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FCC set to OK TV duopolies

Charter plans mega-IPO

Sinclair sheds radio stations

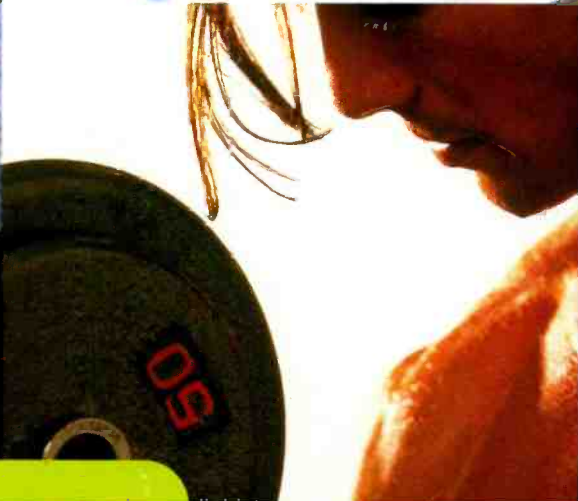
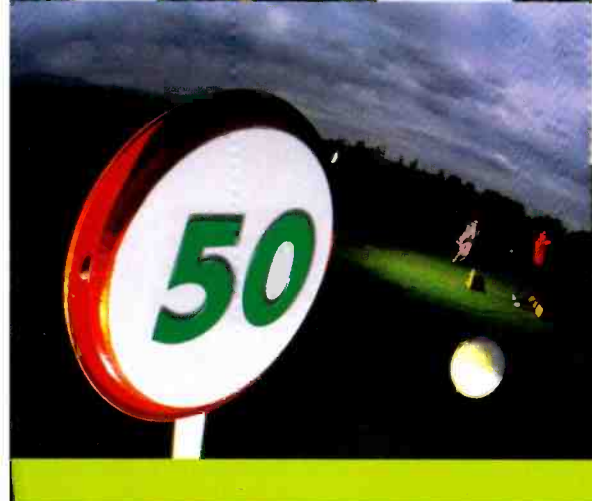
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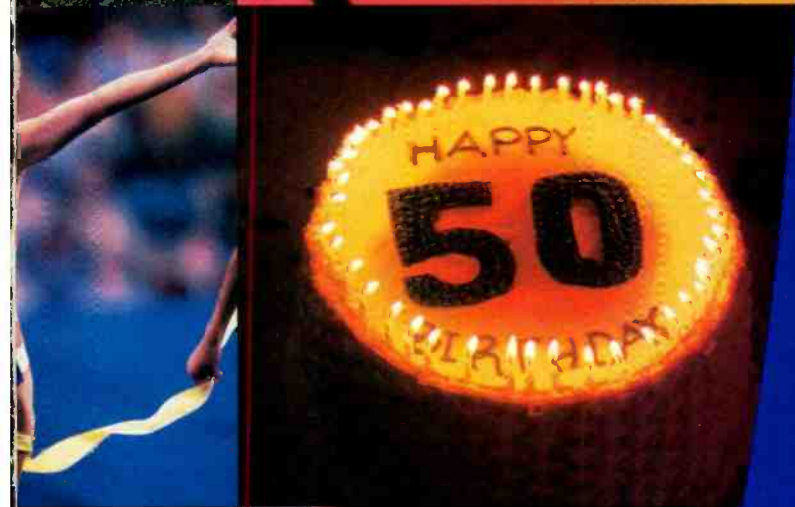
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Two TVs to a market?

FCC proposal for permitting duopolies, preserving LMAs headed for Aug. 5 vote

By Bill McConnell

The FCC this week is expected to relax its local broadcast ownership restrictions, but also will try to keep a lid on industry consolidation by confining the changes to markets with plenty of competition.

Privately, most broadcasters are thrilled with the plan, especially when compared to the much more restrictive one FCC Chairman William Kennard floated last fall. But, publicly, in advance of the vote, they are guarded. "We're pleased to see the item on the agenda," was National Association of Broadcasters President Eddie Fritts' only comment.

Public interest advocates, however, are outspoken, warning that the changes would only tighten the grip of corporate owners on the broadcast industry.

Although the five commissioners continued to debate details of the plan Friday (July 30), the major points appeared to have been agreed upon. Still, the scheduled Aug. 5 vote is not guaranteed, because any one commissioner could yank the plan from the agenda if there are last-minute snags.

One of the biggest changes would allow one owner to control two TV stations in a market if one of the stations were financially troubled. Duopolies would also be permitted if the second station were not among the four top-rated stations in the market and at least eight unaffiliated TV stations remained in the market after the acquisition.

Existing local marketing agreements, which have allowed owners to circumvent the ban on duopolies, will be grandfathered, but no new ones will be permitted. The roughly 80 in-market TV LMAs will be allowed to continue unhampered for at least five years, after which their owners must meet the duopoly criteria and show that they serve the public interest.

Another key change would permit radio/TV crossownership if 20 unaffiliated full-power broadcast outlets remained in the market. One owner would be per-

mitted to hold six radio stations and up to two TV outlets if the duopoly conditions were also met. Current waiver policy allows a TV station to own up to eight stations under some conditions and owners with eight outlets would be allowed to keep all their holdings.

Commission Democrats are said to be pushing hard for tougher standards for permitting duopolies and crossownership and for grandfathering LMAs. For instance, sources said they want 10 unaffiliated TV stations to remain in any market where a duopoly is permitted and would like to bump the number of remaining broadcast voices to greater than 20 when permitting radio/TV crossownership. They are also said to want LMAs divested if they were estab-

Easing up

Highlights of the proposed ownership rules

Duopolies—A company may own two TV stations in one market, if one is financially troubled or if it is not among the market's four top-rated stations and the market has at least eight other separately owned TV stations. A company may own single stations in adjacent markets—say, Baltimore and Washington—even though the stations' signals overlap.

Local marketing agreements—Existing agreements under which one station operates another in the same market will be grandfathered for five years. After five years, LMAs not meeting the new duopoly criteria (above) will be forced to prove they benefit the public interest.

Radio/TV crossownership—

A company with one or two TVs may own up to six radio stations in a market, if the market has at least 20 other separately owned TV and radio stations. Any company that now exceeds the new cap under an FCC waiver may keep all the stations.

Attribution—For purposes of the ownership rules, ownership is defined as an active investment of 10% or a passive investment of 20%. (The existing levels are 5% and 10%, respectively.)



lished after 1996—the year the FCC began its latest local ownership rule-making and Congress ordered the FCC to review all its ownership rules.

Kennard is expected to have the three votes needed (including Republicans Michael Powell and Harold Furchtgott-Roth) to get the changes approved, but with key details in flux, there is no guarantee that his fellow Democrats will support the final plan. Some observers question whether Kennard wants to be put in the awkward position of being the only Democrat to support a largely deregulatory measure. If Democrats Susan Ness and Gloria Tristani oppose the package, some predict Kennard will pull the issue from the Aug. 5 agenda.

The Clinton administration and Capitol Hill have been strangely silent on the proposed changes. Officially, the National Telecommunications and Information Administration, which represents the White House on communications policy, has not backed away from its February recommendation that duopolies and LMAs be prohibited. Nevertheless, NTIA has said it is not planning to weigh in on the latest proposal. Capitol Hill Republicans, who excoriated Kennard for pushing a more restrictive plan last fall, have apparently decided not to rock the boat. Sen. Ernest Hollings (D-S.C.), long an opponent of LMAs, two weeks ago sent a disapproving but mildly worded letter to Kennard about relaxing the rules, apparently making him the only public lawmaker to express opposition.

Public advocates urged the FCC to take a tougher line against grandfathering LMAs. "It would be profoundly disturbing for the FCC to send a message that crime pays," said Andrew Schwartzman, president of Media Access Project. "The final measure for me is the degree to which the commission ends all of the games and phony ownership arrangements."

The commission is also expected to make some key changes to the way it counts minority investments toward local and national ownership caps. For instance, the thresholds for counting equity investments would be raised from 5% of total assets to 10% for active investors and from 10% to 20% for passive investors. ■

Minority initiatives advance

Efforts to help minorities, women and small business owners enter broadcasting and other parts of the telecommunications industry are heating up on Capitol Hill just as the FCC is set to loosen broadcast ownership rules—a move many fear could further tighten big corporations' control of the airwaves.

Last week, Senators John McCain (R-Ariz.) and Conrad Burns (R-Mont.) said they plan to introduce a bill in September that would defer capital gains taxes for owners who sell their telecommunications business to "historically disadvantaged individuals." The bill also would give tax breaks to any seller who invests the proceeds of such a sale in a telecommunications business owned by a minority or "under-represented" interest.

To ensure that big companies do not take advantage of the new tax-certificate program, McCain and Burns would restrict buyers to those with a limited amount of assets and would forbid quick turnover of the property.

In the House, Reps. Charlie Rangel (D-N.Y.) and Eliot Engel (D-N.Y.) said they also plan to introduce similar legislation. A Rangel spokesman said Rangel and Engel plan to work with McCain and Burns to craft a bill. Rangel's support is key because he is the ranking Democrat on the House Ways and Means Committee, the traditional launching pad for tax legislation.

One broadcast source said the broadcast industry is supporting the tax certificate legislation as well as a privately created minority investment fund in exchange for relaxed ownership rules. The source said broadcasters are working on raising "hundreds of millions of dollars" and that details of the private-sector plan should be ready by September.

A Kennard staffer, however, said there was "absolutely no" trade-off with broadcasters between looser ownership rules and congressional and private minority initiatives. Throughout his term, Kennard has pushed heavily for cooperation from broadcasters to get minorities into the broadcast business.

Just last week, Kennard promoted reinstating the tax-certificate program during a speech to Latino Americans in Houston. "Building a strong and prosperous future also means using a tax-certificate program," Kennard said. "It must be designed to entice owners to sell all types of communications licenses—from TV to cable to wireless—to small businesses and especially small business run by Latinos, women and other minorities."

Congress repealed the tax-certificate program in 1995, after several instances of corporate abuse.

—Paige Albinak and Bill McConnell

Telenoticias files Chapter 11

Move follows major layoffs, late paychecks and phone disconnects at troubled network

By Dan Trigoboff

CBS Telenoticias, the financially plagued Spanish- and Portuguese-language news and information network started by CBS but now controlled by Mexico-based Grupo Medcom, has filed for federal bankruptcy protection in Miami.

The Chapter 11 reorganization petition came only days after CBS Telenoticias laid off 77 people, nearly a quarter of its work force. Earlier reports of financial trouble included late paychecks, unreimbursed expenses and disconnected phones in at least one of

its bureaus (B&C, July 12). Sources say CBS Telenoticias President Manuel Abud tried to rally the remaining troops at the announcement of the layoffs and the bankruptcy.

"[W]e are sure that this action will help us in achieving our key goals of creating a powerful and successful action plan for the company, and in refocusing our business strategy and operations," said Abud. Strategies include trying to do more with less, and searching for new revenue streams.

The company said it might also look for a new partner, presumably one with cash. And there had been reports of a pos-

sible deal with Brazilian TV interests prior to the bankruptcy filing. CBS maintains that as a passive investor, it would be inappropriate for it to comment.

The round-the-clock Latin American network and programming service, started by CBS, targeted Spanish-language Latin markets beginning in 1994, and later added a Portuguese-language service targeting Brazil. In late 1998, Medcom bought 70% of the network. Current and former employees trace their problems to CBS' diminished role, and some have told B&C they are planning or considering lawsuits for money they say they are owed. ■

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Thank You, ATAS, For

THE SOPRANOS

16 NOMINATIONS!

Outstanding Drama Series
David Chase, Brad Grey, Robin Green & Mitchell Burgess, Frank Renzulli, Ilene S. Landress, Allen Coulter

Outstanding Directing for a Drama Series
David Chase *Pilot*

Outstanding Lead Actor in a Drama Series
James Gandolfini

Outstanding Lead Actress in a Drama Series
Lorraine Bracco

Outstanding Lead Actress in a Drama Series
Edie Falco

Outstanding Supporting Actress in a Drama Series
Nancy Marchand

Outstanding Guest Actor in a Drama Series
John Heard

Outstanding Writing for a Drama Series
David Chase *Pilot*

Outstanding Writing for a Drama Series
Frank Renzulli *Nobody Knows Anything*

Outstanding Writing for a Drama Series
Robin Green, Mitchell Burgess *Isabella*

Outstanding Writing for a Drama Series
James Manos, Jr., David Chase *College*

Outstanding Casting for a Series
Georgianne Walken, Sheila Jaffe

Outstanding Sound Mixing for a Drama Series
A Hit Is a Hit
Mathew Price, Todd Orr, Ron Evans, Adam Sawelson

Outstanding Sound Editing for a Series
I Dream of Jeannie Cusamano
Ray Spiess, Jr., William Angarola, Robert Guastini, Benjamin Beardwood, Anna MacKenzie, Mike Marchain, Rick Hinson, Bruce Swanson, Mark Cleary, Cindy Rabideau, Kathryn Dayak, Zane Bruce, Joe Sabella

Outstanding Single-Camera Picture Editing for a Series
Joanna Cappuccilli *Pilot*

Outstanding Art Direction for a Series *Pilot*
Edward Pisoni, Diann Duthie, Jessica Lanier

OZ

2 NOMINATIONS!

Outstanding Guest Actor in a Drama Series
Charles S. Dutton

Outstanding Casting for a Series
Alexa L. Fogel

THE RAT PACK

11 NOMINATIONS!

Outstanding Made for Television Movie
Neal H. Moritz, Fred Caruso

Outstanding Supporting Actor in a Miniseries or a Movie
Don Cheadle

Outstanding Supporting Actor in a Miniseries or a Movie
Joe Mantegna

Outstanding Writing for a Miniseries or a Movie
Kario Salem

Outstanding Casting for a Miniseries or a Made for Television Movie
Nancy Foy

Outstanding Sound Mixing for a Miniseries or a Movie
Felipe Borrero, Michael Casper, Dan Leahy, Chris Welch

Outstanding Music Direction
Mark Adler

Outstanding Makeup for a Miniseries, Movie or a Special
Kandace Westmore, Judy Lovell, Marvin G. Westmore, Kevin Haney

Outstanding Hairstyling for a Miniseries, Movie or a Special
Audrey Futterman-Stern, Gail Ryan, Kelvin R. Trahan

Outstanding Single-Camera Picture Editing for a Miniseries or a Movie
Eric Sears

Outstanding Art Direction for a Miniseries or a Movie
Hilda Stark Manos, Kathleen M. McKernin, Linda Spheeris

MR. SHOW

WITH BOB AND DAVID

2 NOMINATIONS!

Outstanding Writing for a Variety or Music Program
Bob Odenkirk, David Cross, Scott Aukerman, Jerry Collins, Jay Johnston, Bill Odenkirk, B.J. Porter, Brian Posehn, Dino Stamatopoulos

Outstanding Lighting Direction (Electronic) for a Comedy Series
Simon Miles *Like Chickens...Delicious Chickens*

A LESSON BEFORE DYING

7 NOMINATIONS!

Outstanding Made for Television Movie
Ellen M. Krass, Joel Stillerman, Ted Demme, Robert Benedetti

Outstanding Directing for a Miniseries or a Movie
Joseph Sargent

Outstanding Lead Actor in a Miniseries or a Movie
Don Cheadle

Outstanding Supporting Actress in a Miniseries or a Movie
Cicely Tyson

Outstanding Writing for a Miniseries or a Movie
Ann Peacock

Outstanding Casting for a Miniseries or a Movie
Robi Reed-Humes, Shay Bentley-Griffin

Outstanding Sound Mixing for a Miniseries or a Movie
Shirley Libby, Rick Ash, Gary Alexander, Scott Ganary

THE CHRIS ROCK SHOW

2 NOMINATIONS!

Outstanding Performance in a Variety or Music Program
Chris Rock

Outstanding Writing for a Variety or Music Program
Tom Agna, Vernon Chatman, Louis CK, Lance Crouther, Gregory Greenberg, Ali LeRoit, Steve O'Donnell, Chris Rock, Frank Sebastiano, Chuck Sklar, Jeff Stilson, Wanda Sykes-Hall, Mike Upchurch

JANET: THE VELVET ROPE

4 NOMINATIONS!

Outstanding Choreography
Choreography: Tina Landon
Additional Choreography: Michael Andrews, Teresa Espinosa, Robert Vinson

Outstanding Lighting Direction for a Drama Series, Variety Series, Miniseries, Movie or a Special
Jerry Watson

Outstanding Music Direction
Rex Salas

Outstanding Technical Direction/Camera/Video for a Special
Keith Winikoff, Matthew Allwork, Ted Ashton, Rocky Danielson, Barrie Dodd, Sam Drummy, David Eastwood, Tom "Scoop" Geren, Ian Hembury, Jay Kulick, Kenneth Patterson, Bill Philbin, Phil Piotrowsky, David Plakos, James Ramsay, Ron Tufnell, Dave Swann, Chuck Reilly, Matty Randazzo

Our Emmy Nominees

74 Nominations!

SEX AND THE CITY

2 NOMINATIONS!

Outstanding Comedy Series
Darren Star, Michael Patrick King,
Barry Jossen

Outstanding Lead Actress in a Comedy Series
Sarah Jessica Parker

WINCHELL

4 NOMINATIONS!

Outstanding Lead Actor in a Miniseries or a Movie
Stanley Tucci

Outstanding Casting for a Miniseries or a
Made for Television Movie
Juel Bestrop

Outstanding Cinematography for a
Miniseries or a Movie
Robbie Greenberg

Outstanding Art Direction for a
Miniseries or a Movie
Marcia Hinds-Johnson,
Bo Johnson, Cindy Coburn

JERRY SEINFELD: "I'M TELLING YOU FOR THE LAST TIME" LIVE ON BROADWAY

2 NOMINATIONS!

Outstanding Variety, Music or Comedy Special
Jerry Seinfeld, Marty Callner, Jeff Thorsen

Outstanding Technical Direction/Camera/Video
for a Special
Keith Winikoff, Rob Balton,
David Eastwood, Tom "Scoop" Geren,
Robert L. Highton, Charlie Huntley,
Ernie Jew, Jay Kulick, Lynn Noland,
Kenneth Patterson, Manny Rodriguez,
Ron Washburn, Mark Sanford

GEORGE CARLIN: YOU ARE ALL DISEASED

2 NOMINATIONS!

Outstanding Variety, Music or
Comedy Special
George Carlin, Jerry Hamza,
Kimber Rickabaugh, Rocco Urbisci

Outstanding Performance in a
Variety or Music Program
George Carlin

TRACEY TAKES ON...

8 NOMINATIONS!

Outstanding Variety, Music or
Comedy Series
Allan McKeown, Tracey Ullman,
Stephanie Cone, Jerry Belson,
George McGrath, Dick Clement,
Ian LaFrenais, Gail Parent, Jenji Kohan

Outstanding Performance
in a Variety or Music Program
Tracey Ullman

Outstanding Art Direction for a Variety or
Music Program
Toby Corbett, Suzuki Ingerslev,
Evette Frances Knight *Obsession*

Outstanding Art Direction for a
Variety or Music Program
Chez Cherry, Suzuki Ingerslev,
Evette Frances Knight *Scandal*

Outstanding Choreography
Joe Malone *Drugs*

Outstanding Costume Design
for a Variety or Music Program
Jane Ruhm *America*

Outstanding Hairstyling for a Series
Audrey Futterman-Stern *Hair*

Outstanding Makeup for a Series
Ron Berkeley, Kathleen Berkeley,
Thomas R. Burman,
Bari Dreihand-Burman

JOHN LEGUIZAMO'S FREAK

2 NOMINATIONS!

Outstanding Variety, Music or
Comedy Special
John Leguizamo, Robert Morton,
David Bar Katz, Denis Biggs, Krysia Plonka

Outstanding Performance in a
Variety or Music Program
John Leguizamo

LENNY BRUCE: SWEAR TO TELL THE TRUTH

2 NOMINATIONS!

Outstanding Non-Fiction Special
Sheila Nevins, Robert B. Weide,
Anthony Radziwill

Outstanding Achievement in Non-Fiction
Programming—Picture Editing
Geof Bartz, Robert B. Weide

DENNIS MILLER LIVE

3 NOMINATIONS!

Outstanding Variety, Music or Comedy Series
Dennis Miller, Kevin C. Slattery,
Eddie Feldmann, David Feldman,
Leah Krinsky, Colleen Grillo

Outstanding Performance in a
Variety or Music Program
Dennis Miller

Outstanding Writing for a Variety or Music Program
Eddie Feldmann, Dennis Miller,
David Feldman, Leah Krinsky,
Jim Hanna, David Weiss, Jose Arroyo

LANSKY

Outstanding Cinematography for a
Miniseries or a Movie
John A. Alonzo

ROSIE O'DONNELL'S KIDS ARE PUNNY

Outstanding Children's Program
Rosie O'Donnell, Sheila Nevins,
Carole Rosen, Amy Schatz, Diane Kolyer

THUG LIFE IN D.C.

Outstanding Non-Fiction Special
Sheila Nevins, Marc Levin,
Daphne Pinkerson, Nancy Abraham

TODD MCFARLANE'S SPAWN

Outstanding Animated Program
Todd McFarlane, John Leekley,
Randall J. White, Brad Rader, Jennifer Yuh,
Tom Nelson, Chuck Patton,
Mike Vosburg, Rebekah Bradford

UNIVERSOUL CIRCUS

Outstanding Choreography
Jean Claude Belmat



Sassa seeks role models

NBC's Hollywood chief says minority characters should have positive impact

By Joe Schlosser

NBC West Coast President Scott Sassa doesn't believe minorities should be added to network programs solely in the name of diversity.

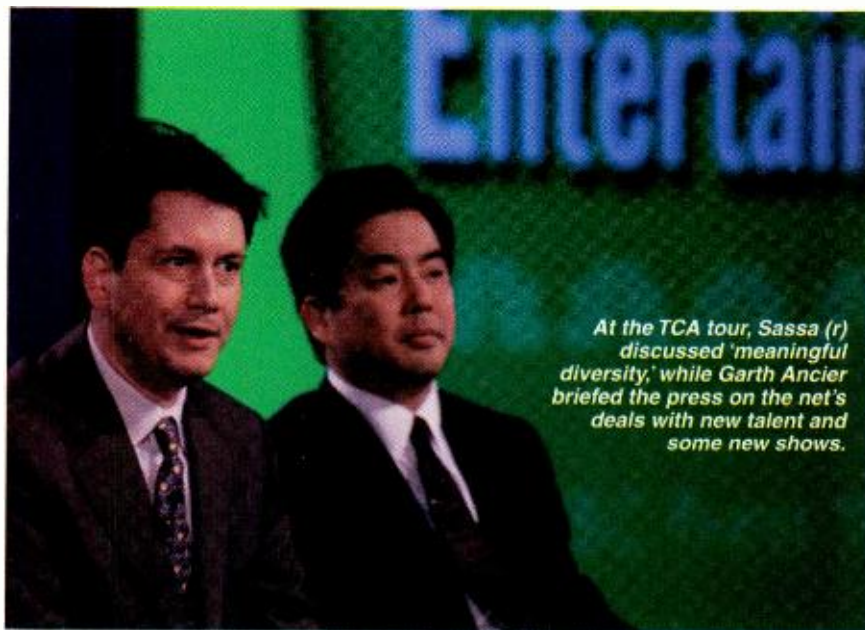
Speaking at the annual summer Television Critics Association (TCA) meetings in Los Angeles last week, Sassa said minorities should be cast for acting parts in which they are seen as role models, not just faces on the screen. Sassa, an Asian American, admitted that NBC has not done "as good a job as possible" on the diversity front.

