief they will either close down or become cable networks, in an instant obtaining the dual revenue streams all broadcasters need to compete in the new television millennium.

This page, of course, has been for total deregulation for, oh, 68 years. We never thought it was the government's role to be anything but a spectrum traffic cop. That remains our point of view, although we understand step-by-step deregulation may be the wisest course. Even the networks that embrace it today were late coming to this party; they've never asked for more than incremental deregulation along the way.

We'll just say this. If those with policymaking power want to do something to give free broadcasting a competitive break, they better get to it. AT&T will have everything else sewed up by Christmas.

A break in the dam

At last, it's time to buy that big-screen digital set. Finally, there will be a critical mass of prime time, high-definition programming to watch. Just when we thought it might take years.

It's all because of a deal struck between CBS and Mitsubishi, the Japanese set manufacturer, to transfer the network's preexisting 35 mm film product—up to 15 hours a week—to 1080i high definition. The other networks will surely follow suit, and digital television will be on its way.

The possibility has been there all along. Most of prime time—as much as 80%—has been produced in 35 mm film from the medium's genesis, beginning with black and white and continuing through color. And 35 mm, of course, is the film equivalent of HDTV. The only thing standing in the way has been the film-to-tape transfer costs, about \$20,000 an hour.

That's where Mitsubishi comes in, essentially stepping into the patronage role played by RCA in the introduction of color. Mitsubishi's self-interest in this generation parallels that of RCA in the 1950s and 60s—it wants to sell sets. No programming, no set sales. Thus its enthusiasm for the CBS proposal to subsidize the transfer costs in return for mentions before each show. In the history of digital television, this will go down as one of the more brilliant quid pro quos.

Now, about buying that digital set: Caveat emptor. FCC Chairman William Kennard wouldn't be having his May 20 roundtable with the consumer electronics industry and others if all was well with that end of the digital business. As you've read here before, there is as yet no interoperability among sets and media, nor is there an agreed-upon system of copyright protection. This new compact between Mitsubishi and CBS just makes it more urgent that the set side of television get its act together.

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