Speaking from personal experience, Sassa told the media, "I don't know that I'm qualified to tell you how African Americans feel about how they're portrayed or what they see on television, and I don't think I'm capable of telling you how Latinos feel about how they're portrayed or what they see on television," Sassa said. "But I can tell you how I feel about seeing Asian Americans portrayed on television. And I've got to tell you, growing up, seeing David Carradine as a Chinese guy pissed you off."

"I think we get lost in this issue of diversity... There is diversity and there is meaningful diversity. You not only want to see someone that looks like you on TV, you want to see someone that is a role model, someone that you want to be with, someone that you want to aspire to be."

Sassa's remarks came two weeks after NAACP President Kweisi Mfume said the Big Four broadcast networks' upcoming fall schedules are a "virtual whitewash." Sassa told reporters that he plans to meet with Mfume and anyone who has a 'good agenda' on the issue of ethnic diversity.

At the TCA meetings in January, Sassa made headlines when he told reporters that NBC would have more family programs and less sexual content. At the time, NBC only had one series, *Mad About You*, that was based on what Sassa called a nuclear family. Now, he says, the network will have four programs based on such families when NBC's fall lineup rolls out next month. Sassa included last year's late addition, *Providence*, along with the upcoming



Freaks and Geeks, *Law & Order: Special Victims Unit* and *Third Watch*.

On the issue of sex, Sassa said, "We have obviously gotten the word out to producers that sex for sex's sake is not going to be a good thing. Because we deal with adult-themed programming, there will be sexual content [on NBC], but it's going to have to be germane to the story line and not gratuitous."

Sassa also reiterated NBC Television President Bob Wright's threat to drop out of the National Association of Broadcasters, as Fox has done. "We are just in favor of our trade organization supporting our view of deregulation," Sassa said. "We think deregulation of the telecommunications business is very important to the growth and the success of this business and the fact that ABC, NBC, CBS and Fox are all for deregulation and the trade organization doesn't want to support us...we have not officially pulled out, but we are looking at that as an option."

The TCA meetings mark just the second time that Sassa and new NBC Entertainment President Garth Ancier have appeared together before the national media since Ancier's arrival earlier this year. Ancier, who helped The WB and Fox move up in the programming ranks, appears to be wasting

no time getting NBC up to speed. "We are making many, many talent deals right now, probably more than NBC has made in many years, with both new and established talent," he said.

Ancier said NBC did a good job developing dramas for the upcoming season, as well as one-hour comedies such as *Freaks and Geeks*, but on the half-hour comedy front, the network needs help. At the meetings, Ancier unveiled three new half-hour comedy pilots, including a sitcom called *Not the Bradys* that will be produced and created by actor/comedian Keenen Ivory Wayans. The potential midseason replacement series mocks *The Brady Bunch* and will star an interracial couple with interracial children. Wayans is committed to two seasons with the series and will not likely be involved on the acting side of the show. Ancier also has given pilot commitments to Yvette Lee Bowser (*Living Single*, *For Your Love*) and the former producers of ABC sitcom *Ellen* for a pair of potential midseason series.

NBC will roll out its new fall programs in the week beginning Sept. 20. The only twist that week will be drama *Third Watch* debuting in *ER*'s regular Thursday night slot. The following week, *ER* will debut in its regular time slot on Sept. 30.



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Sinclair turns off radio

Entercom wins bulk of stations with offer of nearly \$822 million in a 'win-win' scenario

By Elizabeth A. Rathbun

The radio business may be booming, but Sinclair Broadcast Group Inc. would rather amplify its TV holdings and, hopefully, its stock price.

Last Monday, about seven weeks after saying it was considering selling its 52 radio stations or spinning them off into a publicly traded company (B&C, June 14), Baltimore-based Sinclair said it will sell 43 of them to Entercom Communications for \$821.5 million cash.

Three AMs in South Carolina are being sold to another, undisclosed buyer, while Emmis Communications has the rights to Sinclair's five FMs and one AM in St. Louis.

The deals get Sinclair out of the radio business and give it more leverage. Once the radio deals close, "we would certainly be in the market to buy more television stations," Chief Executive David Smith said last Thursday during a conference call about Sinclair's second-quarter earnings.

The company is also considering a stock buyback to boost its stock price.

"The deal is a tremendous win-win for both companies," Entercom President David J. Field said. His company more than doubles its radio holdings, from 42 to 85, and boosts its revenue 56.1%, to \$311.8 million, according to 1998 estimates by BIA Research. Entercom thus displaces Cox Radio Inc., which bid for Sinclair's stations, as the nation's fifth-largest radio group, BIA says. Infinity and Emmis had also been in the running to purchase these stations.

Sinclair is "very pleased" with the 20-times-broadcast-cash-flow multiple it got from Entercom, Treasurer Patrick Talamantes said. However, it wasn't so pleased with Wall Street's reaction. While Entercom's stock price rose 7.1% last Tuesday, to \$39.75, Sinclair's moved up a scant 0.7%, to \$17.50.

"The Street...does not understand the ultimate value of the pipeline that we have...the value of what we can potentially do above and beyond delivering pictures to the marketplace," Smith noted, referring to Sinclair's digital-TV plans (for more on those plans, see story, page 22).

Sinclair has been taking a beating on

Wall Street for more than a year, partly because of its \$2.5 billion debt. The proceeds of the Entercom deal, which amount to \$650 million, will be used to pay that down. Entercom also has pledged to spend \$5 million for advertising on Sinclair TV stations and pay \$2 million for capital improvements to which Sinclair has committed.

Both the FCC and the Justice Department must approve the deal. Assuming that occurs, closing is expected by year-end.

"The addition of the Sinclair platform is a very compelling enhancement of our platform," Field said. The companies' holdings overlap only in Kansas City, Kan./Mo., where Entercom will have to divest two FMs and one AM to comply with the FCC's

ownership cap (see chart).

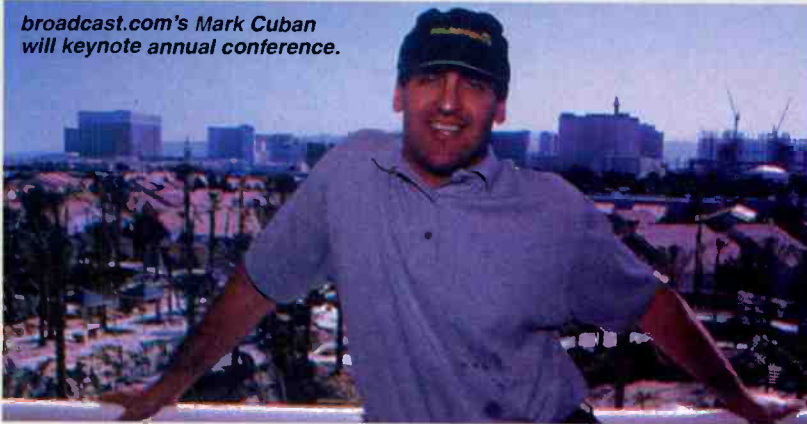
"The radio industry is booming right now," Field said. The more stations Bala Cynwyd, Pa.-based Entercom owns, "the better we'll be able to take advantage" of the increasing ad dollars being devoted to the medium.

The deal moves Entercom "into a different league of broadcasters," said Frank Bodenchak, media analyst with Morgan Stanley Dean Witter. "They now have a much larger plate of assets that they can grow revenue and margins on."

For example, Entercom should find some upside in Sinclair's stations, according to Bodenchak. Sinclair has been operating its stations with 37% broadcast-cash-flow margins, but that should be up around 50% where Sinclair's TV stations operate, he noted. ■

The futurists meet at Interface XIII

broadcast.com's Mark Cuban will keynote annual conference.



Mark Cuban, whose broadcast.com made Internet history when it was sold to Yahoo for \$5.7 billion, will keynote the 1999 Interface XIII telecommunications conference hosted by BROADCASTING & CABLE in Washington Sept. 27. He will set the pace for a day-long program tracking the evolution/revolution/convergence of television and the Internet as all three approach the 21st century.

Also on the program are two "superpanels," one in the morning on cable featuring Leo Hindery of AT&T, Tom Rogers of NBC Cable, the Weather Channel's Decker Anstrom (former president of the National Cable Television Association), Lee Masters of Liberty Media Interactive and Judith McHale of Discovery. A second in the afternoon on broadcasting, will feature Phil Guarascio of General Motors, Chase Carey of Fox, Eddy Hartenstein of DirecTV, Dick Robertson of Warner Bros. Domestic Television Distribution and Eddie Fritts of the National Association of Broadcasters. Still other superpanelists will be announced in the weeks to come. Sam Donaldson and Cokie Roberts, anchors of ABC's Sunday morning *This Week*, appearing after lunch, will review the state of the art of TV journalism. For information and reservations contact Steve Labunski at 212-337-7158.

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Charter plans mega-IPO

Cable consolidator expects to raise \$3.5 billion to finance pending acquisitions

By John M. Higgins

Paul Allen is testing whether investors are as impressed by his management skill as the size of the checks he writes. Last week, the Microsoft Corp. co-founder's Charter Communications Inc. cable unit filed for one of the largest initial public offerings ever.

Proposing to sell \$3.5 billion worth of stock, Charter asked investors to join Allen's quest to use the cable systems as the foundation of what he sees as a "wired world" meshing computing, communications and video. The money will be used to finance pending acquisitions in Allen's giant cable system shopping spree.

If the IPO goes as planned, according to Securities Data Inc., it will rank as the third-largest U.S. IPO ever, behind the \$4.4 billion sale by oil company Conoco Inc. last year and the \$3.7 billion sale by investment banker Goldman Sachs Group Inc. in May.

The deal would be only the second cable system IPO since Cablevision Sys-

Shopping spree

How Paul Allen built the fourth-largest MSO

Company	Price (in millions)	Subs	\$/sub
Charter	\$4,500	1,200,000	3,750
Falcon	\$3,600	1,000,000	3,600
Bresnan	\$3,200	656,000	4,878
Marcus	\$2,800	1,200,000	2,333
Fanch	\$2,400	519,000	4,624
Rifkin	\$1,460	463,000	3,153
Intermedia	\$1,300	266,000	4,887
Avalon	\$845	260,000	3,250
Helicon	\$550	174,000	3,161
Greater Media	\$500	174,000	2,874
Renaissance	\$459	132,000	3,477
American Cable	\$240	68,000	3,529
Total	\$21,854	6,112,000	3,626

Source: company reports

tems Corp. went public in 1986. Insight Communications Inc. broke the cable market for Charter, successfully selling \$500 million worth of stock two weeks ago.

Wall Street executives expect public shareholders to be offered about 25% of the company's equity. If so, that would value all of Charter around \$24

billion, including debt.

So far, Allen's buying spree has been primarily funded out of his own immense pockets. A partner of Microsoft Corp. Chairman Bill Gates since the first days of the software giant, he has primarily borrowed against his \$28 billion worth of Microsoft shares to pump money into Charter. Starting from nothing in March 1998, he has committed \$11 billion of his own money for deals totaling \$21.8 billion (see chart).

Wall Street and system owners love a big spender, so Allen has so far wowed both camps since his Vulcan Ventures first agreed to buy Marcus Cable last year. But in an IPO as immense as Charter's, Wall Street analysts said Allen needs to instill confidence in his ability to actually operate a company rather than spend freely.

"Can he do more than just buy companies?" asked Curt Alexander, a partner in Media Group Research, who is generally bullish on cable. "We don't have any idea what the track record is of Vulcan's investments. He's made some good ones, he's made some lousy ones."

"He's done a hell of a job amassing assets," said one media portfolio manager. "This will show whether he can monetize it."

Charter executives wouldn't comment on the deal.

The IPO filing omits critical details that must be disclosed later, such as precisely how many shares are being sold and what Allen's investment bankers believe the company is actually worth.

However many shares Charter sells to the public, Allen will remain firmly in control. He will hold Class B shares that have around 10 times the voting power of the Class A as available to outside shareholders.

Allen has lined up a big team of investment bankers to pitch the deal, with Goldman, Sachs & Co.; Bear, Stearns & Co.; and Morgan Stanley Dean Witter co-managing the offering.

The deal won't come to market for another two months. ■

AT&T cable cash flow slowing

After posting a decline for the second quarter, AT&T Corp. said it won't meet its already-modest goals for cash-flow growth from its cable systems this year. Executives blamed the slowdown in part on personnel costs.

The company had been telling analysts to expect "mid-to-high" single-digit percentage cash flow growth for 1999, with the biggest bump coming during the second half. But AT&T Broadband & Internet Services cautioned that actual results will be a couple of points lower.

Leo Hindery, president of AT&T's cable arm, blamed the slower growth on increased hiring to improve customer service of AT&T's systems and upgrading the benefits packages of TCI employees to match those given AT&T workers. Further, the company accelerated the switchover from the old TCI brand to AT&T, Hindery said.

At the same time, Hindery and AT&T Chairman Mike Armstrong said they are enthusiastic about the cable unit's progress, particularly high initial sales of cable telephone service in Fremont, Calif.

AT&T said the cable systems' revenue increased 8% to \$1.4 billion. Core operations grew 6% with the rest coming from new services. But cash flow dropped 3%, even excluding start-up costs from new businesses. With those costs included, cash flow dropped 11% to \$469 million. —John M. Higgins

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Latinos set net boycott

By Dan Trigoboff

Leaders of several Latino groups, angered over what they say is a near-total absence of Latino characters and actors in network TV, are calling for a boycott of the Big Four.

"There has never been a Latina lead in a dramatic series, never a miniseries with a Latino theme, maybe one movie of the week with a Latino theme ... never in the history of television has there been a fully integrated and fully functional Latino family," said Felix Sanchez, president of the National Hispanic Foundation for the Arts and coordinator of a number of groups promoting the "brownout."

Even *I Love Lucy*, which starred Cuban-born actor-musician Desi Arnaz, always offered comedy from the viewpoint of Ricky Ricardo's American wife, said Sanchez.

The boycott planned for the week of Sept. 12 could be the first of many, and Sanchez said it's gone past the point where scheduled meetings with network heads will suffice.

For his part, NBC West Coast President Scott Sassa said last week that he had not heard from the Latino groups. NBC Entertainment President Garth Ancier told reporters he would love to see a Hispanic family drama on network TV. "It's obviously a huge opportunity for someone to go into," Ancier said.

The groups want more Latinos hired and promoted behind the cameras as well, and their concerns reach into the cable industry.

Sanchez, a lawyer, said they might seek some regulatory solution and plan to ask the President to expand a Federal Trade Commission media violence probe to include the impact of the dearth of Latino images on children and their development.

The National Hispanic Media Coalition also said Latino leaders will meet with the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People and other minority groups to pursue a collective strategy to achieve better representation in the media. ■

CLOSED CIRCUIT

BEHIND THE SCENES, BEFORE THE FACT

WASHINGTON

Keeping the First first

Whitney Radio President and NAB District 2 Director Bill O'Shaughnessy has found an important ally in his crusade to keep First Amendment issues atop NAB's agenda. In response to a letter he sent to the NAB executive committee calling for a major campaign promoting the First Amendment, Paramount Stations Group President Tony Cassara penned one of his own to the committee. O'Shaughnessy's letter had talked of the "First Amendment rock and regulatory hard place" that media companies and trade associations now find themselves between. Cassara agreed, saying that "to the extent that some of us feel constrained by the 'regulatory hard place' ... we need NAB to do the heavy lifting that we may not always be able to do for ourselves. We all understand that more often than not, compromise is the way of life in Washington. When it comes to the First Amendment, there can be no compromise."

Tauzin's take

Rep. Billy Tauzin (R-La.) last Friday sent a letter to Republicans on the House Commerce Committee—who sources say unanimously opposed a Tauzin proposal to fund public broadcasting at high levels—asking them to support a new bill. The letter addresses multiple press reports saying Tauzin postponed a scheduled July 14 committee vote on the bill because he was going to lose. Rep. Mike Oxley (R-Ohio), Tauzin's chief rival for chairmanship of the House Commerce Committee in 2000, and Rep. Steve Largent (R-Okla.) had sponsored a substitute measure with lower funding. Tauzin spokesman Ken Johnson denies Republican bickering and says the vote was delayed because members discovered the day before that public TV station WGBH-TV Boston had swapped donor lists with the Democratic National Committee. In his letter, Tauzin also implies

Republicans inappropriately took the squabble to the press. "There is no fight or argument over 'authorizing levels,'" Tauzin wrote. "We can and will agree upon them. Attempts to create such an argument for public consumption is a reflection of a separate agenda that has no place in our subcommittee's work or our efforts as a team."

DENVER

Source vs. TV Guide

Interactive program guide developer Source Media faces new legal battles following the meltdown of its joint venture with TV Guide Inc. TV Guide disclosed last week that Source allegedly violated Canadian intellectual property laws and that the joint venture was on hold until the issue could be resolved. Source fired back, saying it was pulling out of the deal with TV Guide to do a similar deal with cable operator Insight Communications. In the ensuing press release battle, TV Guide accused Source of breach of contract and hinted strongly it will sue and Source countered that TV Guide's allegations are baseless. Whew! For Source, however, the problems go beyond the TV Guide situation. It faces a slew of shareholder lawsuits from 1998 over alleged failure to disclose loss of contracts and other material events. It has a heavy debt load of about \$120 million and a cash-burn rate estimated at \$2 million a month. Insight's joint-venture investment of \$13 million buys Source time, but the company would run out of cash by about June 2000. Moreover, Source acknowledges it would have to pay TV Guide liquidated damages of \$10 million—essentially a break-up fee—if Source goes with a company other than TV Guide. Finally, there are questions about Insight CEO Michael Willner's role as an insider. Willner, who has invested privately in Source, has been on the company's board for more than a year. As such, Willner would have had access to terms of the deal with TV Guide.

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FINANCIAL WRAP-UP

Week of July 26-30

WINNERS

	7/30 midday	% change
Radio One	\$44.00	10.00
Entercom	\$40.38	8.75
Sinclair	\$18.88	8.63
Paxson	\$11.31	7.74
Young Bcstg	\$50.00	6.81

LOSERS

	7/30 midday	% change
Citadel	\$32.75	(12.60)
Hispanic Bcstg	\$70.44	(9.76)
Telewest	\$42.50	(6.47)
Shop at Home	\$8.00	(6.25)
AMFM	\$52.25	(5.62)

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BROADCAST TV (7/29/98-7/30/99)



Week ending 7/30
Close249.59
High250.29
Low247.46

0.5%

CABLE TV (7/29/98-7/30/99)



Week ending 7/30
Close296.01
High301.40
Low295.14

1.8%

RADIO (7/29/98-7/30/99)



Week ending 7/30
Close683.47
High698.76
Low678.27

3.0%

DOW JONES

Week ending 7/30
Close10655.2
High10979
Low10655.2

2.3%

NASDAQ

Week ending 7/30
Close2638.49
High2705.84
Low2619.19

2.0%

S&P 500

Week ending 7/30
Close1328.72
High1365.4
Low1328.72

2.1%

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Wrangle over ENG reimbursement

FCC is considering covering only equipment depreciation in plan to take back spectrum

By Bill McConnell

TV stations are still waiting to learn how much they will be paid for giving up a big chunk of electronic newsgathering spectrum.

The FCC was expected to decide by June how the industry will be reimbursed for ENG spectrum slated to be reassigned for a global wireless telephone system, but agency staffers say a decision won't come until fall.

The new users are required to provide sufficient compensation to purchase "comparable facilities," according to government rules. But they are fighting with broadcast executives over exactly how much money that means.

TV reporting crews now use the spectrum to beam coverage of news, sports and other live events back to their stations. Currently the ENG spectrum covers 120 mhz on the 1990 mhz-2110 mhz band. After the take-back, the band will shrink to 85 mhz and begin at 2025, thus slash-

ing the size of the seven ENG frequencies from 18 mhz to 12 mhz. Because of the smaller channel size, today's equipment cannot simply be retuned to the new frequencies, broadcasters say, but must be completely replaced.

Broadcasters thought they had won the battle and expected the FCC soon to rule that the new users must cover all relocation costs, which would include funds needed to replace all of their ENG equipment plus as much as another 45% or so to cover taxes, legal, engineering and installation costs. The mobile satellite service (MSS) operators have long argued that broadcasters were due only enough to cover the depreciated value of their existing equipment.

The FCC is reconsidering the depreciation-only idea, thanks to a study prepared on behalf of ICO Global Communications, one of the ENG band's potential new users. The study, conducted by Charles River Associates, argues that FCC rules and federal law require only

enough compensation to leave the broadcasters no better or worse off than they are today. "The proper value for 'comparability' is the economic value of the equipment—i.e. its remaining useful life," CRA notes in its study.

What's more, CRA says, market studies show that wireless operators' rates will be too low to cover all of the broadcasters' relocation costs. If MSS companies are required to fund full relocation, the FCC will doom the government's goal of introducing the new service, the study found.

The National Association of Broadcasters is incensed that the wireless operators' argument is getting another look from regulators. "The commission has [already] determined that compensating licensees merely for the depreciated value of their equipment is insufficient to enable incumbents to construct comparable facilities," the NAB wrote in a July 12 letter to the agency. "MSS entities clearly do not want to pay the price of entry." ■

CPB opposes donor list swaps

Hopes to avert legislation, seeks guarantees from brokers that no political groups get names from public stations

By Paige Albiniak

In the face of mounting criticism from Washington, the Corporation for Public Broadcasting's board has come out against member stations' swapping their donor lists with partisan political organizations.

"The CPB board will not condone any activities by stations that raise doubts about the integrity and objectivity of public broadcasting," said Diane Blair, chairman of CPB's board. "This resolution expresses our determination to do whatever is within our power to insure that the trust of the American people, which is the most precious asset of public broadcasting, is fully

justified and promptly restored."

By adopting the policy, CPB hopes to avoid legislation that would make such activities illegal.

Last month, House Telecommunications Subcommittee Chairman Billy Tauzin's (R-La.) subcommittee learned that public TV station WGBH-TV Boston had exchanged its donor lists with the Democratic National Committee. Later, WETA-TV Washington, WNET-TV New York, KQED-TV San Francisco and KCET-TV Los Angeles all said they had traded their lists with political organizations, albeit always through list brokers and never directly. Discovery of the swaps set off Republican rebukes, and Tauzin quickly held a hearing to

examine public broadcasting's fundraising policies.

Meanwhile, House Commerce Committee Chairman Tom Bliley (R-Va.) last week sent letters to CPB President Robert Coonrod, PBS President Ervin Duggan, NPR President Kevin Klose and Association for Public Television Stations President David Brugger asking them to respond in writing to a series of questions by Aug. 4.

"Given that at least four stations have admitted to exchanging donor lists with political organizations since the 1980s, I am concerned that CPB did not know about this practice, or more troubling, if CPB did know, that CPB apparently did nothing to halt this practice," Bliley wrote to Coonrod.

At the hearing, Coonrod said CPB would require all stations receiving federal grants to certify that they had not swapped donor lists with any political group. Coonrod, Duggan, Klose and Brugger all were quick to condemn the stations' actions and agreed with members of Congress to work to ensure no such swaps happened again.

CPB's Inspector General is surveying public broadcasting stations' list-swapping activities. ■



WASHINGTON WATCH

By Paige Albiniak and Bill McConnell

Phone regulation stifling Internet, coalition says

Telecommunications regulations are hindering the deployment of Internet services in rural states, according to a study commissioned by a coalition that includes regional phone companies Ameritech and SBC. IAD-advance, a group put together by former Rep. Susan Molinari and former White House press secretary Mike McCurry, wants Congress to deregulate the regional phone companies so those companies can send data across state lines. The 1996 Telecommunications Act forbids the phone companies from transmitting traffic out of state until the FCC certifies that they have opened their local markets to competition. Several bills that would allow the phone companies to send data out-of-state have been introduced in Congress, including one package from Reps. Rick Boucher (D-Va.) and Bob Goodlatte (R-Va.) and another from Reps. Billy Tauzin (R-La.) and John Dingell (D-Mich.).

The study says phone companies are deciding not to build Internet backbone hubs outside major urban areas because there is not enough population with enough income to support investment in those places. Regulation also is stifling the regional phone companies, who have the most capital, from investing in rural states. The study esti-

mates that building a hub costs approximately \$200,000. The Competitive Broadband Coalition—which includes AT&T, MCI WorldCom, Qwest, Sprint, Cable & Wireless and the Association for Local Telecommunications Services—rebutted the study, saying it is intended by the regional phone companies “to seek regulatory shortcuts to maintain their advantage in their markets rather than simply following the rules that are clearly set out in the Telecom Act, and are proven to be working.”

In fond memory of Democratic fund-raiser Dutko

Lobbyist and Democratic fund-raiser Dan Dutko, 54, died last week after sustaining head injuries in a bicycle accident in Aspen, Colo. Dutko ran his own lobbying firm, The Dutko Group, which represents telecommunications interests such as AT&T, the Satellite Broadcasting and Communications Association, Cumulus Media, Cable & Wireless and TV Guide. Dutko also was an active Democratic fund-raiser, heading the Democratic National Committee's Leadership 2000 effort and playing a key role in President Clinton's 1996 re-election campaign. Clinton and Vice President Gore issued statements regarding Dutko's passing. “He deeply believed in the cause of the Democratic Party, and worked tireless-

ly to ensure that it would have the ability to communicate effectively with the voters,” Clinton said. “I will always remember the boundless energy and enthusiasm he brought to every task and challenge, inspiring others to do the same,” Gore said. He is survived by his wife, Deborah Jospin, director of AmeriCorps, and two sons, Jonathan, 6, and Matthew, 5.

Buffalo stations win public channel switch

Western New York Public Broadcasting, which operates two noncommercial TV stations in Buffalo, N.Y., will be allowed to sell the weakest of its two stations, WNEQ-TV, even though the outlet operates on a channel reserved for public TV. The FCC last week agreed to move the noncommercial reservation from WNEQ's ch. 23 to ch. 17, on which WNYPB operates co-owned station WNED-TV. Selling WNEQ-TV will allow WNYPB to fund WNED-TV's conversion to digital transmission, the organization said. WNED-TV has the strongest signal of WNYPB's two Buffalo stations, offers more programming and has the largest audience. Although a sale was opposed by advocacy groups seeking to keep two noncommercial stations in the city, FCC's Mass Media Bureau ruled that a deal would be in the public interest because it would improve funding

for WNED-TV. The action does not remove or add any commercial channel in Buffalo, the FCC said. Sinclair Broadcasting has a contract to buy WNEQ-TV. David Honig, attorney for the Coalition for Noncommercial Media, called the decision “plainly wrong” and said the group may appeal the ruling to the full commission.

CFA attacks AT&T's 'arrogant' cable rules ploy

AT&T's pitch for more lenient cable ownership rules is an “arrogant” ploy to fool regulators into allowing industry monopoly, says Mark Cooper, research director at the Consumer Federation of America. “There's no justification for changing the rules,” he said after reviewing the company's application to acquire MediaOne. AT&T is asking the FCC not to count minority holdings in cable systems toward national ownership caps unless the investor controls or supplies programming. The FCC doesn't enforce its 30% household pass-by cap, but the commission is revising its rules and plans to reissue them before ruling on the MediaOne deal. Unless the new rules are more lenient than those currently on the books, AT&T would need a waiver to win FCC approval of the acquisition because it has several minority investments in large systems that would count toward the limit. “AT&T claims their ownership in these companies is not effective,” Cooper says. “But...one corporation could own the entire industry and still claim to have no control.”

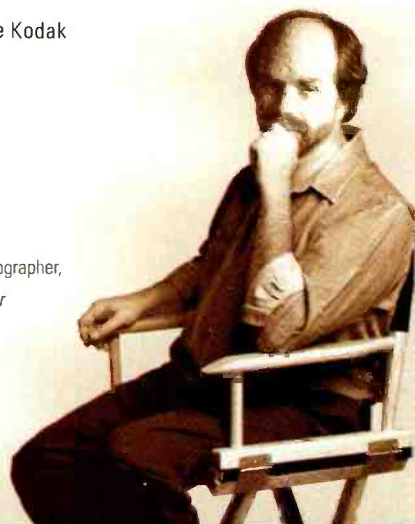


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Back to the Future

Broadcasters worry that need for outdoor antennas limit DTV reception, potential

After you buy your digital TV set, be sure to swing by Radio Shack on the way home. To pick up digital signals off the air, you're going to need an outdoor antenna and you're probably going to need to mount it on a rotor to make sure it's pointed in the right direction. In the world of DTV, rabbit ears and bow-tie antennas just won't do.

For all the high-tech hype, says a growing number of critics, DTV isn't much of an over-the-air service. The first generations of costly DTV sets now sitting in showrooms do a far worse job receiving pictures than that \$79 black-and-white sitting on the kitchen counter.

And the poor indoor reception capability is causing increasing concern among some broadcasters. Led by Baltimore-based Sinclair Broadcast Group, which owns or operates 59 stations, they fear the loss of millions of potential viewers—those unwilling or unable to mount an outdoor antenna or subscribe to cable (or hook up second or third sets to cable). They also believe the reception problem threatens a potentially lucrative business—the

By Glen Dickson

broadcasting of data to computers, particularly laptops and other portable devices.

"Today, it does not work," says Sinclair President and CEO David Smith of DTV. "Period and end of sentence." (For more from Smith, see the interview that begins on page 24.)

According to Smith, the model used for the U.S. DTV transmission standard, one based on outdoor measurements made with directional antennas mounted on 30-foot masts, is outdated. "That's wrong in terms of the real world," he says. "The real world doesn't have, necessarily, outdoor antennas and there's a staggering part of society that has loop antennas, or bow-tie antennas, sitting on their sets. Well, nobody cared about those people when the initial conditions were laid down to create the standard."

To make its point, Sinclair has conducted side-by-side tests in Baltimore of the indoor reception performance of the U.S. modulation scheme—the American Television Systems Committee's 8-VSB system—and the Euro-

pean COFDM system.

Broadcasters who witnessed the Baltimore demonstrations give the same account: 8-VSB was barely receivable on simple antennas indoors in high multipath environments, even after extensive antenna adjustments, while COFDM worked all the time, regardless of antenna orientation.

"I simply observed that the COFDM signal was remarkably superior to the 8-VSB as far as ease of reception," says Mike DeClue, director of engineering for Clear Channel Communications. "Simply stated, it just worked better. It was difficult or impossible to get 8-VSB in some cases, and it was not that way with COFDM. We were never able not to get it; 8-VSB was very difficult. The antenna had to be very, very precisely placed, and there could not be any movement around the antenna. In a very real and practical sense, it was unusable."

"It's impossible not to be impressed by the demonstration Sinclair provided," adds Lee Carpenter, corporate chief engineer for Pegasus Broadcast Television. "It raises a number of concerns regarding DTV's signal propagation, or lack of it, in a multipath environment."

While Carpenter says it's impossible to draw any conclusions from the Sinclair test, he would like to see more research into the merits of 8-VSB and COFDM—sooner rather than later.

"We do not have all the answers we need to ensure that the implementation of DTV will work as originally projected," says Carpenter. "And if it doesn't work that way, broadcasters are in trouble."

Within the next 60 days, Sinclair plans to petition the FCC to either impose DTV receiver standards to improve reception or reconsider 8-VSB as the U.S. standard. Smith says he expects other broadcasters to join him in signing the petition.

What broadcast engineers don't agree on is what the relatively unscientific Sinclair demonstration actually means. Most aren't sure if the 8-VSB standard is actually inadequate for indoor reception, or whether the Sin-

clair demonstrations simply reflect the shortcomings of first generation DTV receivers that were rushed to market last fall.

"The question was why can't 8-VSB receivers be as good as COFDM receivers?" says PBS DTV Project Engineer Ed Williams. "I think that's a fair question to find out, until we know whether the difference is in the system or the difference is in the receivers. All we know is we saw a difference. We can't draw any conclusions on the system at this moment until doing an adequate scientific analysis of the capabilities of receiving 8-VSB," he says. Williams would also like to see a comparison of COFDM with NTSC coverage, such as the Advanced Television Test Center did with 8-VSB.

Fox executives weren't surprised by what they saw at the Sinclair demo, says Andrew G. Setos, executive VP for News Corp.'s News Technology Group. "We didn't learn much new. We know the first generation [tuner] chips don't work well with indoor aerials but do work well with outdoor aerials. We know chips are being developed to address those matters.

"From a mathematical standpoint, COFDM and 8-VSB should perform equally well in a multipath environment," Setos says.

Simon Wegerif, product marketing and business development manager for Philips Semiconductors, says that Philips' second-generation 8-VSB tuner chip has several new features designed to fight multipath interference, which Philips identified as a problem when testing indoor DTV reception in New York. Wegerif says one of the challenges is modeling indoor reception in a lab, since each location has a different dynamic interference pattern. But he is optimistic Philips' new 8-VSB tuner, which should make its way into DTV sets in 2000, will offer a significant improvement.

"One of the key questions of whether or not VSB can perform as well indoors in a heavy multipath environment as COFDM still has to be answered," says Wegerif. "It may be answered in the

next few months, when we and other people will start to see how much progress is really being made."

Zenith, the patent holder on the 8-VSB system, is currently working on its third-generation 8-VSB tuner-chip. Its second-generation chip set is already in the receivers it will ship this fall. Richard Lewis, Zenith's senior VP of technology and research, says he isn't surprised by Sinclair's demonstration since he knows DTV manufacturers still have work to do in fighting multipath. But he says there is nothing wrong with the 8-VSB standard.

"It's a receiver issue; it's not a system issue," says Lewis. "We happen to know some of the issues with these boxes, and it's a solvable issue." Executives from Samsung and Sharp voiced similar opinions.

Most manufacturers and broadcasters are also quick to point out that COFDM's multipath performance comes with an inherent trade-off—its carrier-to-noise threshold is lower than 8-VSB's. That means that for a given power level, COFDM doesn't reach as far out into a station's analog coverage area as 8-VSB.

"With the issue of multipath robustness and sensitivity are trade-offs," says Fox's Setos. "The viewer who lives 80 miles from the transmitter would be out of luck with COFDM but not with VSB."

Engineers say that to achieve the same reach as 8-VSB, COFDM would require broadcasters to transmit at more than twice the power required for 8-VSB. That would mean bigger transmitters, bigger electric bills and—perhaps most importantly—a complete overhaul of the DTV frequency allocation plan devised by the FCC.

"The fundamental thing not showing up there is the trade-off with COFDM's ability to reject strong multipath, which is a five [decibels] worse carrier-to-noise threshold in the receiver," adds ATSC Executive Director Craig Tanner. "For most stations, huge areas in the Grade B contour will no longer be reached by DTV. Sinclair is not telling people that.

"Sinclair says it is not interested in

the outer reaches of the Grade B area, not interested in going that far out. That's Sinclair's view. However, they have an inordinately high interest in achieving reception indoors in the center of the city, which is the most difficult reception there is—and one, coincidentally, that COFDM is suited for."

Sinclair's argument is that the viewer 80 miles away is either watching another market, or already has an outdoor antenna with a preamplifier to receive broadcast signals. What's important to Sinclair is reaching viewers close to a station's transmitter, particularly those viewers who are used to good NTSC reception with an indoor antenna and less apt to have cable. And Sinclair's stance seems to resonate with some smaller station groups that aren't sure if they'll get digital must carry, or "will carry," from cable operators.

"In the cities, where the major population is—that's our bread-and-butter," says Dale Kelly, director of engineering for Pappas Telecasting. "That's where the viewers are. And the people who live in cities can't be guaranteed must carry."

"The concept we were sold was broadcast replication, and that's based on signal strength," adds LeBon Abercrombie, Pappas' senior executive VP of planning and development. "But it appears you don't have replication if you can't receive the signal at the same locations as you receive an NTSC signal you'd be willing to watch."

Sinclair points out that COFDM can also support mobile reception—something 8-VSB wasn't designed for, although Zenith says it is investigating how 8-VSB could support it. But ATSC's Craig Tanner, a vigorous defender of the standard, says mobile reception wasn't one of the original requirements for the standard, a point seconded by set manufacturers.

"I understand there are some interests in changing the requirement of what the broadcast system should do," says Gary Feather, Sharp senior manager of business development for digital video. "I hear some things that are real, and some things that are not. If it's

a real point that they want mobile platforms receiving the signal, then by very definition COFDM is a better solution since 8-VSB is not designed for reception on the move. But not many people watch TV while driving along."

With the exception of Fox, the major networks have been quiet on the DTV debate Sinclair has started. CBS is conducting indoor DTV 8-VSB reception tests in Philadelphia, but hasn't released results. NBC isn't talking either, but is launching its own tests of 8-VSB and COFDM, according to a source. And ABC has made no public comment on the Sinclair test.

"All the engineers believe COFDM is a better solution domestically," says one network source. "The problem is, nobody wants to deal with the political fallout. [Sinclair] is on the right side of the technical issue here. You can throw away their motivations."

Although COFDM is a better technical solution, revisiting the ATSC standard wouldn't be pretty, says the source. "The risk of reopening the issue and losing the spectrum is huge. The problem is, to change the standard is to bring it to a screaming halt. There's no way to do this gracefully. There are too many stakeholders who will want to be heard."

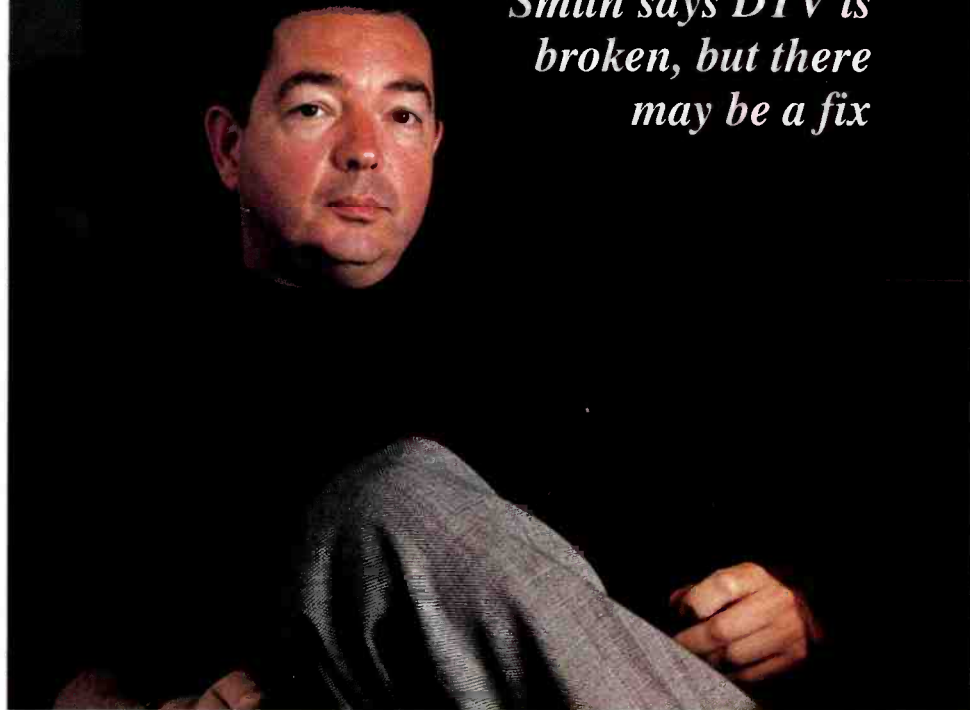
Others suggest the networks have less to lose if 8-VSB won't support indoor reception, since they have more leverage to negotiate cable carriage for their owned stations than small station groups. CBS and NBC have already struck DTV carriage deals with Time Warner and AT&T, respectively.

"The networks have already made deals with major cable companies for carriage, and when they've got the top 20 markets, that's where their money is," says one broadcast source. "I know and understand Sinclair's position. They have no allegiance to a major network, and their business is in broadcasting only. They clearly see whatever is coming on the horizon that will impede their ability to get programming out to viewers as a threat, and they want to make sure they have robust delivery and that does not necessarily involve cable."

"What Sinclair is doing fundamentally is communicating to the world that they believe in a different set of requirements for digital broadcasting," says the ATSC's Tanner. "It remains to be seen whether anyone agrees with them and whether the industry as a whole can come to a consensus." ■

A better way

Sinclair's David Smith says DTV is broken, but there may be a fix



David Smith isn't happy with the current state of DTV, and he's not afraid to talk about it. Since early 1998, the president and CEO of Sinclair Broadcast Group has been raising questions about the ability of the current crop of DTV sets to receive pictures using simple indoor antennas—an ability he feels is crucial to the future of broadcasting. To convince the broadcasting world that DTV is broken (and that there might be a fix), Sinclair for the past month has conducted side-by-side demonstrations of the current U.S. transmission standard (8-VSB) and the European standard (COFDM).

More than 100 broadcasters, manufacturers and policymakers have witnessed the tests. While all may not agree with Smith, he won many converts and few doubt his sincerity in wanting digital TV to work. Associate Editor Glen Dickson spoke with Smith about the tests and what they mean. An edited transcript follows.

What's wrong with the ATSC transmission standard we have right now?

The promise of DTV was to be able to provide crystal-clear, high-resolution pictures in place of today's analog, ghostly, noisy pictures. There was supposed to be a clear replication of coverage. That means simply that when I go into somebody's house and I can watch analog television, I have to be able to

watch digital television with the same ease. What our tests have concluded—very definitively, at this point in time—is that the existing receivers that are in the marketplace are not capable of providing that coverage. In other words, the transmitter delivers the energy into the household, but the receiver does not receive the picture and display it in any kind of format or manner that would be

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What are the receiver manufacturers telling you?

We have not been led to believe, by one receiver manufacturer, that they can solve the problem and we've been asking and asking and asking. Nobody has come forward—not one chip manufacturer, not one TV set manufacturer—and said, "We are going to solve the problem, no matter what it costs, no matter how long it takes." And that disturbs us, as an industry that has a responsibility to invest tens of billions of dollars in equipment, to transmit a picture that nobody's going to be able to receive. And it only begs an obvious question from us as an industry. If we have to build it so that the public can receive it, who's going to make sure that the public can receive it? I can't, as a broadcaster, because I don't build television sets.

So it stands to reason that if all I can do is transmit a picture, somebody's got to build a receiver that works and nobody's done that to date. We have an obligation—for our



Sinclair's comparison test of 8-VSB and COFDM used indoor antennas and American and European set-top boxes. The tests wrap up this week, as the European COFDM gear is needed for DTV trials in Brazil.

benefit, and for the consumers' benefit—to revisit the issue and see if there is a better way. And we already know there's a better way, because we've been displaying it.

They're going to have to prove it, especially now, given that there is legitimate side-by-side comparison with a magnificent standard that the rest of the world is using.

Why do you think that is? Why in your opinion are they so far off the mark on their products' ability to receive the DTV signal?

They're off the mark because nobody really provided them the right set of conditions under which to design a standard. In other words, the initial conditions for digital television in this country were predicated on an outdoor antenna. Well, the receiver manufacturer would arguably tell you that, if you attach an outdoor antenna 30 feet above the ground and it has a certain amount of directivity to it, my receiver works. Unfortunately, that's wrong in terms of the real world. The real world doesn't have, necessarily, outdoor antennas and there's a staggering part of society that has loop antennas, or bow-tie antennas, sitting on their sets. Well, nobody cared about those people when the initial conditions were laid down to create the standard.

Why didn't Sinclair bring up this point when the conditions for the standard were being discussed three, four, five years ago?

As a practical matter, we made the fundamental assumption that somebody's working on the problem. And that's not irrational. If industry organizations were engaged and hired to create the standard, and make sure it does what it's supposed to do, then we relied on them to do that. But it appears as though they didn't. ATSC's role in life was to provide a standard to the U.S. broadcaster and to the consumer that provides ubiquitous coverage and ease of reception. And, by the way, the fact that we weren't involved then is no basis to disqualify us now.

Why are you taking the lead now in questioning 8-VSB?

I would only tell you that the thing that really piqued our interest in this was when we conducted the multichannel test in Baltimore over a year ago. We set up an antenna, line of sight to the tower, and we couldn't receive a picture.

And it simply begged a large question on our part: Why doesn't it work? We went to Zenith, the manufacturer—the guys who hold the patent. We went through the whole process with them and, frankly, we didn't like what we heard. And I think, as a function of our not liking what we heard from them, we went one step further and started doing some homework and studying the issue.

And you think COFDM is clearly superior?

Today there is no comparison between the receiver that receives COFDM and a receiver that receives 8-VSB. If you were in Circuit City, you'd say, "Let me have the COFDM receiver, please." You wouldn't waste two seconds with the 8-VSB receiver. It's that black and white. Not gray, it's absolutely black and white.

Do you think that due to the penetration of cable, that TV set manufacturers may have gotten a little blasé about over-the-air reception?

That's a legitimate question. And the thing that concerns us is that the TV manufacturers will simply look at the over-the-air broadcast industry and say, "We don't care about it." They will simply build junk 8-VSB receivers and say, "Don't worry about over-the-air television. Just go to cable." That, obviously, doesn't serve the public interest. And the broadcast industry will stand up, and it will fight on that fundamental issue. We're going to do what we have to do to cause the receiver manufacturers to either build sets that will allow very simple, basic reception for the consumer, or we'll argue to change the standard.

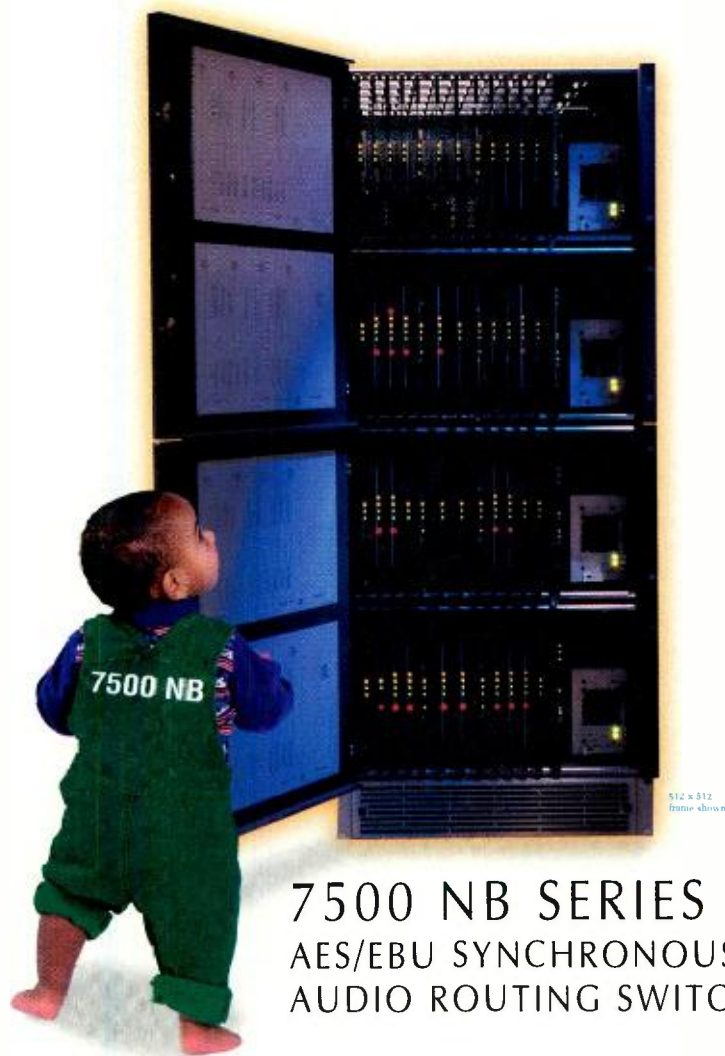
But there's a bigger issue here: Suppose there is no must carry for digital television. What happens then? And even if there is must carry, what happens to the 35% or 40% of the people who don't have cable? I mean, there's a lot of issues at stake here. Cable isn't the end-all, be-all in terms of delivery.

The ATSC says that your position is "unwarranted and irresponsible" and that there is no clear evidence that COFDM is better. How do you respond?

Frankly, the executive director of the ATSC was in here last week to see the tests. And he was essentially laughed at by numerous broadcasters witnessing the tests because he couldn't find a place to demonstrate 8-VSB without extreme difficulty in receiving the picture.

You must appreciate that ATSC has birthed the standard and has wed itself to it. And if I could encourage ATSC to do anything, it's to stand back. Look at what's going on in the television industry today; recognize that there is clearly,

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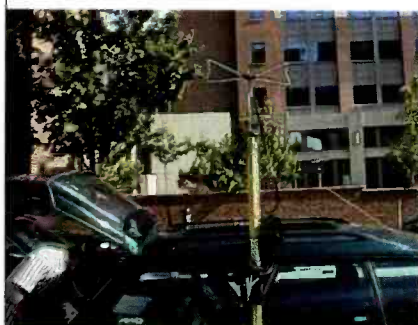
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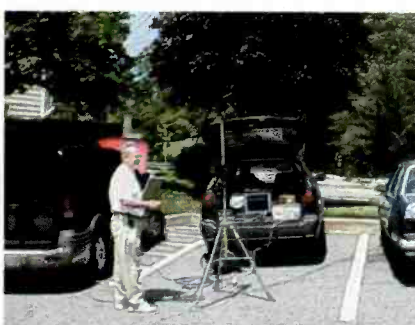
demonstrably, a better way in COFDM. And that if they don't feel compelled to cause and assist the TV-receiver manufacturers to build a receiver that will, at the very least, do what COFDM does in terms of ease of reception, then I would suggest that ATSC, as an organization, runs the risk of being set aside as not really looking out for what's in the best interests of the broadcasters and the American consumer.

The ATSC isn't the only one to criticize you, or to question your motivation. Some broadcasters I've spoken to have suggested that you are delaying, that you don't want to spend the money on doing digital right now. Others say it's because of your investment in Acrodyne, a transmitter manufacturer that may be a little behind the digital curve.

In the final analysis, the notion that Sinclair doesn't want to do DTV because it can't afford to is just naïve. And people that make those statements are people that have, really, other agendas. We have a singular agenda: We want to make sure that, when we turn on our DTV stations, that the consuming public can receive the picture with no difficulty. That's all we've ever wanted. And I honestly believe that everybody in the industry thought that's what they were getting. Well, I



Sinclair also has made a few outdoor measurements of 8-VSB and COFDM signals, using its indoor antenna setup. The station group hoped to document results at 50 to 75 sites around Baltimore.



can only tell you they were misled into believing that.

And I can now only suggest to you that there's no longer a reason to have faith about what it's supposed to do. We now know what it does. It's absolute; it's on the table; it's clearly visible. You can go by Circuit City, get a receiver, take it home, plug it in. It doesn't work.

If you're not looking for a delay, then how come your corporate-engineering department can't promise that any of your top-30 stations are going to be on with digital come Nov. 1—the FCC-mandated deadline?

The FCC, to my knowledge, hasn't even approved any of our applications yet. So I don't even know what power I'm operating at. So I can't very well go buy a transmitter unless I know what my power is. There's been kind of a breakdown in the regulatory process in terms of approval of all this stuff. But we will meet every one of our obligations.

So, regardless of whatever you're saying about COFDM, you guys are moving ahead to put up digital stations right now?

Absolutely. We're going to do whatever we're required to do. There's no confusion about that. Remember, this is not about the entire standard. This is only about a very small piece of the entire ATSC standard—the rest of which is fine. This only represents a couple of percent of the whole equation. The difficulty, of course, is it's the couple of percent that determines

whether it succeeds or fails from the consumers' perspective.

Another concern of the ATSC is that a shift to COFDM would require the FCC to redo the whole channel-allocation plan.

We don't know that that's the case. In fact, I will tell you that we're attempting to engage, right now, the same organization that did all the power studies for us a couple years ago. You may remember the power issue we raised a couple years ago, about how a certain number of broadcasters were short-changed in terms of their coverage. We're talking to that same organization now about running the same tests—the same type of tests—to determine what the interference issues are.

It may come to pass that the changes necessary are immaterial and irrelevant as it relates to the overall industry. But I can't tell you that with any degree of certainty. I'm just speculating. But we'll know, because we're going to make the investment to find out. The same people who said 8-VSB is wonderful, that 8-VSB is perfect, that you can receive it everywhere are now saying, "Well, you can't change it, because of all these other issues." And I, frankly, can't rely on what they say. And I'm not going to. I'm going to go find out for myself.

Some broadcasters fear that revisiting the transmission standard reopens the whole question of whether broadcasters should have gotten the spectrum in the first place.

The people who are arguing that are the same people that are arguing that COFDM can't handle HDTV, that it can't do this, it can't do that. I come at it from the perspective that Congress will insist on over-the-air free television that's ubiquitous. Period. That's what they're going to ask for and that's what they think they're getting from the organizations. And they're not. And when they find out about it, my sense is they're really going to be upset. And I can only tell you that the people—the Congress people and Congressmen's representatives—that have been here and seen the tests are in shock.

They had no—absolutely no—reason to believe anything other than what had been promised them by the standard-bearer. And I think the difficulty that the standard creator is going to have in this process is, if they get called before Congress, to respond to the following question: Why doesn't it work?

We've asked that question for two years: Why doesn't it work? And there's not going to be an answer to it that's going to be acceptable. Because, today, unlike two years ago, you can walk right into a Senate Commerce Committee hearing room, and you can put an 8-VSB receiver on the table and a COFDM receiver on the table, and the evidence will speak for itself. You couldn't do that two years ago. All you could do was pontificate about how wonderful it was going to be. Or tell everybody what you thought it *might* be. That day's gone.

What's the government role in this?

If I, as a broadcaster, have an obligation to spend millions of dollars to put transmitters out so I can transmit an 8-VSB standard and if the public can't receive it, it stands to reason that the government's got to come in and say to the receiver manufacturers, "You're going to have to build a receiver that works. And here's the fundamental basis that it has to work under. And if you can't do that, then we'll change the standard." I don't know how it doesn't go anywhere other than that. ■



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Technical progress is good, but where's the programming?

By Andrew Bowser

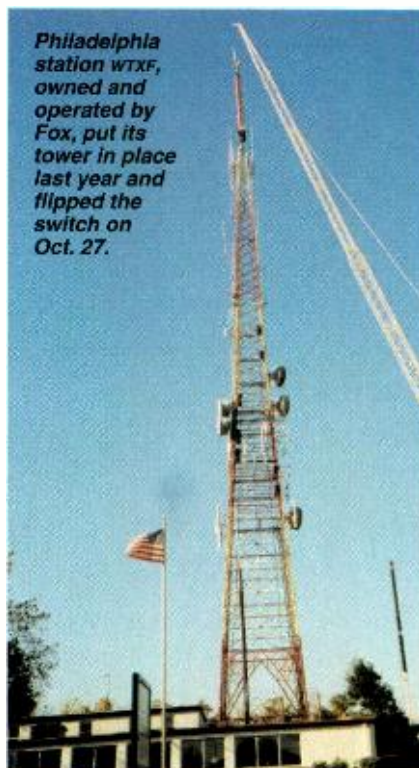
At least 41 stations in the top 10 markets were on the air with a digital channel as of mid-July, up from 28 some five months earlier. Most of the new entrants were major network affiliates spurred along by the FCC-mandated May 1 digital deadline. Fox's O&O WAGA-DT in Atlanta scrambled and made it on air a week early, but is using only a portion of its allotted power via a temporary antenna on the existing tower. WAGA will transfer both channels to a new \$3 million tower in a few months and bump up the digital broadcast to full power.

"We have only talked to a handful of [WAGA-DT] viewers, but the common thread is that all of them would like to find out when anybody is going to be doing true high-definition," says Operations and Engineering Director David Jones.

Almost all of the major network affiliates in the top 10 markets are now at least upconverting standard-def fare. The exceptions include mainly a few affiliates in Chicago and New York, where tower space is limited, and protracted negotiations are forcing some broadcasters to defer DTV plans.

Yet progress is being made. In New York, WABC-TV continues to negotiate for a digital television antenna deal. And on July 15 WNBC-TV announced an agreement with the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey to mount an HDTV antenna atop the World Trade Center tower. WNBC may begin broadcasting a digital signal as early as next spring. Currently on order are a Comark digital transmitter and a Dielectric digital antenna and combiner, according to an WNBC representative.

Word on the WB and UPN front is mixed. The NAB projects over 100 stations will broadcast digital by the end of 1999, but many will not be in the largest metro areas. "It's become sort of a competitive race in a number of local markets," says NAB spokesman



Philadelphia station WTXF, owned and operated by Fox, put its tower in place last year and flipped the switch on Oct. 27.

Dennis Wharton.

In Dallas, the next station likely to go digital is UPN affiliate KTXA(TV). There's no official deadline yet, but the station may broadcast a digital signal on channel 18 by the end of 1999. "From an engineering level, we are anxious to get on with it," KTXA Chief Engineer George DeLacerda says. "From a business standpoint, it's neither here nor there. There's obviously no money to be made from it right now."

For NTSC, KTXA uses a 2-year-old, four-tube Comark UHF transmitter; on order for the 220 kw digital channel is a two-tube Comark transmitter, according to DeLacerda. The station has yet to work out a leasing deal for antenna space. Contenders include two new towers built on speculation recently and a third under construction that will be capable of holding five or six TV antennas.

KTXA will be one of the first of Para-

mount Station Group's television properties to go digital, along with WKBD(TV) in Detroit, according to sources, who says the group had hoped to launch first in Boston but got sidelined by zoning issues.

Boston WB affiliate WLVI-TV has set a target date of fall 2000, area broadcast sources say. All major network affiliates in Boston have made it on the air with digital, though at least two are still at low power.

CBS Station Group's WBZ-TV is at low power but completing a \$10 million construction project including an antenna tower rebuild and a new transmitter building that will house DTV equipment for at least four Boston area stations.

"Our hope right now, barring any unforeseen conditions, is to be on full power by Nov. 1," says WBZ Director of Broadcast Operations and Engineering Bob Hess.

Digital stations in the top 10 markets are still coping with a dearth of programming and lack of retailer awareness. NBC ch. 5 in Dallas/Fort Worth (KXAS-DT), which aired the first live HDTV sportscast (a 1998 Texas Rangers game), has been broadcasting *The Tonight Show with Jay Leno* since day one of the show's digital premiere. That may surprise a salesman for one retailer, who insisted that the station was merely upconverting the show.

In Philadelphia, American Tower Corp. and Philcom are vying to build a new tower that will accommodate digital television antennas. American officials testified before the city's zoning board and hope to hear some news in August, but Philcom's proposal, which was recommended by the Philadelphia City Planning Commission, hasn't yet had a hearing.

Meanwhile, a consortium of Chicago broadcasters seeking a permanent location for DTV antennas have signed a nonbinding agreement to negotiate for antenna placement space with European American Realty, the would-be developers of a 112-story, 1,537-foot skyscraper topped with two 463-foot towers. However, the deal is contingent on if and when the project is approved and completed.

"It's hard to say what will happen," says Fran Preston, WLS-TV programming director and spokeswoman for the consortium. "[The developer] is right at the beginning process of getting all sorts of zoning cleared through city councils and things like that."

Chicago's WBBM-TV, the CBS O&O, is gearing up to carry network HDTV feeds in the fall, using its Jampro auxil-

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ary antenna, which has been modified for DTV broadcasts. The antenna sits atop the Hancock Building. On July 15, CBS Corp. and Panasonic Consumer Electronics Co. conducted the city's first high-def demo, which included 12 hours of prerecorded 1080i HD material. "TV dealers as far away as 30 miles were tuned in and watching," says Dave Heyworth, WBBM's assistant chief engineer.

To date, the only Chicago station delivering a digital signal is Fox O&O WFLD-DT, but others are considering potential deals. "As soon as I can get negotiations for an interim site concluded, we'll get on the air," says Mark Drazin, chief engineer for Tribune Broadcasting station WGN-TV.

All of San Francisco's NTSC and digital antennas are located on a 977-foot tower atop Mt. Sutro, much to the chagrin of the leaders of resident associations below, who have complained loudly about DTV antenna deployment. A pending lawsuit is scheduled to be heard in a California Superior Court in December.

The five San Francisco digital stations currently broadcasting full time should be joined by two more in 2000. Granite Broadcasting's KBWB, a WB affiliate, plans to use a Harris transmitter and be up and running by the first of the year, according to a station source.

San Francisco PBS station KQED, meanwhile, is expected to broadcast in 2000. By then, PBS digital channels will be available in at least eight of the

top 10 markets. To date, Philadelphia and Dallas PBS affiliates have not formally announced rollout schedules, but will be on air no later than 2001, according to Ed Caleca, PBS senior VP of technology and operations.

In Detroit, NBC affiliate WDIV-DT has been multicasting DTV channels since going on air full-time May 1. When not broadcasting *The Tonight Show* in HDTV, it is upconverting NTSC and airing real-time Doppler radar. For the entire month of May,

WDIV-DT multicast three channels using its General Instrument encoder.

"For the TV set resellers, that's a huge advantage to show multicasting to potential purchasers," says WDIV Chief Engineer Marcus Williams.

Detroit CBS affiliate WWJ-DT, which missed the May 1 deadline due to weather-related tower construction delays, flipped on the switch for its digital in July, rounding out the DTV rollout among the major network affiliates in that market. ■

Bumpy digital ride for KBHK-DT

It wasn't Friday the 13th, but the superstitious might believe that going live with a digital channel on April 15—Tax Day—was a recipe for disaster for San Francisco UPN affiliate KBHK-DT.

The power supply failed on Friday, May 7, and Harris sent the replacement board by overnight delivery that same day. It arrived the next morning, but transmitter supervisor Bob Thompson wasn't able to fix it until Monday, when he could talk to Harris technicians who walked him through the installation.

Although the broadcaster's digital channel 45 is humming along smoothly now, within the first month of going on the air, a power supply board on its brand new Harris Sigma transmitter blew, taking the channel down for an entire weekend. Soon after that was fixed, a transmission line snafu forced the digital transmitter offline again.

Then, in the early morning hours of May 15, the transmitter line failed. "The inner conductor had a hole in it the size of a 50-cent piece," Thompson said.

That affected both KBHK-DT and Chronicle Broadcasting's KRON-DT, which share a bay (and therefore a transmission line) on the community digital antenna on Mount Sutro that accommodates all five of San Francisco's digital channels currently on the air. The community antenna is installed underneath the tower's existing NTSC antennas. The RF system and its combining network belong to Sutro Tower Inc., which itself is owned by a consortium of stations. Dielectric rounded up technicians and flew them to San Francisco to fix the transmission line.

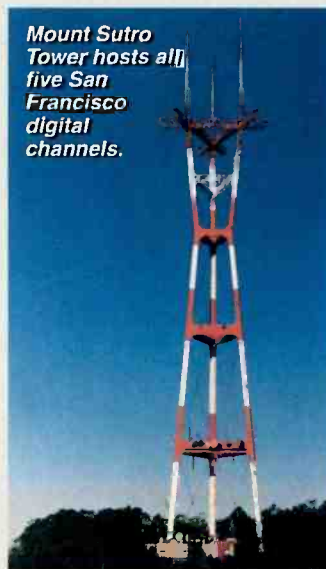
"Throughout this whole job, the vendors filled the role of firemen really well," said Ed Karl, KBHK-TV chief engineer. "They got on their hook and ladder and came down and put the fires out."

Since then, station engineers have recorded signal transmission without any propagation anomalies in recent field-strength tests conducted on flat terrain 26 miles from the tower. KBHK-TV currently broadcasts at 206.3 kw, which is the upper limit of its licensed ERP. It is simulcasting its NTSC ch. 44 in 480p, though it has conversion equipment on hand to transmit in any of the accepted formats, including 1080i.

Despite problems early on, KBHK-TV sources said they are now ready for the fall when San Francisco broadcasters are expected to gear up with promotions tied to the new network-originated high-def programming.

"The vendors have all done yeoman service to see that this all gets done," said Karl.

—Andrew Bowser



Mount Sutro Tower hosts all five San Francisco digital channels.



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Digital—ready or not?

The next stations slated for digital transmission on Nov. 1 are facing major hurdles

By Karen Anderson

Most network affiliates in the top 10 markets have already launched digital broadcasts, in some cases even before the May 1 deadline. Now affiliates in the next largest markets—11 through 30—are preparing to launch DTV as the FCC-mandated Nov. 1 deadline draws near. According to the FCC, stations in the following 20 DMAs are expected to begin broadcasting digital signals: Houston; Seattle-Tacoma; Cleveland; Minneapolis-St. Paul; Tampa-St. Petersburg, Fla.; Miami-Fort Lauderdale; Phoenix; Denver; Pittsburgh; Sacramento-Stockton-Modesto, Calif.; St. Louis; Orlando-Daytona Beach-Melbourne, Fla.; Baltimore; Portland, Ore.; Indianapolis; San Diego; Hartford-New Haven, Conn.; Charlotte, N.C.; Raleigh-Durham, N.C.; and Cincinnati.

Of the 80 stations in this next round, 15 have begun broadcasting at least some digital signals. While most of the remaining stations report a smooth progression toward DTV, some are facing major hurdles and will not meet the Nov. 1 deadline. The biggest problem is a lack of tower space—an issue that has also plagued stations in some top 10 markets.

In Denver and Hartford, Conn., stations are facing community opposition to proposed tower

sites and are currently in the midst of difficult fights to win local zoning approval.

Tower trouble

At least one Hartford station will miss the Nov. 1 FCC mandated DTV deadline because of setbacks in getting its DTV tower plans approved. WVIT-TV, NBC's O&O in Hartford, is taking its appeal to the state level after the initial proposal to build a new tower in Farmington, Conn., where WVIT's tower is located, was denied by the local zoning board in January. However, the Connecticut Siting Council, which is now reviewing the proposal, has jurisdiction to override the board's decision.

The station proposes disassembling its two towers on Rattlesnake Mountain in Farmington, Conn., a few miles outside of Hartford—a 1,060-foot tower and a 100-foot tower—and in their place putting up a 1,005-foot tower that would house its NTSC and DTV antennas. The new tower could also house DTV antennas for the local CBS and PBS affiliates.

"This is a significant issue," says WVIT Director of Engineering Dave Bondanza. "Our tower is structurally loaded to the max so there is nothing else we can hang on there. And it's not like people have tower space available with

the size of the [DTV] antennas."

Rattlesnake Mountain is also home to a broadcast and communications tower owned by Chase Enterprises, a Hartford-based tower management firm that has a competing proposal to build a new tower. In January the town of Farmington struck down Chase's plan to construct a 1,700-foot tower that would replace its existing one. Chase has submitted a new proposal to the town for a 1,300-foot tower.

According to Chase Enterprises President Arnold Chase, its newly proposed tower could accommodate DTV antennas for area television stations including WVIT. Chase says he has tried to negotiate with WVIT, offering the station the opportunity to rent or buy space on the tower, "but has been rebuffed continually."

Bondanza says the station has discussed those options with Chase. "We can't seem to swallow the numbers he's offering," he says.

According to Bondanza, the station's main tower has been in place for more than 20 years, and the station has had a tower on the present site since 1953, well before the surrounding neighborhood was established.

"The tower has a long history," Bondanza says. "The whole site does." WVIT's 10-acre site was originally zoned for a 500-foot tower but the company raised it in 1977 to its current height. The town has since added a zoning variance that stipulates that the radius of the owner's property around any tower must at least equal the height of the tower. Chase's property is 400 feet away.

Both Chase's and WVIT's plans have come up against opposition from local residents. "They see this as the opportunity to get rid of these towers," Bondanza says. WVIT expects a hearing before the siting council this month.

Denver stations have also seen their share of similar problems over the past year. Local residents have opposed the broadcasters' plan to build a tower that could accommodate their DTV antennas and consolidate the stations tower operations.

NBC affiliate KUSA-TV, CBS

A Dielectric antenna (at left and below) broadcasts digital signals for KHOU-DT Houston, which spent nearly \$6 million on the conversion.



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O&O KCNC-TV and ABC affiliate KMGH-TV, which organized as a consortium called Lake Cedar Group, expected the local zoning board to approve rezoning that would allow the consortium to build the tower. So it came as a shock when the local zoning board last month denied the rezoning proposal.

"They've done everything imaginable to keep us from going into digital television," says Myron Oliner, chief engineer at KUSA.

So what's next? Oliner says the consortium may appeal, but if they do, it will be a very long process.

Missing the mark

While most stations in the other markets are modifying their towers and ramping up on transmission equipment to begin broadcasting by the Nov. 1 deadline, a handful of stations say they will not meet that date.

According to FCC Video Services division spokesman John Morgan, stations that are going to miss the Nov. 1 deadline need to file requests for extensions at least 30 days in advance. The FCC reviews requests on a case-by-case basis and is generally lenient the first time around if there are extenuating circumstances.

In Minneapolis, Fox affiliate WFTC-TV is looking for tower space because its existing tower is loaded and cannot support an additional antenna for DTV.

"We're waiting for tower space to open and hopefully any day we'll see some contracts on that," says WFTC Chief Engineer David Bird. "It looks like there's enough space on the Telefarm tower."

The Telefarm tower is a jointly owned property of the local CBS, ABC and NBC affiliates, and is being modified to hold additional DTV antennas. "What kind of antenna and transmission line I'm going to order will depend on what tower I'm on," Bird says. As the deadline draws near, "We will try everything we can [to make Nov. 1]," he says. "But if I don't have a home, I can't get on."

In Seattle, KCPQ-TV, a Tribune-owned Fox affiliate, is fighting a battle with the Federal Aviation Administration and will not make the deadline. The station wants to extend its 500-foot tower by 50 feet, but the FAA says the extension would interfere with landing patterns at the nearby Seattle-Tacoma International Airport. According to KCPQ Chief Engineer Larry Brandt, the station

KMGH-DT is the only Denver station on-air with DTV. It is broadcasting a low-power signal from a side-mounted antenna on its downtown Denver rooftop.



is working with consultants and hopes to gain FAA approval later this year.

Some Sinclair Broadcast Group stations may also miss the mark. Five of its stations are mandated to begin broadcasting in November: Fox affiliates WPGH-TV Pittsburgh and WLFL-TV Raleigh-Durham; WBFF-TV Baltimore; CBS affiliate KVOR (TV) Sacramento, Calif., and ABC affiliate KDNL-TV St. Louis. According to Sinclair Vice President of Engineering Del Parks, most of the towers need modifications, which may prevent the stations from meeting the deadline.

"All tower studies are completed and we're just waiting to get in queue to get the work done," Parks says. "There is a lot of work being done and tower crews are in demand."

WBFF Baltimore is doing extensive work to its tower. Once it is complete, the tower will be able to support both the NTSC and DTV antennas as well as antennas for its LMA station WNUV-TV Baltimore and Maryland Public Television outlet WMPT-TV, says WBFF Chief Engineer Dennis Winters.

Pittsburgh's WPGH should meet the deadline. Its tower is only 3 years old

and does not require modifications to hold a new antenna. "We just have to get our ducks in a row in terms of encoder and transmitter," says WPGH Chief Engineer Bill Hanson.

According to Parks, all stations will be using Acrodyne transmitters and Dielectric antennas and transmission line.

The trouble with VHF

Stations that have begun broadcasting DTV are finding out that once you get past the first hurdle of getting the tower built and the transmission equipment in place, handling the digital signal can create new challenges.

The Indianapolis CBS affiliate WISH-DT began broadcasting last December on its digital ch. 9. By January, the LIN-owned station had noticed problems with cable ingress. Its digital ch. 9 was leaking into Time Warner Cable's ch. 9, which carries WISH's analog signal.

"The scenario here was that cable channel that we were interfering with just happened to be us," says WISH-DT Chief Engineer Terry Van Bibber.

According to Shary Johnston, Time Warner Indianapolis vice president of public affairs, the cable system generates about 3,000-4,000 service calls per month. Service calls increased by 300-400 a month since the problem began. "The vast majority [of the calls] were not a problem with the actual cable but with the consumer's electronics," she says.

Van Bibber says the problem occurred in homes where people had video games, VCRs and other electronic devices hooked up to the television that can "open up the system to problems." To minimize interference, WISH was broadcasting its digital ch. 9 at "very low power," he adds.

"It was the worst combination of circumstances that affected us," he explains. "Our antenna system is close to a high-population-density area, so we were affecting a lot of people within a mile or two of the transmitter."

Time Warner Cable agreed to shuffle its channels and carry WISH-TV on ch. 3 as of Aug. 1.

"I would suspect that any place that they're adding a VHF channel as a digital channel, they're going to experience some [interference problems]," Van Bibber adds.

His suspicions may be correct. In June, the Cleveland NBC affiliate WKYC-DT began broadcasting on digital ch. 2. Cox Communications' local cable converter channel also is on ch. 2. Ever

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since it began broadcasting DTV, there has been interference on Cox's signal.

The station has "been running at an extremely reduced operating schedule and forgoing testing in a cooperative effort for [Cox] to change its cable boxes," says WKYC-TV Chief Engineer Rex Rickley. It is broadcasting six hours a day of NBC HDTV network programming and upconverted local programming. According to Rickley, when the problem surfaced last month, WKYC-DT agreed to reorganize its operating schedule for about four weeks until the cable company could work out a solution.

Only a handful of DTV stations in the 11-30 markets were assigned VHF channels, which may be a mixed blessing. While carrying a VHF DTV signal has some advantages—viewers are generally familiar with the lower-numbered VHF broadcast channels, and many engineers are familiar with VHF RF—it can also be a disaster. Not only can it cause interference with local cable channels, but it can also affect medical centers that operate equipment on VHF frequencies.

In one case, top 10 market station WFAA-TV Dallas went through a series of stops and starts when it began broadcasting on digital ch. 9 in February 1998 because its digital signal was interfering with cardiac monitoring equipment at nearby Baylor Medical Center.

Tampa-St. Petersburg, Fla., NBC affiliate WFLA-TV is trying to avoid interference problems by "stopping them before they start," says David Peek, a WFLA-TV maintenance engineer. "We've got someone contacting every hospital and medical center in the area, so they can prepare."

The station expects to begin broadcasting on digital ch. 7 by Nov. 1 through a stacked Dielectric antenna mounted on the 1,649-foot tower it shares with ABC affiliate WTSP(TV). "Very few [VHF stations] have been able to stay VHF," Peek says. "I guess it makes a difference because we are familiar with VHF RF."

The VHF advantage

Stations in Portland, Ore. would have welcomed VHF channel assignments. All of Portland's stations were assigned UHF channels.

UHF signals transmit at higher frequencies, so the signals do not stand up to physical obstacles as well as VHF signals. KGW(TV) Engineering Director Eric Dausman says because of Portland's hilly terrain, "there are going to be huge pockets of the population within 20 miles of the transmitter that will not be able to receive digital television without a repeater or translator. UHF just doesn't go over those hills well," he says.

Even high-band VHF channels are at a disadvantage there. "Our signal [on analog ch. 8] just does not go where 2 or 6 goes." He believes all Portland stations will eventually look to add signal boosters or translators to extend the reach of their digital signals.

Dausman.

He says the station also is replacing its ch. 8 analog antenna. "We believe NTSC will be here beyond 2006," he adds.

Success stories

Amidst the horror stories, there have been some successes. In Indianapolis, WTHR-DT Director of Engineering and Operations Al Grossniklaus feels victorious. The Dispatch-owned NBC affiliate has been broadcasting HDTV programming since Sept. 26, 1998, when it debuted with a 1080i broadcast of *The Tonight Show*.

"We did quite well getting on-air [with DTV] and have the option to put facilities up to full power," Grossniklaus says. "We met the deadline and exceeded it."

The station is pumping out a 250,000-watt signal from a side-mounted Dielectric antenna. The station has submitted an application for a construction permit to refurbish its 1,390-foot tower and plans to eventually install a top-mounted antenna. Grossniklaus says the station will either use the side-mounted antenna as a backup or resell it when the new antenna goes up.

"We took somewhat of a hit but also knew it would have taken us much longer if we had to do the extensive modifications," he says.

Despite ongoing problems in Denver, KMGH-DT, the McGraw-Hill-owned ABC affiliate, is broadcasting a low-power DTV signal from its downtown Denver rooftop under temporary FCC authority. Fox affiliate KDVR is not a member of the Denver consortium and is expecting to meet the Nov. 1 deadline.

In Hartford, Conn., LIN-owned ABC affiliate WTHN-DT also is broadcasting DTV despite troubles in the market.

Other stations in markets 11 through 30 currently broadcasting digital signals are: KHOU-DT in Houston; KOMO-DT and KING-DT in Seattle; WOIO-DT in Cleveland; WTAE-DT in Pittsburgh; KCRA-DT in Sacramento, Calif.; WBTV-DT in Charlotte, N.C.; WRAL-DT in Raleigh, N.C.; and WKRC-DT and WLWT-DT in Cincinnati. ■



Le Blanc Broadcast is building a new tower for KGW(TV) Portland, Ore., that will also house KOBP's NTSC and DTV antennas: 1. Inside tower's guy anchor. 2. KGW's new Dielectric antennas. 3. A concrete base. 4. A steel base that will be mounted atop the concrete base.

For now the station is focusing on building a new 826-foot mountain top tower that will replace its 30-year-old tower. It is installing a Harris IOT transmitter and will add a Dielectric DTV antenna when the tower is complete. "We do not see a problem with Nov. 1 unless the sky falls," Dausman says.

KGW will share the tower with Oregon Public Television station KOBP-TV, which will put both its NTSC and DTV antennas on the tower. The stations will split the \$2.5 million cost for the new tower. Including all transmission and studio equipment, the total bill for KGW's transition will be about \$6 million. "A nice little chunk of change considering there's no revenue," says

Moonves says CBS is diverse

Concedes NAACP's general criticism, but is quick to defend his network's efforts

By Joe Schlosser

CBS Television CEO Leslie Moonves last week defended his network against charges that its programming is not racially diverse.

Moonves, addressing 200 or so television writers and reporters gathered for semiannual meetings in Los Angeles, distanced CBS from NAACP accusations that the Big Four broadcast networks' fall lineups were "virtual whitewashes." Moonves said CBS' track record and its soon-to-launch 1999-2000 schedule stand out from ABC, NBC and Fox and that he didn't want to be "lumped" with them.

"We agree with [the NAACP's] position that the racial composition of prime time television needs to reflect the population as a whole," Moonves said in his opening remarks. "However, I just want to make the point that CBS has racial diversity in our lineup. In fact, the composition of our prime time television programming is greater than the composition of minorities in America."

Moonves pointed out that 12 of the network's 19 entertainment series for fall have minority characters in "primary roles," including two series with Bill Cosby as the lead (*Kids Say The Darndest Things* and *Cosby*). Moonves, like executives at the other three networks, said he is planning to meet with NAACP President Kweisi Mfume in the coming weeks.

"We can and will do more," Moonves said. "We are conscious of the problem. We're working every day to correct it. But as I said, I think CBS stands alone as the No. 1 network aware of their responsibility in this area."

Moonves also pointed to the upcoming midseason drama from Steven Bochco, *City of Angels*. The series is set in a hospital in Los Angeles' tough South Central neighborhood and will feature an almost all-minority cast. Bochco, speaking at the Television Critics Association meetings,



Moonves: Twelve of the Eye's 19 entertainment series prominently feature minority actors.

said the show was ordered well in advance of Mfume's remarks last month and that the show was ordered based on its subject matter, not in an effort to boost the minority count on CBS' prime time.

Three months after pulling the Mafia drama *Falcone* from the fall lineup because it "wasn't the right time for people to be getting whacked on Coney Island," Moonves defended the network's decision to

bring the series on as a midseason replacement show.

CBS also made a number of program-

ming announcements during the TCA meetings, including an upcoming Ricky Martin one-hour music special and a possible sitcom with Ellen DeGeneres.

CBS executives said the DeGeneres sitcom, which would have the former ABC star playing a fictional variety show host à la HBO's former *The Larry Sanders Show*, is in the early stages of development. The show would be a co-production of CBS and Artists Television Group, Michael Ovitz's new TV studio. Executives say the sitcom might be ready for a midseason pickup or could hold until fall 2000.

On the music front, CBS' first network special with Latin singing sensation Martin will air in November. The network has also lined up music specials for the upcoming season with Celine Dion and Shania Twain. Both had similar specials on CBS last year. Air dates have not been set.

Doors open at ABC

Network says it's interested in shows from rival studios

By Joe Schlosser

ABC executives defended their studio's consolidation plan to the national media corps last week, saying it would save money and would not turn the company into a closed shop. They also pledged casting changes to address charges that their 1999-2000 prime time season is diversity-challenged.

Stu Bloomberg and Lloyd Braun, the co-chairmen of the newly formed ABC Entertainment Television Group, said that the merger does not mean ABC and Disney will produce shows only for ABC and that the network will not take sitcoms and or dramas from rival studios such as Warner Bros. or Fox. The executives said the consolidation of the studios is designed to save "a lot of money" and to streamline the process of getting Disney



Fili-Krushel: 'This is a personal commitment that I have [to program diversity]. I think you will see change.'

programs on ABC.

"The proof will be in what you see at the end of this season. But I don't believe we can have a schedule that is composed of 100% Disney product," Bloomberg said. "We would be crazy to not have tried to get the best work from Fox or Warner Bros. You will not see a schedule that is 100% Disney."

On the flip side, they will be selling their product to other studios through a new, separate division. "There will undoubtedly be some tricky waters now and then as we [figure] out how this is all going to go," said Braun.

On the diversity issue, ABC Television Network President Pat Fili-Krushel said she will be meeting with NAACP President Kweisi Mfume in the coming weeks.

"A lot has been written about the

major disappointment this spring with the lack of diversity on our new shows," Fili-Krushel said. "This is not just a prime time entertainment issue, it's a problem at different levels for different parts of the network. And at a certain point, talk, I know, becomes cheap. So this is a personal commitment that I have. I think you will see change. I applaud the NAACP for speaking out and keeping the issue front and center."

The network has added minority cast members to a number of returning and new shows, including *Wasteland*, *Once and Again* and *Sabrina*, *The Teenage Witch*. In May, after announcing the network's fall schedule, ABC's Tarses told reporters that she would be adding minorities to a number of shows.

"We will continue to add minorities to shows throughout the season," Tarses said. "It is an ongoing thing." ■

MGM restructures

MGM continued to remake its television division last week, promoting a pair of top-ranked executives to jointly run the studios' international and domestic TV businesses and moving former MGM domestic syndication president Sid Cohen into a consulting role.

Hank Cohen is the new president of MGM Television Entertainment and Jim Griffiths is the president of the studio's newly created worldwide television distribution division.

"We're looking to do a couple of things together. First, we are going to look toward some strategic alliances with different companies in the business to really enhance our ability to distribute the programming that Hank [Cohen] is going to produce," Griffiths said. "Second, now that we have married the international and domestic groups in a way that we haven't done in the past, it's going to allow us to create some co-production arrangements that we haven't taken advantage of to this point."

Both executives say their push will be more on the first-run syndication front than for the networks. Hank Cohen says the studio is looking to stay with the sci-fi and action-hour genres that have proven successful for MGM in recent years.

—Joe Schlosser



GET WITH THE PROGRAM

By Joe Schlosser

Kissinger crew

New Studios USA programming president, David Kissinger, made his first staff moves last week, naming Marcy Ross senior vice president of comedy programming and Dan Pasternack senior vice president of drama programming. Ross was formerly senior vice president

of comedy programming at The Jim Henson Company and Pasternack was formerly vice president of creative affairs at Granada Entertainment USA.

Felicitous resolution

WB and Touchstone/Imagine TV executives have resolved *Felicity* star Keri Russell's contract troubles

by giving the teen star a raise. Russell, who won a Golden Globe for her role on The WB drama, did not show up for work late last month in an effort to play hardball for a new contract, studio executives confirmed. A spokeswoman for Touchstone/Imagine said that the matter was

resolved and Russell is back to work on the show. She was reportedly earning \$30,000 per episode, roughly the same salary earned by some other leading actors.

Moves at NBC News

John Seigenthaler, co-anchor of MSNBC's *Morning Line* newscast (Monday-Friday, 9-11 a.m.), has been named weekend anchor of the *NBC Nightly News*. He replaces Brian Williams, who anchors a nightly newscast on MSNBC and who will continue as the permanent substitute anchor for the weekday edition of the *NBC Nightly News* with Tom Brokaw. Seigenthaler joined MSNBC in 1996 and has subbed for the weekend editions of *Nightly* and *Today*, as well for Williams on MSNBC. Separately, the network announced that Soledad O'Brien has been named co-anchor of the weekend edition of *Today*, replacing Jodi Applegate, who is shifting to *Later Today*, a new magazine that will follow *Today*, which bows in September.

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XM's high hopes for IPO

Satellite radio company hopes to raise \$150 million for 100-channel service in 2001

By Elizabeth A. Rathbun

XM Satellite Radio Holdings expects to spend nearly \$265 million to plug holes on Earth for its planned satellite-to-car radio service.

"Terrestrial repeaters" will be needed in some 70 cities to guarantee uninterrupted reception of up to 100 digital-quality channels, which will be broadcast via two satellites, according to a July 23 XM filing with the Securities & Exchange Commission. The filing, which outlines plans for a \$150 million initial public offering, also details the would-be broadcaster's business strategy and the high costs of creating a new technology (see chart).

Washington-based XM says it needs about \$1.1 billion to build its vision to the point of launch. Nearly \$331 million of that has already been raised (investors include General Motors Corp. and its DirecTV, along with Clear Channel [B&C, June 14]). However, according to the filing, XM already has spent or plans to spend more than \$1.41 billion, including post-launch costs.

A company spokeswoman said she couldn't comment on the filing because of SEC rules.

The offering, which will likely be made this fall, is expected to net \$138.7 million. That should get XM, which currently is owned by wireless-data service provider American Mobile Satellite Corp., through the first quarter of 2000. That's more than a year short of the planned commercial launch of XM Radio (second quarter, 2001). XM plans to trade on the Nasdaq National Market under the symbol XMSR.

The repeaters, to avoid sound "dead zones" caused by tall buildings and tunnels, will cost \$263.3 million, the filing says. More than 100 repeaters may be required in each of the nation's largest markets. But first, "roof rights [must be secured] in suitable locations and on acceptable terms." That shouldn't be a "serious problem," the filing says. However, the satellite/repeater system is "untested and may not provide the expected transmission quality." In fact, the entire system "depends on development and integration of complex technologies in a novel configuration that might not work," the filing says.

Let's do launch

XM Satellite Radio says it expects to spend \$1.1 billion to build and launch a satellite digital-radio service. In its recent IPO filing, the company outlines pre- and post-launch costs that add up to more than \$1.4 billion:

- Up to \$541.3 million for two satellites and a spare.
- About \$400 million to General Motors for installing XM radios in GM cars and trucks. GM also gets an undisclosed amount of money for programming subscriptions sold for XM radios, covering up to 8 million vehicles.
- \$263.3 million for terrestrial repeaters.
- \$90 million for the FCC license.
- \$65.9 million for programming production studios, satellite-control facilities and other ground facilities and equipment.
- \$50 million for satellite launch insurance.

Source: SEC filings

Since new technology first finds acceptance among young people, XM says it initially will market the service—to be priced at \$9.95 per month—to ages 16-34. "We will...focus a significant portion of our programming and marketing efforts to appeal to" these so-called early adopters, as well as GM car buyers, the filing says. Others to be targeted are Baby Boomers ages 35-53, senior citizens 55 and older, African-

and Asian-Americans and Hispanics.

While most AM and FM stations in many markets try to appeal to a wide audience, XM will serve underserved and "niche" listeners with tailored formats and more extensive playlists than offered on traditional radio, the filing says. Programming providers, including the BBC World Service, announced last Monday, have already signed on to fill 25 slots. ■

Radio revenue on rise

Radio companies reported strong second-quarter gains last week, with Clear Channel Communications posting nearly 282% earnings growth, to \$106.5 million, after its May merger with Jacor Communications.

The \$6.5 billion tax-free deal, which added 228 radio stations and a single TV station to Clear Channel's portfolio of 248 radio and 18 TV stations, also boosted Clear Channel's net revenue by 93%, to \$617.7 million. Clear Channel, based in San Antonio, also owns more than 425,000 outdoor advertising displays in 32 countries.

Clear Channel's stock price rose after it announced its numbers last Monday, closing last Wednesday at \$72.875, up 6.2% from Monday's close.

Shares of Infinity Broadcasting Corp. dropped 3.25% to \$27.875 last Wednesday despite that day's news that earnings were up 49.2%, to \$100 million, in the second quarter when compared with the same period a year ago. Revenue was up nearly 31%, to \$587 million. Ad revenue was strong at both the New York-based company's 163 radio stations and its transit advertising segment. Growth came in virtually all markets and was fueled particularly by Internet-related advertising, the company said. Infinity went public last December.

Significant revenue increases in Atlanta and Orlando, Fla., helped create 13.6% 2Q revenue growth for Cox Radio Inc., to \$78.6 million, the Atlanta-based company said last Wednesday. Net income jumped 41.5%, to \$32.7 million, mostly because of a \$23.8 million gain on the sale of five radio stations in Syracuse, N.Y. Meanwhile, broadcast cash flow rose 20.4% in the quarter, to \$27.8 million.

—Elizabeth A. Rathbun



STATION BREAK

By Dan Trigoboff

Shuttle diplomacy snafu in Orlando

WFTV(TV) Orlando anchor Steve Rondinaro did not enjoy his moment in the national spotlight. In a moment he says was never intended to air, he insulted First Lady and New York senatorial hopeful Hillary Rodham Clinton. As cameras filmed the entry of visiting dignitaries for a space shuttle launch, Rondinaro commented, "There she comes, the old battle-ax. There she is with Chelsea in tow," at Clinton's entry. It was just a casual remark without real malice said in an informal backstage chat, he said, and the audio was not supposed to accompany the airing of the video. Rondinaro said he was as shocked as any viewer to hear the remark broadcast, and immediately apologized. "I would never say that on live television," said Rondinaro, who later discovered his comment had been reviled and celebrated in the media—including conservative radio talker Rush Limbaugh's show—and through many calls and

e-mails. "This hurts," said the veteran newsman. "I had fully hoped and expected that this would die, and go away. But it has not. I've taught a lot of college classes," he said, "and I tell the students to treat the microphone like a loaded gun. I violated my own adage." Rondinaro issued a second, more formal apology after meeting with management. The station did not discipline Rondinaro, who will be leaving television later this summer to run two radio stations in North Carolina. "The station has been very supportive," Rondinaro said. "They would have been within their rights to do any number of things" in penalizing him, he said.

Susan Lucci gets some competition

WJLA-TV anchor Kathleen Matthews put her AFTRA membership to another use, doing a walk-on as a nurse on long-running ABC soap *All My Children*. Matthews had spent time behind the scenes at another ABC soap, *One Life to Live*—

where, years ago, recently departed WJLA-TV anchor Paul Berry had appeared—and went in front of the cameras on AMC.

Her motivation as an actress, she said, was a story the Washington ABC affiliate is running on soap operas. Matthews is not herself a soap watcher, but she has frequently observed the traffic-stopping effect of the programs' sometimes torrid content when aired over station monitors. "Two million people watch these programs every day. A lot of them stay tuned to our news," she said. "They're tremendously popular, and they're never in reruns. We wanted to see how they're put together." As an "under-five," the designation given actors with fewer than five lines, Matthews received \$150, which she said she will donate to charity. Her solo line was in response to a request for directions: "You just go down the hall, make a left, and you'll see the sign, doctor."

Steam rises in Chattanooga

Pegasus Broadcasting fired back last week, after numerous missives this month blasting the group and station WDSI-TV for a promotion promising positive news coverage in exchange for a \$15,000 fee (Broadcasting & Cable, July 19). David Janacek, Pegasus' VP, news, said in a letter to industry Internet newsletter *Shoptalk* and an interview with BROADCASTING

& CABLE—which ran a satirical editorial criticizing Pegasus—that attacks in the media as well as over the phones and e-mail were full of inaccuracies as well as vitriol, and failed to acknowledge that the group had corrected the situation before all the negative publicity. "We're not hiding from this," Janacek said. "We don't deny that it happened. Was it embarrassing? Of course it was." But, he added, "There's a lot of gray areas that come up every day. Our business is about journalism, and we try to be ethical, but we're told we have to work every day with the sales department. Those interests can run contrary to one another." Journalists in both print and broadcast, he said, need to "take a second look" and consider their own positions along the ethical line.

Janacek also responded to the charge that the company used its general sales manager—apparently fired over the incident—as a scapegoat. According to the *Chattanooga Times & Free Press*, General Manager Jim Wright told the paper "he had personally promoted the program and called businesses about the offer." The paper was standing by the story last week. Janacek said his investigation did not reach the conclusion that top station management was involved. He would not comment further on any personnel issues. The company has said that it "had taken steps to ensure such a situation never occurred again."

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



Even when acting on a soap opera, Washington anchor Kathleen Matthews (l) can't escape her role as information provider.

JULY 19-25

Broadcast network prime time ratings
according to Nielsen Media Research

PEOPLE'S CHOICE

CBS dominated Week 44 by winning five nights, starting with a
strong Monday lineup highlighted by 'Everybody Loves Raymond.'

Week 44	abc	CBS	NBC	FOX	U/PIN	WB
	6.4/11	7.7/13	5.6/10	5.4/9	1.5/3	2.8/5
MONDAY	8:00 38. 20/20 5.7/10	27. King of Queens 6.6/12	27. Dateline NBC 6.6/12	62. That '70s Show 4.8/9	111. The Sentinel 1.6/3	89. 7th Heaven 2.9/5
	8:30	22. Becker 6.7/12		49. That '70s Show 5.2/9		
	9:00 19. ABC Monday Night Movie—Seduction in a Small Town 6.8/11	4. Ev Lvs Raymd 8.5/14	53. NBC Movie of the Week—Witness to the Mob, Part 2 5.1/9	38. Ally McBeal 5.7/10	114. 7 Days 1.3/2	92. Movie Stars 2.7/5
	9:30	7. Becker 8.1/13				98. For Your Love 2.1/3
	10:00	5. 48 Hours 8.2/14				
	10:30					
TUESDAY	5.2/9	6.8/12	6.3/11	3.8/7	2.0/4	1.9/4
	8:00 37. Spin City 5.8/11	22. JAG 6.7/12	49. Just Shoot Me 5.2/10	75. Guinness World Records 10.5/20	98. Moesha 2.1/4	102. Buffy the Vampire Slayer 2.0/4
	8:30 58. It's Like, Y Know 5.0/9		58. 3rd Rock fr/Sun 5.0/9		102. Clueless 2.0/4	
	9:00 27. Dharma & Greg 6.6/12	14. 60 Minutes II 7.6/13	53. Just Shoot Me 5.1/9	81. Fox Files 3.5/6	106. Malcolm & Eddie 1.9/3	108. Felicity 1.8/4
	9:30 66. Sports Night 4.4/7		27. Will & Grace 6.6/11		106. Between Brothers 1.9/3	
	10:00 60. NYPD Blue 4.9/9	32. 48 Hours 6.3/11	9. Dateline NBC 7.9/14			
	10:30					
WEDNESDAY	6.9/12	4.5/8	7.5/13	3.8/7	1.8/3	2.9/5
	8:00 42. Two Guys, A Girl 5.6/11	66. Cosby 4.4/9	10. Dateline NBC 7.8/15	78. Fox Summer Movie Special—To Die For 3.8/7	111. 7 Days 1.6/3	94. Dawson's Creek 2.5/5
	8:30 53. The Norm Show 5.1/9	62. Cosby 4.8/9				
	9:00 36. Drew Carey 6.0/11	66. CBS Wednesday Movie—The Almost Perfect Bank Robbery 6.8/13	18. World's Most Amazing Videos 7.1/12		102. Star Trek: Voyager 2.0/3	85. Charmed 3.3/6
	9:30 32. Whose Line Is It 6.3/11		14. Law & Order 7.6/13			
	10:00 2. 20/20 9.3/16					
	10:30					
THURSDAY	4.8/9	6.3/12	7.8/15	4.1/8	1.2/2	2.3/5
	8:00 69. ABC Original—Radiant City 4.3/8	42. Diagnosis Murder 5.6/11	10. Friends 7.8/16	60. World's Wildest Police Videos 4.9/10	113. Moesha 1.4/3	98. Wayans Bros 2.1/4
	8:30	22. Diagnosis Murder 6.7/12	19. Jesse 6.8/13		115. Clueless 1.2/2	92. Jamie Foxx 2.6/5
	9:00		3. Frasier 8.1/15	81. The Family Guy 3.5/6	118. Moesha 1.1/2	96. Steve Harvey 2.4/5
	9:30		9. Will & Grace 8.7/15	86. The PJs 3.0/5	118. Clueless 1.1/2	97. For Your Love 2.2/5
	10:00 38. Vanished 5.7/10	22. 48 Hours 6.7/12	13. ER 7.7/14			
	10:30					
FRIDAY	6.2/13	5.6/12	5.3/11	3.2/7	1.2/2	
	8:00 44. Home Imprvmnt 5.5/12	53. 48 Hours 5.1/11	53. Providence 5.1/11	80. World's Funniest! 3.6/8	115. Legacy 1.2/3	
	8:30 49. The Hughleys 5.2/11					
	9:00 44. Sabrina/Witch 5.5/11	46. Unsolved Mysteries 5.4/11	27. Dateline NBC 6.6/13	90. Mad TV Primetime 2.8/6	115. Love Boat: The Next Wave 1.2/2	
	9:30 46. Boy Meets Wrld 5.4/11					
	10:00 10. 20/20 7.8/16	32. Nash Bridges 6.3/13	72. Homicide: Life on the Streets 4.2/9			
	10:30					
SATURDAY	3.8/8	5.7/12	4.0/9	4.7/10	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	
	8:00 81. America's Funniest Home Videos 3.5/8	72. Early Edition 4.2/10	81. The Pretender 3.5/8	76. Cops 3.9/9		
	8:30			65. Cops 4.5/10		
	9:00 76. ABC Saturday Night Movie—Tremors 2: Aftershock 3.9/8	38. Martial Law 5.7/12	69. NBC Saturday Night Movie—Her Costly Affair 4.3/9	48. AMW: America Fights Back 5.3/11		
	9:30	16. Walker, Texas Ranger 7.2/15				
	10:00					
	10:30					
SUNDAY	6.1/12	7.9/15	5.1/10	3.7/7		2.2/4
	7:00 49. Wonderful World of Disney—Angels in the Outfield 5.2/10	1. 60 Minutes 10.1/21	72. Confirmation: Evidence of Aliens 4.2/9	86. World's Funniest! 3.0/6		108. The Parent 'Hood 1.8/4
	7:30			86. King of the Hill 3.0/6		110. Smart Guy 1.7/4
	8:00	5. Touched by an Angel 8.2/16		64. The Simpsons 4.6/9		102. Sister, Sister 2.0/4
	8:30			69. Futurama 4.3/8		94. Sister, Sister 2.6/5
	9:00 16. 20/20 7.2/13		35. NBC Sunday Night Movie—The Arrival 6.1/11	79. The X-Files 3.7/7		90. Movie Stars 2.8/5
	9:30	22. CBS Sunday Movie—Passion's Way 6.7/12				98. Unhap Ever After 2.1/4
	10:00 19. The Practice 6.8/12					
	10:30					
WEEK AVG	5.6/11	6.4/12	5.9/11	4.1/8	1.5/3	2.4/5
STD AVG	7.6/13	8.6/15	8.4/14	6.5/11	1.9/3	3.0/5

OpenNet courts grassroots

ISP group hopes consumers will help them win access to high-speed cable pipes

By Price Colman

The OpenNet Coalition, a group of Internet service providers and local telephone companies, is now trying to rally voters as part of its campaign to pry open cable networks.

The new tactic comes as OpenNet saw momentum generated through recent victories in Portland, Ore., and Broward County, Fla., dwindle last week in San Francisco. The city's Board of Supervisors, in a carefully worded compromise, protected AT&T's cable network from encroachment while endorsing the "open-access" concept.

OpenNet's tack is signaled in Denver, where it's now seeking to put the cable-access issue on the November general election ballot. "We're not looking to go out and spend millions on public initiatives if a city council has the authority" to require cable access, says OpenNet Co-director Greg Simon. "But if the city council doesn't [have the authority] and enough of the citizenry want [access], a ballot initiative is always an option."

OpenNet's primary focus will continue to be on grassroots campaigns directed at elected officials in markets where MediaOne franchise transfers to AT&T must be approved.

"We're going to challenge AT&T-MediaOne license transfers in every city where we have the resources to challenge them," vows Simon. "We feel consumers want us to challenge them...but we have limited resources."

With the FCC taking a hands-off approach to Internet regulation, OpenNet's best chance may be the grassroots, says Mark Riely of Media Group Research, a New York research and investment firm. But it's hardly a sure-fire approach.

"I suspect the open access people are going to tote up cities one by one, take that to Congress and say, 'See, this is how the local constituencies feel. And regardless of how courts interpret the law, you can change the law.' But it's not a topic most people have on the top of their minds when they get up in the morning."

The 9-2 vote by San Francisco's board of supervisors permits Tele-



Communications Inc. to transfer its 160,000-customer cable operation in the city to AT&T without burdensome conditions. At the same time, amendments in the resolution and to the franchise itself make it clear the city intends to revisit the issue.

"It's important to see what technologies do emerge before we start imposing specific requirements on a particular technology," says Supervisor Leslie Katz, whose language was adopted in the resolution. "We're in the driver's seat."

AT&T General Counsel Jim Cicconi called the city's decision "a fair outcome" that "doesn't get in the way of rapid deployment of exciting new services." OpenNet characterized San Francisco's action as "a very positive development," comparing it to votes in Portland, Ore., and Broward County, Fla., where officials mandated that cable operators open their networks. But cable executives weren't buying the OpenNet spin. "The gimme net people have clearly misread what the San Francisco Board of Supervisors did,"

said one. "The fact is, they refused to create a forced access environment."

After failing to persuade elected officials in Denver to impose an access requirement on AT&T earlier this year, OpenNet filed petitions with about 4,000 signatures calling for a vote on the issue in the November general election.

Denver is unusual in that it is one of relatively few cities that requires voter approval of a franchise renewal. San Francisco does not, but Katz and fellow San Francisco Supervisor Michael Yaki say a ballot initiative is a possibility. "I would not be surprised if they went to the ballot simply because of the enormous amount of money they believe is at stake," says Yaki.

There are signs that OpenNet's arguments may be wearing thin. Some city officials and regulators are openly critical of OpenNet co-founder and key backer AOL, noting that AOL doesn't apply the same stance on openness to its own instant messaging system. AOL has repeatedly blocked Microsoft, Yahoo!, and Prodigy's efforts to route

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10:15 AM	CABLE SUPERPANEL Decker Anstrom Leo Hindery Lee Masters Judith McHale	12:00 PM	LUNCHEON Sam Donaldson & Cokie Roberts - <i>Featured Speakers</i>		

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e-mail messages to AOL users. Critics also note that AOL once owned its own proprietary transport system, but sold it to MCI WorldCom, now a member of the OpenNet Coalition.

OpenNet has consistently played up the desirability of "open access" and used cable monopoly rhetoric that strikes a populist chord. But elected officials and

regulators familiar with the complexities of the fast changing telecommunications world appear increasingly skeptical of the easily invoked negative imagery. "I still fail to see how we can say we're preventing a monopoly that doesn't yet exist," says Yaki, whose amendment endorsing cable access is part of the cable franchise.

San Francisco has about 80% digital

subscriber line penetration and no cable modem service. And while it's "fun watching these people throw money around to obscure the issue," says Yaki, of both OpenNet and AT&T. "The only winners are political consultants and media outlets.... At some point the FCC might have to make a real decision." ■

AT&T retires TCI name

Hindery says cable op is better than new brand

By Price Colman

Come this Tuesday, it's so long TCI, hello AT&T as Ma Bell officially becomes Ma Cable. That's when any company item with "TCI" emblazoned on it gets replaced by AT&T.

For example: 15,500 TCI trucks will be repainted with the well-known AT&T globe logo. Overall, AT&T has budgeted about \$30 million for the transition phase of the rebranding campaign, including \$8 million for the trucks; \$6 million for new uniforms; and \$8 million for new signs. Not

included in the capital expenses are the costs for national and local advertising.

The rebranding effort has also generated some dicey questions about timing and what it took for TCI's myriad operations, which have suffered from a tarnished reputation, to qualify for AT&T's seal of approval. So, should AT&T have delayed its rebranding effort until every TCI operation passes the consumer-satisfaction test? Clearly no, says Howard Horowitz of Horowitz Associates Inc., a Larchmont, N.Y., firm that tracks marketing of products and services, consumer attitudes and usage and market segmentation. "It was very much expected, although no one knew the timing of it," says Horowitz. "There were some issues about bringing the cable business up to speed.... I think they have come to the conclusion that they need to sell new subscribers and new services, and they're not going to tread water until the 'i's' are dotted and 't's' crossed. They have big markets to sell. They'll bring the others along. They'll take the risk. The AT&T brand will sell trusted products."

Indeed, TCI has focused enormous time and energy on improving the company's oft-maligned customer service and operations reputation since the AT&T-TCI merger was announced in June 1998, says Leo Hindery, president-CEO of AT&T Broadband & Internet Services. Today, Hindery bristles at the notion that TCI operations might not be up to AT&T standards: "Compare our performance in every market with the regional Bell company and without exception we're treating and handling our customers better than the Bell alternative. That's a reality. We're as good as anybody in the country, either in the cable or the telecom industry."

AT&T has been working on the rebranding campaign since closing on the TCI acquisition in March. "It's the largest brand transition in our company's history, maybe the largest in the history of the [telecommunications] industry," adds Hindery. "It's the magnitude of this thing that's great fun to contemplate." ■



CABLE'S TOP 25

PEOPLE'S CHOICE

USA's presentation of the Patrick Swayze-starrer 'Road House' was last week's highest-rated movie. The '80s film ranked No. 5 with a 3.8 rating/6.6 share.

Following are the top 25 basic cable programs for the week of July 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 Sports Entertainment	USA	Mon	10:00P	68	6.5	5.0	4966	10.6
2	WWF Sports Entertainment	USA	Mon	9:00P	60	6.0	4.6	4532	9.3
3	NASCAR/Pennsylvania 500	TBS	Sun	1:05P	284	5.1	4.0	3947	13.3
4	WWF Sunday Night Heat	USA	Sun	7:00P	60	4.1	3.1	3107	8.2
5	Movie: 'Road House'	USA	Tue	9:00P	150	3.8	2.9	2915	6.6
6	Besette Bodies Found	CNN	Wed	3:49P	71	3.7	2.8	2822	10.3
7	NTSB-Coast Guard PC/JFK	CNN	Wed	7:30P	40	3.6	2.7	2709	6.9
7	WCW Monday Nitro Live!	TNT	Mon	8:00P	60	3.6	2.7	2708	6.1
9	Real World VIII	MTV	Tue	10:00P	30	3.4	2.5	2468	5.7
9	South Park	CMDY	Wed	10:00P	30	3.4	2.0	2027	5.6
11	Larry King Live	CNN	Wed	9:00P	60	3.3	2.5	2516	5.6
11	WCW Monday Nitro Live!	TNT	Mon	10:00P	69	3.3	2.5	2505	5.4
11	Adm Larrabe Briefing-JFK	CNN	Mon	5:42P	18	3.3	2.5	2499	7.5
14	Rugrats	NICK	Mon	7:30P	30	3.2	2.4	2381	5.7
15	WCW Monday Nitro Live!	TNT	Mon	9:00P	60	3.1	2.4	2358	4.9
15	Hey Arnold	NICK	Mon	8:00P	30	3.1	2.4	2347	5.5
15	Rugrats	NICK	Sat	9:30A	30	3.1	2.4	2346	11.1
15	JFK Jr Dth/Search For Ans..	CNN	Wed	8:10P	50	3.1	2.3	2335	5.6
15	Clinton PC Budget Surplus	CNN	Wed	2:35P	70	3.1	2.3	2334	9.0
20	Rugrats	NICK	Mon	4:00P	30	3.0	2.2	2224	7.9
21	Movie: 'Road House'	USA	Sun	4:30P	150	2.9	2.2	2221	6.7
21	Inside Politics	CNN	Wed	5:00P	60	2.9	2.2	2206	7.1
21	Rugrats	NICK	Mon	4:30P	30	2.9	2.2	2195	7.4
21	Franklin	NICK	Mon	10:30A	30	2.9	2.2	2193	10.2
21	Rugrats	NICK	Mon	3:30P	30	2.9	2.2	2157	7.9
21	Movie: 'Trial: Price of...'	LIF	Sun	6:00P	120	2.9	2.1	2128	6.0

Health as an Internet play

MSOs see e-commerce opportunities with launching of Discovery Health Channel

By Deborah D. McAdams

In what arguably is the biggest convergence play to date, Discovery Communications this week launches a television channel designed to drive Internet traffic.

"This company is being built on the assumption that having a Web site is as important, if not more important, than having a channel," said John Ford, president of Discovery Health Media, referring to the pairing of Discovery Health Channel and discoveryhealth.com. "We talk about content, not TV or online, but content," he said.

With a \$350 million bankroll, Discovery Health Channel's 13 original prime time series will range from a view of life inside a major Chicago hospital to explorations of the human body. Ultimately, Ford said, the goal is to get viewers to move between Discovery Health Channel and discoveryhealth.com's 2.5 million pages—something that cable operators launching broadband services find highly enticing.

"They've got a very in-depth Web site, and that Web site is attractive to any operator that is providing multiple services, such as @Home," said a programming executive at a major MSO. "Any time you have a service you can cross-collateralize, you can use it as a vehicle to drive the Internet service."

Both MSO executives declined to be identified for this article, citing ongoing contract negotiations with Discovery.

But one said that the health model will be readily adaptable for e-commerce and even video on demand, such as ordering prescriptions or obtaining immediate access to detailed medical information. Online prescription orders already are a multimillion dollar bonanza, and MSOs stand to profit from a cut of the e-commerce action as well as the pay-per-view nature of video on demand. This scenario, he said, is attractive to any MSO.

Additionally, part of what makes Discovery's venture into health unprecedented is the company's substantial \$350 million upfront investment to establish the brand. Ford said any potential profit won't be realized



Discovery Health expects to drive viewers to the companion Web site: discoveryhealth.com.



until at least four years out.

Discovery is capitalizing on Ford's turnaround experience. He took the Learning Channel from a 15 million-household also-ran to a profitable network with 69 million households.

As for how many subscribers will get the channel on its first day, Ford said he didn't have a count. "We have deals in the works with major MSOs and satellite providers, but we're sticking by having 15 million subscribers" by year's end.

"They were originally considered

as a digital play, but they're reshaping the network now, replacing Knowledge TV with Health and treating it as analog," the programming executive said. "We hadn't looked at it as analog. Our corporate plan was digital. We haven't been pitched the package overall."

That said, he added, "Discovery is the No. 1 branded network in the industry. This genre is compelling and it hasn't really been served. If Dis-

covery's motive is to take health, it's really going to be the only one in the genre."

Actually, Discovery is not the only health player. Fox beat the Bethesda, Md.-based network group to the punch by two weeks with The Health Network. Unlike Discovery Health, which is completely new, Fox has rolled together its own floundering Fit TV with the barely breathing America's Health Network to create The Health Network, which launched July 19 with the live Cesarean birth of triplets. ■

Cox wins Gannett auction

By John M. Higgins

Cox Communications Inc.'s victory in the auction of Gannett Corp.'s cable systems completes the company's shopping spree—for now. But the foray has Cox executives rushing to raise money to pay for all its pending deals.

Cox last week agreed to pay \$2.7 billion for Gannett's Multimedia Cable unit, a near-record valuation of \$5,200 per subscriber and 21.5 times estimated running-rate cash flow. The deal gives the company 522,000 additional subscribers in Kansas and North Carolina, as well as Oklahoma, where Cox already has operations.

Cox's immediate task is to raise money to pay for all the deals. The company unveiled a plan to raise \$2.8 billion-\$3.7 billion within the next 30 days by selling a combination of \$300

million-\$500 million worth of common stock plus a blend of bonds, convertible notes and preferred stock.

The deal, combined with other takeover agreements cut this year, gives Cox \$11 billion worth of acquisitions, including a \$4 billion takeover of TCA Cable TV, a \$2.4 billion stock swap for a chunk of AT&T Corp. systems, plus a \$1.4 billion buy of Media General Cable.

The Atlanta-based MSO's portfolio will ultimately increase 50%, from 4 million to 6 million subscribers.

Cox had been suffering from a corporate inferiority complex, with company executives privately expressing concern that with companies like Comcast Corp., Adelphia Communications Corp. (both losing bidders for Gannett) and Charter Communications Inc. buying so aggressively that Cox would become a small-time player. ■

NY Times' one-stop shop

TV group offers to provide master-control services at Va. op center to other stations

By Karen Anderson

The New York Times Broadcast Group is taking station automation to a new level, saying last week that it will open up its centralized master control facility in Norfolk, Va., to other stations by the end of the year.

From the automated center, quartered at NYT's WTKR-TV, Norfolk's NBC affiliate, the group remotely controls five of its eight stations. It plans to bring three others online by October.

The \$5 million center was developed four years ago in response to the onset of digital television and the need to monitor signals in a multichannel environment.

"We started looking at digital," says Elden Hale, executive VP and COO for the group. "What are we going to do when digital becomes a reality? ... What if we multicast, are we going to multiply by six the number of master control operators we have and equipment?"

Consolidating its master control operations has allowed the company to reduce its master control personnel by almost half, Hale says. And most of the people have been transferred to jobs in the center, he says. "We managed the program through attrition and retraining.... Most of us need more resources. This allowed station managers to manage precious human resources on news and sales."

The system has also reduced errors in spot playback and increased potential revenue. "We have found that we can operate at about 70% error reduction rate," he says. Spots that had been used for make-goods can now be sold, he adds.

The station group is now seeking to provide master-control services to other stations. "The capacity is really not limited by anything," says Hale. "We can add as many stations as want to come along.... It doesn't take much space to do what we're doing, and the more stations we add the more efficient it becomes."



"The pricing structure varies [with] the number of functions," Hale says. "But it will be far less than what stations are spending to access the same functions and with a higher level of reliability and accuracy."

New York Times Group vice presi-

dent of operations and engineering, Frank Chebalo, designed the center. The system works in a "closed-loop" fashion, he says. A traffic log started at the station is electronically delivered to the master control center. It runs the broadcast day, writes a file for the day's activity and then sends it back to the station for reconciliation. All day-to-day management and administrative functions remain on the station level.

Computers at the facility are networked to video servers, transmitters and satellite receivers at each station. The group uses Hewlett-Packard servers and Columbine JDS automation software. However, the operations center can interface with any automation system or video server, Hale says. ■

A cheaper way to HD

HD Vision and Capitol Broadcasting are teaming to build a cheaper HD production truck.

The unit is designed to be "big enough to do large network productions...in a configuration that's affordable for local stations," says Capitol's Vice President of Special Projects John Greene.

"I think [DTV broadcasters] will embrace it immediately, and I think there will be a big push come November," says Greene.

Owner of CBS affiliate WRAL-TV Raleigh, N.C., Capitol has been a leader in HDTV. It put one of the nation's first DTV stations (WRAL-HD) on the air and has been regularly producing HDTV programming for it.

Based in Irving, Texas, HD Vision is another HD pioneer, leasing HD production trucks and equipment.

Under the agreement, HD Vision would manage and lease the truck. Capitol would finance the truck and get to use it free of charge on certain projects. Lease rates for other stations and production companies will be determined on a case-by-case basis, the principals say.

According to HD Vision President Randall Dark, the 53-foot unit should be on the road by late October.

The truck will include Sony HD cameras and Panasonic and Sony VTRs, a Sony HD editing system and a Chyron Duet "or equivalent" character and effects generator, says HD Vision Chief Operating Officer and Director of Engineering Charles Pantuso. An audio board will be capable of mixing two-channel digital audio or five-channel AC-3 audio.

A format converter will allow users to shoot in HD and downconvert for NTSC broadcast. Greene believes that more broadcasters will produce shows in HD and downconvert as more equipment becomes available. "You start with the highest form and from there go down," Greene says. —Karen Anderson



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AOL bolsters broadband bid

GTE pact latest in sequence to advance faster Net access

By Richard Tedesco

America Online last week struck its fourth digital-subscriber-line deal with a telco, aggressively pushing its broadband access strategy and strengthening its bargaining position with cable companies.

AOL's latest deal last week, a multi-year pact with GTE, gives the online service access to GTE's asymmetric digital subscriber lines in 17 states, expected to pass 4 million households by year-end.

AOL struck a similar deal two weeks ago with Ameritech, which simultane-

ously announced it was accelerating its ADSL deployments to reach 8 million households by the end of 2001. AOL already had deals in place with SBC Communications and Bell Atlantic, which will double up access to its InfoSpeed DSL service with 17 million lines by year-end.

AOL aims at charging subscribers \$20 for DSL access on top of its standard \$21.95 monthly fee.

Those deals effectively give AOL a national base to begin building a broadband service. Bob Pittman, AOL president and COO, says the goal is to "help make broadband access a reality for the mass market consumer."

Sources report AOL has had ongoing discussions with AT&T, as well as Time Warner Cable, a primary partner with MediaOne in Road Runner.

Tom Wolzien, analyst with Sanford Bernstein & Co., says AOL has applied pressure on cable operators through its DSL deals and its DirecTV deal for AOL TV carriage. "They've sort of circled cable in a way."

Wolzien posits a scenario with cable operators unbundling the @Home and Road Runner services and selling AOL access for \$35 monthly. He estimates cable could boost high-speed access revenues by 300% and gain a share of AOL's advertising and e-commerce.

"AOL's participation could serve to accelerate overall [cable modem] penetration, which would aid all participants," says Emily Meehan, analyst with the Boston-based Yankee Group.

Meehan foresees a possible deal with AT&T, which would provide an open access platform in a cross-marketing deal that could give AOL subscribers certain privileges or premiums.

"It always comes down to money. What will AT&T and the other cable companies get?" asks Gary Arlen, president of Bethesda, Md.-based Arlen Communications.

SITE OF THE WEEK

www.ktvb.com



KTVB-TV Boise, Idaho NBC, ch. 7

Site features: Live streaming of weekday newscasts at 5:30 a.m.; noon; 5, 6 and 10 p.m.; newscasts streamed at 8 and 9 a.m., and 5, 6 and 10 p.m. on Saturdays; 8 a.m., 5, 6, 10 and 10:30 p.m. on Sundays; links to local restaurant and concert guides and weather forecasts; online store

Site launched: 1995; relaunched in March 1997

Site director: Conrad Jungmann, KTVB Internet account executive

Number of employees: 2

Traffic generated: Averaging 500,000 page views from 300,000 visitors monthly

Streaming technology: RealVideo, Windows Media

Advertising: Banner ads

Revenue: N/A

Highlights: Site hit record traffic levels of 20,000 daily page views when it streamed the Boise River Festival in early July to kick off its video streaming; satellite and radar weather maps are big draw, along with live Skycam offering constant vista of Boise.

—Richard Tedesco

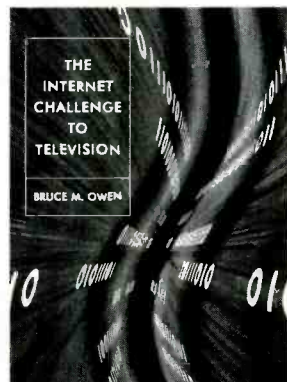
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RADIO

HELP WANTED MANAGEMENT

Help Wanted: General Manager AM/FM station combo in Sierra foothills of N. California. 20 FT. Employees. Fax resume to: 530/477-6473. Attn: Scott.

HELP WANTED SALES

Radio, wanted Account Executive, Spanish fluent with syndication experience. Contact: Radio Show, POB 46123, Los Angeles, CA 90046.

Account Exec: ESPN Radio 1250, Pittsburgh, PA, is looking for self motivated, hard working, goal oriented individuals. Must be able to work established business and cultivate new business. Knowledge of basic computer programs preferred. Contact: Station Manager, 400 Ardmore Boulevard, Pittsburgh, PA 15221. Equal Opportunity Employer.

HELP WANTED NEWS

Full-time news person needed ...small market operation...send tape and resume to David Bradsher, WKRX-WRXO, Box 1176, Roxboro, NC 27573. Equal Opportunity Employer.

HELP WANTED FINANCIAL & ACCOUNTING

Controller: Leading broadcasting company seeks highly motivated accounting professional to serve as Controller for its radio division. Ability to manage and direct activities of station Business Managers and effectively interact with senior level management personnel at both the divisional and corporate levels is essential. You will be responsible for financial analysis, budgeting, forecasting, and financial reporting. Bachelor's degree in Accounting with at least 5 years experience in the broadcasting industry, or the equivalent, is required. CPA a plus. The ideal candidate will have superior written and verbal communication skills, a thorough working knowledge of all accounting cycles, proficiency in PC and accounting system software, and strong organizational abilities. We offer a competitive compensation and benefits package and are an Equal Opportunity Employer. Send resume and salary history to Broadcasting & Cable, Box 01585, 245 W. 17th St., 7th fl, NY NY 10011.

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Subcarrier Available. WNYE-FM, New York. 91.5 Mhz. 20 KW. Data/paging Services only. Contact: Frank Sobrino (718)250-5829.

TELEVISION

HELP WANTED MARKETING

Marketing Manager in Miami Florida! WFOR (CBS O&O) has a Marketing manager position available. This person will be responsible for all aspects of Marketing, Sales promotion, Corporate Sponsorships and Special Events for the Sales Department. Must have strong work ethic, high energy and the ability to create promotional programs. Excellent communication skills and extensive experience in dealing with clients and agencies is a must. If you want to be part of a winning team please send resume to: Contact: Human Relations, Fax: 305-639-4448, Email: jacobsj@wfor.cbs.com M/F EOE.

HELP WANTED SALES

WFOR (CBS O&O) in beautiful Miami Florida is seeking Account Executives. We are looking for heavy weights, middle weights and entry level positions. If you have a solid track record in media sales, a strong work ethic, and a deep seeded desire to win, CBS4 is the team for you. Contact: Human Relations, Fax: 305-639-4448, Email: jacobsj@wfor.cbs.com M/F EOE

Local Sales Manager: One of the fastest growing top 30 markets in the southeast has an immediate opening for local sales manager. If you're a dynamic leader looking for growth opportunities with a group broadcaster, send us your information. We offer excellent benefits and compensation package. Reply to Box 01571 EOE.

General Sales Manager for KTVX, the ABC affiliate in Salt Lake City. Minimum 3 years television sales management experience. Knowledge of Scarborough, TV Scan. Must have a track record of developing non-traditional revenue. Send resume to General Manager, KTVX, 1760 Fremont Dr., Salt Lake City, UT 84104, or e-mail to rurlong@4utah.com No phone calls please. KTVX is an Equal Opportunity Employer. No phone calls.

General Sales Manager: Grapevine Broadcasting/GOCOM Communications is seeking dynamic leader to serve as GSM at ABC/FOX combo in beautiful Savannah Georgia. The position is for a team player that will grow our stations to new levels. If you're not afraid of success, please send resume and salary history to: General Manager, WJCL/WTGS Television, 10001 Abercorn Street, Savannah, Georgia 31406. EOE.

Account Executive: WCTV6 CBS Tallahassee. Join with other pros selling one of the country's top rated, market dominant news leaders serving Florida's capitol and booming South Georgia region. We are seeking a senior level Account Executive, a proven pro, a team player with an eye to the future. If you have a successful TV sales background; college degree; strong verbal, writing, computer and organizational abilities and truly enjoy new business development, vendor programs, even promotions and marketing major sports products, tell us about your experience and ambitions. Find out how you will gain professionally with the growing Gray communications group. WCTV6 is an Equal Opportunity Employer. Pre-hire drug screen required. Cover letter and resume to: Account Executive, WCTV6, PO Box 3048, Tallahassee, Florida 32315.

HELP WANTED SALES

GM/GSM - Fox affiliate in Topeka, KS has immediate opening for a take charge manager. Must have strong background in sales or sales management. Programming experience also desired. Good salary, benefits and bonus plan. We're looking for someone who can take us to the next level. All inquiries confidential. Send resume to: Roland Waechter, PO Box 129, Junction City, KS 66441.

Domestic & International Sales: A leading international television distribution company with \$137,000,000 in sales last year is seeking additional experienced "independent contractor" Sales Executives, to place 'Four Brand New Series' on Broadcast stations. Company also has 27 feature films all new to TV (Cable & Broadcast rights available). Proven Track Record a Must! Company pays a monthly draw against 15% commission and expenses. (Avg. executive earned over \$300,000 last year). Fax Resume to E.Coast VP 703-354-5344, if you desire an interview.

Account Executive: WSOC-TV is seeking an energetic, highly motivated sales person to develop and sell television advertising and marketing concepts to area businesses to create new and traditional revenue for the station. A minimum of two years of television, radio, or cable sales experience is required. Proficiency in proposal writing and design, project organization, computer skills, and prospecting is helpful. College degree preferred. Send resume to: Jean Humphrey, WSOC-TV, Dept. 95, 1901 North Tryon Street, Charlotte, NC 28206. No phone calls please. EOE M/F.

HELP WANTED TECHNICAL

Chief Engineer

WPXN, PAX 31, NY, NY needs a Chief Engineer with min. 3 yrs. full time broadcast TV exp.; thorough knowledge of engineering operations and FCC reg. a must; FCC license or SBE cert. desired. Motivated self-starter w/ extensive technical & troubleshooting skills and hands-on UHF broadcast transmitter capabilities. For confidential consideration, fax current resume w/ cover letter, references and salary requirements to 212-956-0951. attn: Chief Engineer. EOE

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HELP WANTED TECHNICAL

Broadcast Engineers

STUDIO MAINTENANCE ENGINEER-

Must be able to perform the following duties: install and maintain studio transmission equipment including video switchers, audio consoles, DVE, CG, SS cameras and robotics. Familiarity with automation systems and master control environment. Should possess a general computer/networking systems and master control environment. Must be able to work on a rotating shift schedule. **Position Code SME**

IT ENGINEER- Must be able to install and maintain broadcast computer based equipment. Applicants should have a basic knowledge of video/audio systems in a television environment. Experience working with Tektronix Profiles, Avid Media Composer and HP Mediastream systems is essential. Must be proficient with PC hardware, server and network architecture. Possess knowledge of Newsroom computer systems and non-linear editing. Expertise in various operating systems for MAC and PC based platforms. Please include salary history/requirements.

Position Code ITE

RF MAINTENANCE ENGINEER-

Must be able to perform the following duties: install and maintain RF related equipment in a studio, transmitter and remote site environment. Must be able to work on VHF/UHF solid state transmitters and all associated transmitter equipment. Ability to align and repair microwave TX/RX and all wireless equipment such as microphones and IFB. Knowledge of FCC rules and regulations. You must possess knowledge of analog/digital systems and a minimum of five years broadcast television experience. Applicants must be able to do component level repair and work well under pressure. **Position Code RFM**

Candidates should have an engineering degree or equivalent technical training. SBE/FCC certification is a plus. If you want to be a part of the exciting transition to HDTV in the most exciting city in the world, please send your resume and cover letter (with position code) to **Kurt Hanson, WABC-TV, 7 Lincoln Square, New York, NY 10023**. No telephone calls or faxes please. We are an equal opportunity employer.



Fox 4 WFTX-TV in Ft. Myers/Naples market is seeking a full time *Technical Director*. Applicants must have experience switching live newscasts and some directing experience is preferred. Please send resume and non-returnable tape to: Brian Culbreth, Production Manager, 621 SW Pine Island Rd, Cape Coral, FL 33991. Emmis Communications is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

HELP WANTED TECHNICAL

We're going digital!! And need some help with plant rewire and night-side engineering. FOX 4 WFTX-TV in Ft. Myers/Naples market has an immediate opening for a full-time permanent second shift *Maintenance Engineer*, 2-11 pm Sun - Thurs. Exp. with plant wiring and systems, schematics, tape machines and board level repair a must. Exp. with computers, news department and UHF transmitter a plus. Please send resume and salary requirements to: Ryan Steward, 621 SW Pine Island Rd, Cape Coral, FL 33991 or e-mail to: rsteward@wftx.emmis.com Emmis Communications is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

Television - Technical Director: Candidate must be able to efficiently perform switching duties for fast-paced newscasts and special programs. Candidate must be familiar with operation of Grass Valley 3000-3 Switcher, Abekas Deveous, Pinnacle DVE & Still Store, Chyron Infinit and Sony 370 studio cameras. Must be able to perform under pressure and meet deadlines. Creativity and communication skills required. Must be able to do some directing. Prefer a minimum of three years experience in a major market as a Technical Director doing newscasts. Degree in Communications or related field desired. Qualified applicants must be motivated, creative and able to meet strict deadlines. Please send resume and cover letters to: Jeff Jeandheur, Production Manager, KPRC-TV, PO Box 2222, Houston, Texas 77252.

Sparling, Inc. Job Opening: Audio/Video Designer, Open Date: 7/15/99 - Close Date: 8/20/99. Growing audio/video and technology consulting and design group is looking for a designer to work with us on commercial, retail, educational, and telemedicine presentation environments. Knowledge of current audio/video technologies and future trends, system layout, equipment specification, room configurations, and infrastructure layout desired. Minimum two years experience with Window/Word/Excel AutoCad R12 and R14 required. Excellent verbal and written communications skills required. Progressive firm with compensation package including bonus and profit sharing plans. Send your resume in confidence by August 20, 1999 to Sparling, Inc., 720 Olive Way, Suite 1100 [D], Seattle, WA 98101. Refer to Position #1101. Equal Opportunity Employer.

Assistant Director of Engineering: Engineering professional - major market television group broadcaster, "Univision", seeks a "hands-on" Assistant Director of Engineering for the group. You will be based in Los Angeles but will work with and travel to all our major market "O&O's". The ideal candidate will have 5-10 years experience as Chief or Assistant Chief Engineer working in UHF stations. Superior salary and benefits. Fax resume to (310) 348-3659. EEO.

HELP WANTED PRODUCER

Univision CH-23 is looking for a *Producer/Director* that will be responsible for the production of our local commercials. This position requires complete knowledge of Spanish. If you're a talented, driven professional wishing to join our growing dynamic network, please send your resume to: Human Resources 2323 Bryan Street, #1900 Dallas, Texas 75201, or fax it to (214) 758-2306. EOE.

HELP WANTED NEWS



Managing Editor (Job #216-200)

WBNS-TV is seeking a Managing Editor to oversee the editorial direction of 10TV Eyewitness News. The successful candidate will be responsible for the news coverage and content of its award-winning newscasts. Eyewitness News is the dominant news leader in central Ohio producing more than 32 hours of news per week. The Managing Editor will work with the assignment desk and reporters to ensure aggressive coverage, enterprise reporting, and compelling storytelling. Must have excellent news judgement and strong writing and storytelling skills. Desk and field experience a plus. Minimum of three years prior experience as a manager.

Qualified candidates should rush cover letter, resume, and news philosophy to:

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Western New York's #1 morning show is looking for a male co-anchor to help its viewers wake up! If you like a combination of hard news and fun this is the job for you. Candidate must have 2-3 years TV news on-air experience, solid news judgement and an extensive reporting background. Successful candidate will also be called upon to fill-in as anchor on the station's other newscasts as needed. Send cover letter, resume, and tapes to Mark Preisler, Executive Producer, WIVB-TV, 2077 Elmwood Avenue, Buffalo, NY 14207. WIVB is an EOE.

Reporter: We're looking for an aggressive and enterprising hard news reporter who knows how to write to pictures and use natural sound. Strong live skills a must. Send letter, resume and non-returnable tape to WJW TV Human Resources, Attn: Reporter Opening, 5800 S. Marginal Road, Cleveland OH 44103. EOE. No phone calls.

Promotion Producer/Writer: The award winning Creative Services Department at NBC6/WCNC-TV, the Belo station in Charlotte, NC, is looking for a creative, aggressive Writer/Producer, who is passionate about news. We are looking for a dynamic, self-motivated person, with a minimum of two years experience in news promotion and who thrives under pressure. Ability to write and edit compelling special report and topical promotions that sell our newscasts and excite our viewers. Please send your tape and resume with salary history to: (No Phone Calls Please), NBC, Human Resources Department, RE: 99-33, 1001 Wood Ridge Center Drive, Charlotte, NC 28217, EOE/M/F/V/H.

Promotion Director: WCYB is looking for someone to head our promotion effort, concentrating on news and events. Applicants should have promotion producing experience at TV station with a news department. College degree preferred. Resume and reel to Judy Baker, WCYB-TV, 101 Lee Street, Bristol, VA 24201. EOE/M/F/H/V.

HELP WANTED NEWS

SBG

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Immediate opening for a News Producer. This person must have a minimum of one year producing experience and two years of newsmen experience. You will be responsible for putting together a well-written and visually compelling newscast that you can call your own. Send resume and non-returnable VHS tape. Box #345

News Photographer

Candidate should be experienced in shooting ENG tape, editing news tape, and fact gathering. Live remote broadcasts, using ENG microwave trucks and portable microwave equipment. Must have valid driver's license. Please send resume and non-returnable VHS tape. Box #346

Assignment Editor

Looking for an aggressive Assignment Editor that loves spot news. Ideal candidate will run the desk, come up with stories, thrive on sport news and remain cool under pressure. Previous experience on assignment desk or related broadcast news field required. Box #347

• **Columbus, OH - WSYX (ABC)**

Weekend Anchor/Reporter

Responsibilities include reporting weekend 6 p.m. and 11 p.m. newscasts along with general assignment reporting three days per week. Applicants should have a minimum two years newsmen and anchoring experience. Please send resume and non-returnable VHS tape. Box #348

• **Dayton, OH - WRGT (FOX)**

Local Sales Manager

Seeking a Local Sales Manager to lead the local sales force. Ideal candidate should be able to position an emerging prime time newscast, introduction of meters, and LMA combo selling with our sister NBC station. Must demonstrate knowledge of traffic systems, qualitative research, sales hiring, training and budgeting. Knowledge of Excel a plus. Send resume and cover letter. Box #349

• **Dayton, OH - WKEF (NBC) / WRGT (FOX)**

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Immediate opening for our main Weather Anchor. A meteorology degree and seal is strongly preferred along with outstanding presentation skills. The ideal candidate will be an enthusiastic presenter who can deliver a forecast-driven weathercast with graphics that are eye-catching and easy to understand. We have a brand new WSI Weather Producer system ready to go on air. Send resume and non-returnable tape. Box #350

• **Nashville - WZTV (FOX) / WUXP (UPN)**

Account Executives

Immediate openings for experienced Account Executives. A college degree in broadcasting, marketing, or a related field and at least 3 years in television sales experience preferred. We are looking for aggressive self-starters who know how to work agencies as well as develop new business. This is an excellent opportunity to work in the 30th market and get on board with great stations that are growing each year! The ideal candidate will possess excellent communication and relationship-building skills, be a team player, and have a winning attitude. Please send resume. Box #351

Web Master

Live in Music City and work for two growing television stations as Web Master. We are looking for a team player who is proactive and able to coordinate needs and activities on the local level as well as with corporate staff. The ideal candidate should have at least 2 years experience actually maintaining and designing web pages using one or more of the following: HTML, JAVA, Perl, CGI Script and SQL. Must also be experienced with URL's, browsers, FTP and E-mail. Send resume. Box #352

• **Portland, ME - WGME (CBS)**

News Director

We are looking for a leader who can create defining moments in television broadcasts, and who knows how to create locally compelling newscasts. If you have a practical action plan to do it differently and can rally people both inside and outside the newsroom to achieve these goals, then you may be a candidate for this rewarding opportunity at a heritage station in one of the more desirable locations in the country. Must have a desire to win ability to have fun. Send resume. Box #353

• **San Antonio - KABB (FOX)**

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• **San Antonio - KABB (Fox) / KRRT (WB)**

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Seeking an individual experienced with Nielsen, TV Scan, Scarborough, Market Manager, Microsoft Office as well as graphics presentation. Prior television or ad agency experience desired. Send resume with cover letter. Box #355

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HELP WANTED NEWS

SBG

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Morning Show News Producer

Opening for a producer to bring news ideas and energy to our AM show. Ideal candidate will have 1-2 year's experience, solid writing skills and good news judgement. WICS-TV is one of the top NBC affiliates and the news leader in our market. Please send tape and resume. Box #356

Mail your resume in confidence immediately to:
Broadcasting & Cable, 245 W. 17th Street,
NY, NY 10011, Attn: Job # _____

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WOMEN AND MINORITIES ARE ENCOURAGED TO APPLY

Photographer/Editor: ABC-41 in Battle Creek, Michigan is expanding its news product, and we need a professional to fill the newly created position. The right candidate will be working with state of the art digital equipment. This job is for a self starting journalist with broadcast television experience. This position is full time. Please send your resume and references to: Tim Malone, News Director, WOTV 41, 5200 W. Dickman Road, Battle Creek, MI 49015. WOTV 41 is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

Photojournalist: WWTW(CBS) in Traverse City/Cadillac (Market #118) is aggressively searching for two passionate, hard-working, dedicated storytellers who embrace N.P.P.A. fundamentals and techniques. Job expectations include live truck operation and daily editing. We will consider outstanding entry level candidates with prior Beta ENG experience and a hunger for spot news. If you want one of these exciting positions, send your resume, references and Beta/VHS tape to Sean Mahon, Chief Photojournalist, WWTW, Box 627, Cadillac, Michigan 49601.

News Topical Producer: WIVB-TV, Buffalo, NY, seeks a skilled producer who knows how to sell a news story. Must have at least two years experience in either the newsroom or TV promotion department. Strong writing skills and an understanding of the viewers needs and wants are required. WIVB currently has all the momentum in the Buffalo market. Join a staff that is motivated and focused on winning. Send resume and non-returnable tape to Marketing Director, WTVB-TV, 2077 Elmwood Avenue, Buffalo, NY, 14207. Equal Opportunity Employer.

Newscast Producer: WTVR-TV, a Raycom Media station in Richmond, VA, is looking for an experienced Newscast Producer. Please send resume to: Trina Lee, 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.

News Photographer: NBC6/WCNC-TV, the Belo station in Charlotte, NC has an immediate opening on its award winning photography staff. We are looking for a self-motivated, creative storyteller with strong editing skills and a full understanding of live truck and helicopter operations. We are a BetaSX shop with Avid editing. Individual would be supplied with own take home gear. Applicants must have at least two years experience and a college degree is preferred. Must have a current valid driver's license. If you are the competitive, yet, creative photographer at your station send your resume and salary history to: (No Phone Calls Please), NBC 6, Human Resources Department, Re: 97-32, 1001 Wood Ridge Center Drive, Charlotte, NC 28217. EOE/M/F/V/H

HELP WANTED NEWS

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 #00255, 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 Photographer/Editor: NBC 30 Connecticut News (O & O) is looking for someone who can tell a story using audio and video. Must be able to work under strict deadlines and have working knowledge with DVC-Pro. Must be familiar with non-linear editing systems. Requires minimum of 1-2 year's experience in broadcast television news. Send tape and resume to Bill Nardi, Manager, News Operations and Production, WVV/NBC 30, 1422 New Britain Avenue, West Hartford, CT 06110. EOE.

News Director-Sunworshipper for USVI, decreed in Broadcast Journalism or Communications for development of VI/Caribbean news & entertainment channel. 5 yrs + exper. in broadcast television, live news style programming. Take charge management abilities, knowledge of Caribbean "lifestyles", French and/or Spanish highly desired. Must be eligible to work in US and relocate for min. 24-36 months. Full package/salary open. For consideration, fax to JRG Recruiters (954) 422-1841 or email j.roberts-gould@worldnet.att.net.

News Director: WTOV9, one of the country's top rated NBC affiliates is looking for a creative, aggressive, leader for our newsroom. We produce 5 newscasts a day and need someone who knows content, promotion, and has a vision for the newsroom. You also need to be able to hire, train, and motivate a young and aggressive staff. We look and act bigger than our market size, we have the awards and ratings to prove it! Send resume and tape to: Tim McCoy, President and General Manager, WTOV-TV, 9 Red Donley Plaza, Box 9999, Steubenville, OH 43952. EOE. Absolutely no phone calls.

News 12, the country's first, largest, and most-watched regional news network, is seeking a Promotion Manager to promote one of its five local news channels. Candidates must have at least one year experience in television or cable marketing and/or promotions including hands-on production experience. Avid experience a plus. Bilingual Spanish a big plus. Please rush resume and tape to KP, Human Resources, 1111 Stewart Avenue, Bethpage, NY 11714. EOE.

Bi Lingual Meteorologist: Exciting opportunity for weathercaster that is fluent in Spanish/English. Very High-profile exposure in major markets and the internet. Recent Grads OK! Call (800) 353-9177 x317.

Are you a small/medium market producer looking to break into one of the best news markets in the country? WFOR in Miami is looking for an Associate Producer/fill-in Producer. If you are smart, creative, aggressive, and a writer who prides yourself in writing strong copy, quickly - this is the job for you. You will have the opportunity to fill-in produce on a regular basis, in a newsroom where promoting from within is encouraged. Send a resume, tape and writing samples to: Shannon High, News Director, WFOR-TV, 8900 N.W. 18th Terr. Miami, FL 33172 M/F/EOE.

HELP WANTED NEWS

Feature Reporter: An important member of our #1 rated morning show. We need a creative storyteller that can capture the essence of the people and places of Cleveland in daily live reports. Must be exceptional live with strong interviewing skills. If you're motivated, self-starting and, of course, an early riser, send letter, resume and non-returnable tape to WJW TV Human Resources, Attn: Feature Reporter Opening, 5800 S. Marginal Road, Cleveland OH 44103. EOE. No phone calls.

Talented Producer: ABC-7, WJLA-TV has immediate opening for a top-notch producer to join our team. 5 years of progressively responsible experience in a television newsroom, preferably in a Top 20 market required. Strong news judgement, leadership abilities and communication skills a must. Resume and non-returnable reel to: Human Resources, WJLA-TV, 3007 Tilden Street, N.W., Washington, DC, 20008. EOE.

Weekend News Anchor/Reporter: KFSN-TV, Fresno, an ABC/Disney Owned Station is seeking an experienced Co-Anchor/Reporter for its Number One Rated Weekend Newscast. A minimum of 3 years fulltime anchoring and reporting experience is required. Must be able to write clear and concise copy and have great live-shots skills. Four-year Journalism degree preferred. Resume and tape (Beta or VHS) to: Kevin Keeshan, ABC30, Dept. BC, 1777 G Street, Fresno CA 93706. KFSN-TV is an Equal Opportunity Employer. Women and members of minority groups are encouraged to apply.

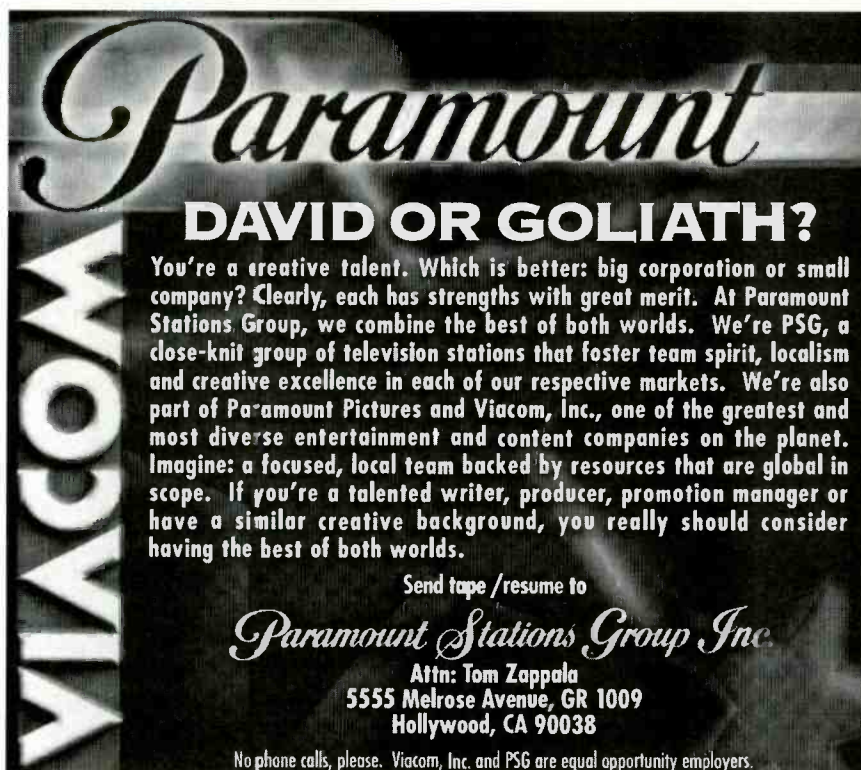
TV News Reporter: KFSN-TV, Fresno, an ABC/Disney Owned Station is seeking an experienced General Assignment Reporter. Minimum of two year's fulltime field reporting experience. Skills must include understanding of libel and slander laws, clear and concise writing and creative presentation. Good live-shot skills a must. Four-year degree required. Resume and tape (Beta or VHS) to: Kevin Keeshan, ABC30, Dept. BC, 1777 G Street, Fresno CA 93706. KFSN-TV is an Equal Opportunity Employer. Women and members of minority groups are encouraged to apply.

Producer: ABC-41 in Battle Creek, Michigan is expanding its news product, and we need a professional to fill the newly created position. The right candidate will be working with state of the art digital equipment. This job is for a self starting journalist with broadcast television experience. This position is full time. Please send your resume and references to: Tim Malone, News Director, WOTV 41, 5200 W. Dickman Road, Battle Creek, MI 49015. WOTV 41 is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

HELP WANTED FINANCIAL & ACCOUNTING

Director of Finance: Fox O&O in Boston, MA is looking for an experienced broadcast finance manager to assist the VP of Finance and Programming with budgeting, forecasting, special projects, and various financial analyses. Position will oversee the daily operations of the accounting department, including general ledger, accounts payable, fixed assets, and weekly and monthly financial reporting requirements. Degree in Accounting and five years accounting management experience required. Must be detail oriented and have the ability to work in a fast paced environment while adhering to strict deadlines. Solid working knowledge of MS-Word and Excel required. Excellent communication, organizational, and analytical skills, a must. Send resume with cover letter to: Linda M. DiStefano, WFXT Fox 25, 25 Fox Drive, P.O. Box 9125, Dedham, MA 02027-9125. No phone calls please. EOE/M/F/D/V.

HELP WANTED PROMOTION



Paramount
DAVID OR GOLIATH?

You're a creative talent. Which is better: big corporation or small company? Clearly, each has strengths with great merit. At Paramount Stations Group, we combine the best of both worlds. We're PSG, a close-knit group of television stations that foster team spirit, localism and creative excellence in each of our respective markets. We're also part of Paramount Pictures and Viacom, Inc., one of the greatest and most diverse entertainment and content companies on the planet. Imagine: a focused, local team backed by resources that are global in scope. If you're a talented writer, producer, promotion manager or have a similar creative background, you really should consider having the best of both worlds.

Send tape / resume to
Paramount Stations Group Inc.
Attn: Tom Zappala
5555 Melrose Avenue, GR 1009
Hollywood, CA 90038

No phone calls, please. Viacom, Inc. and PSG are equal opportunity employers.

When Your Business Is People,

At WRAL-TV 5, we're in the business of enhancing people's lives—as an entertainment provider, information source and proactive employer. We begin by building community relationships, which not only helps us build trust, but inevitably helps us build the future.

Topical Producer —WRAL-TV Promotion

Person to promote the area's #1 late newscast and join a team of award winning producers and designers. If that's not exciting enough, you'll be living just hours from the beach or mountains and working at the station that put HD on the map. So, if you have at least two years of promotion producing experience, can write copy full of viewer benefit and edit on a non-linear system, get us your tape and resume. Job #99-127

Here, you'll receive an excellent compensation package as well as professional development. Please send non-returnable VHS tape and resume, indicating job number, to: Corporate Human Resources, WRAL-TV, P.O. Box 12800, Raleigh, NC 27605; FAX: (919) 890-6011. EOE

Division of Capitol Broadcasting
Company, Inc.

www.wral-tv.com



P
eople Notice.

HELP WANTED PROMOTION

On-Air Manager: WBDC-TV 50, Washington, DC's growing WB affiliate managed by Tribune Broadcasting Company is looking for a hands-on On-Air Manager with at least 3-5 years television promotion experience. Non-linear editing experience required! Qualifications include extensive writing and production experience with an emphasis on non-news programming. WB experience is a strong plus. Familiarity with MS FrontPage, Macromedia Dreamweaver, Photoshop, Adobe After Effects and Enterprise traffic system also a plus. Position requires hard work, creativity, strong organizational skills and ability to work and think independently. Rush non-returnable tape, resume and salary history to: Human Resources Dept., WBDC-TV, 2121 Wisconsin Ave., NW, Suite 350, Washington, DC 20007. Fax # 202-965-7304. EOE.

Assistant Promotion Manager, KCRA, Sacramento: You're the top writer/producer in your market, and now you're looking to take the next step. We're the dominant station in the 20th market, and we're looking for an Assistant Promotion Manager who can blend their talents with our winning team. Strong writing, a good eye, and working with a sense of urgency a must. Interested applicants please send resume and non-returnable reel to: Gene Robinson, Creative Services Director, KCRA, 3 Television Circle, Sacramento, CA 95814. No phone calls please.

HELP WANTED PRODUCTION**DIRECTOR OF PRODUCTION**

PGA TOUR Productions at the World Golf Village in St. Augustine, Florida, has an outstanding career opportunity for a Director of Production. This individual will assist with creative development and implementation of broadcast programs, commercial vignettes and ancillary products, including syndication and home video. Duties include guiding the creative production staff, overseeing program development opportunities and developing a freelance pool of talent. Must work with other departments to prepare budgets, develop communication links across departments, implement a Quality Control system and develop new business opportunities. This position reports to the VP, Production.

Candidates must have 10+ years of production industry experience, including 3 years in a management role. Requires a working knowledge of film and video, understanding of production processes and knowledge of directing and editing techniques. Must be able to budget and actualize projects and write detailed production proposals. Strong attention to detail and interpersonal skills are essential. Knowledge of golf 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 send your resume to: **PGA TOUR, Inc., Attn: HR-DP, 100 PGA TOUR Blvd., Ponte Vedra, FL 32082.** No phone calls, please.

www.pgatour.com

EOE, M/F/D/V

**HELP WANTED ALL POSITIONS**

WB33/KWCV-TV WB33 is the exciting new WB affiliate in Wichita, Kansas that will sign on the air in August! We are looking for an aggressive and innovative staff committed to becoming the market leader in Wichita. The following positions are available: **General Manager:** Responsible for all strategic and operational efforts of the station including meeting or exceeding WB33's revenue and cost objectives; acquisition and execution of effective programming and promotion; preparation and management of all departmental budgets and goals and hiring and training of department heads. The General Manager will also be involved in all aspects of WB33's new studio, office and transmitter site construction. Requirements include 3-5 years of media management experience with a proven track record of success. Sales and startup station experience a plus. **General Sales Manager:** Responsible for the maximization of Local, National and Regional station revenues. The GSM will hire, train and lead an innovative sales and support staff. 3-5 years of television or radio sales management preferred. Candidate must have a proven track record of developing new and non-traditional revenues and creative sales promotions as well as maximizing traditional revenues. **Chief Engineer:** Responsible for overseeing the buildout of WB33's new transmission, studio and office facilities. Other responsibilities include inspect, direct and perform tests, maintenance and repairs of studio and broadcast equipment; maintain FCC compliance for the facility; prepare and execute annual operational and capital budgets and hire and manage all technical personnel. Candidate should have FCC Radiotelephone General Class and/or SBE Certificate; strong RF and UHF transmitter background. Experience with digital video and DTV integration a plus. Candidate must also have a minimum 3-5 years of television broadcast engineering experience. **Assistant Chief Engineer:** This part-time position will assist the Chief Engineer in all aspects of the technical operation and management of the station including inspect, direct and perform tests, maintenance and repairs of studio and broadcast equipment; maintain FCC compliance for the facility. Candidate should have FCC Radiotelephone General Class and/or SBE Certificate; strong RF and UHF transmitter background. Candidate must also have a minimum 2-4 years of television broadcast engineering experience. **Traffic Manager:** Primary responsibilities include preparing commercial logs; inventory management; order clearances; programming formatting and hiring and managing of support staff. Candidate must have knowledge of CIDS, BIAS or VCI and excellent computer skills. Candidate must also work well under deadline pressure. Three years experience in traffic supervision or management preferred. High School diploma or some college preferred. For all positions, college degree in related fields preferred. Replies will be held in confidence. Please send resume or inquiries to the address below. No phone calls please. WB33, KWCV-TV, Turner Communications, Inc., PO Box 1100, Wichita, Kansas 67202. Equal Opportunity Employer.

SITUATIONS WANTED TECHNICAL

Broadcast Engineering veteran with 29 years experience, and DTV, seeks opportunity with group broadcaster as corporate DOE or GM. Reply to Box 01583. EOE.

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.

HELP WANTED CREATIVE SERVICES

Director of Creative Services, WSB-TV, Atlanta: Lead the marketing efforts of one of the top ABC affiliates in America. The combination of a great station - WSB-TV, a great company - Cox Broadcasting, and a great market - Atlanta, make this one of the finest opportunities of its kind in broadcasting. Depth of experience and a strong news orientation are necessary. For the right candidate with the right background, there could be a programming component to this position as well. Send resume and tape to Greg Stone, Vice President & General Manager, WSB-TV, 1601 W. Peachtree Street, N.E., Atlanta, Georgia 30309.

Art Director/Designer: No news is good news. Paramount O & O in Tampa is looking for an incredibly creative individual with a good attitude and a great track record. You'll create and manage all on-air and out of house promotion. Must be proficient on Macintosh Graphic Workstation, utilizing software including, but not limited to: Quark Express 3.3, Photoshop 5.0, Adobe Illustrator 8.0, After Effects and basic Mac Utilities. Must have an Art/Design background. Please send resume and non-returnable tape of on-air and print samples to: WTOG-TV, Attn: Art Dept., 365 105th Terrace N.E., St. Petersburg, FL 33716. No phone calls please.

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- Over 50 local city forecast portal pages in the U.S. and growing weekly!
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- Can be promoted as "your own" in your local market while recapturing the internet audience via your station's streamed video promo spot.

WHO ARE WE?

National Weather Networks has been providing customized, local weather forecasts to TV stations since 1991. Weatherama.com is an extension of our weather operations and will quickly become the dominant provider of local video weather in the new world of convergence.

HOW CAN WE HELP YOUR STATION?

NWN is looking for promotional partners in each TV market. Through your participation as a local promotional partner, your station can receive prominent placement on your market's local Weatherama.com city page, direct links back to your station's website, or even stream a :10 station promo! We ask that each partner promote usage of the service in their market through an on-air campaign consisting of billboard placement, weather bumpers, or similar opportunities in news, movies, etc.

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edward@nwnstudios.com

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ADS IN THE INDUSTRY!**

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SERVICES

Parrot Media Network (www.parrotmedia.com) offers online databases of over 70,000 media executives with extensive up-to-date info on thousands of media outlets. U.S. and International TV Stations, Networks, Groups, Reps, Cable Systems, MSOs, Cable Networks, Satellite Operators, Radio, Press/Publicity, Newspapers, Advertising Agencies, Movie Chains and Movie Theatres. \$49.95/month. Call for **FREE** one day password. All information also available in directory and computer disk formats. 1-800-PARROT

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LOW COST!

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simply request
to run on
our website
for an
extra\$50/wk.

CABLE

HELP WANTED RESEARCH

We're looking for researchers who are cable-ready.

CBS Cable relies heavily on research to keep our finger on the pulse of those who watch cable. To support this endeavor, we are seeking the following research professional to join us in our NEW YORK CITY location.

SENIOR RESEARCH ANALYST

To perform audience performance tracking of all the major US basic cable networks, the selected candidate will maintain a research database to support management, ad sales group and public relations. This will be accomplished by tracking industry developments, identifying trends and anticipating changes in the cable industry. To qualify, you must have strong sales support and presentation writing skills, along with 4-5 years' media or media-related experience and a college degree. Additional requirements including familiarity with Nielsen products (Galaxy Explorer, PNF, Program Names, ACR reports, etc.) Knowledge of Microsoft Office Suite including Excel, Word and PowerPoint is essential, as is experience working with MRI product usage data and CMR information.

We offer a competitive salary and benefits. Please forward your confidential resume, including salary history and requirements to: Human Resources Department, CBS Cable, 250 Harbor Drive, Stamford, CT 06904. Fax: 203/965-6117. Equal Opportunity Employer.

©CBS CABLE

HELP WANTED SALES

USA BROADCASTING

USA Broadcasting, a division of USA Networks, Inc., and the 5th largest station group, is looking for key sales & business executives to help launch USAB's local stations in Dallas & Atlanta. This is a unique opportunity to help build truly local independent television stations, which are fully integrated with our original programming & Internet properties. We're seeking individuals to join our team:

Sales Managers: Seeking creative candidates with successful track records in television sales management. Your goal will be to grow traditional billings and develop innovative new business opportunities, which will include packaging our Internet & original programming assets. Local sports will be your edge, as we have successful sports franchises in each of these markets. We're looking for team builders, capable of marketing a unique effort in a crowded marketplace.

Account Executives: Successful candidates will be aggressive self-starters with media experience who know how to work with agencies and generate new business. This will be a fast pace environment; where a person with excellent presentation skills and commitment to teamwork will excel. We encourage people with all forms of media background to apply.

Business Managers: This individual will be responsible for all accounting, financial reporting and human resource area of the station. Ideal background should include 3-5 years of financial media management experience.

For immediate consideration, fax your resume and salary history indicating position desired to K. Featherstone (310) 360-2517. EOE.

Women and minorities encouraged applying.

HELP WANTED DIRECTOR

Director, Library Systems

A&E Television Networks is seeking an experienced professional for a newly created position overseeing all video library systems. The individual will be responsible for upper level budget and process control, development of enhanced library procedures, and ability to meet the demands of a robust and dynamic environment. The qualified candidate will have 7-10 years experience conducting tape library traffic, edit session support, dubbing and conversion, and technical quality control. 5 years experience in tape tracking and archive management and 3-5 years experience in new technologies, close-captioning, and hybrid information integration is required, along with day-to-day management of a diverse staff spread throughout various facility locations in the tri-state area.

Please forward resume with SALARY REQUIREMENTS to:

A&E Television Networks
Human Resources/DLS
235 East 45th Street
New York, NY 10017
Fax: (212) 907-9402
Email: recruiter@aetn.com



No phone calls please. EOE

HELP WANTED TECHNICAL

Chief Engineer: WSAH-TV, Bridgeport, CT. Technically skilled engineer to maintain transmitters, local insertion equipment, and automation. The Chief Engineer will maintain contact with cable systems resolving carriage issues relating to signal quality and strength. Must be able to work in a self directed environment, be resourceful, and be able to work with outside contacts. Experience with UHF transmitters, first phone, and SBE certification is a plus! Send resume and salary requirements by mail to Tracie Frank, Shop at Home Network, 5388 Hickory Hollow Parkway, Antioch, TN 37013, by fax to (615) 263-8910, or by e-mail to tfrank@sath.com.

HELP WANTED NEWS

Producers: Seeking experienced Hard News, Music News, and Celebrity Interview Producers for growing entertainment and lifestyle cable network for full-time positions. Strong writing and management skills required. Must be willing to relocate. Please fax cover letter and resume to 800-835-7445.

ALLIED FIELDS

HELP WANTED TECHNICAL

**Director of Engineering
University Teleplex**

Ball State University has a continuing contract position available immediately for an individual to perform and oversee installation, operation, and maintenance of audio and video equipment according to FCC specifications and regulations. Duties include but are not limited to: direct supervision of two chief engineers and indirect supervision of eight broadcast engineers; recommend equipment use and replacement; write and research equipment grant specifications; prepare and monitor annual engineering budget. The Teleplex consists of the following areas: WIPB-TV, Indiana Public Radio, University Media Services, Video Information Services, and Equipment Projectionist Services. The Teleplex provides support to the university through Broadcast Services; Ball State Sports Network; Video, Audio, and Graphics Production; multimedia development, instructional design, and distance learning. Minimum qualifications: bachelor's degree in electronics engineering or related broadcast field; at least five years of recent broadcast engineering management experience. Salary is market based.

Send letter of application, resume, three letters of reference, and transcript to:

**Mr. Bill Cahoe Director,
University Teleplex
Ball State University
Muncie, IN 47306.**

**Review of applications will begin immediately and will continue
until the position is filled. (www.bsu.edu)**

Ball State University is an equal opportunity, affirmative action employer and is strongly and actively committed to diversity within its community.

SEND BLIND BOX RESPONSES TO:

BROADCASTING & CABLE

Box _____, 245 West 17th St. 7th Fl. New York, New York 10011

HELP WANTED DIRECTOR

Director

The E.W. Scripps School of Journalism at Ohio University invites applications and nominations for the position of Director. Appointment is to begin July 1, 2000.

Position Description

The director leads and administers undergraduate and graduate programs, teaches, participates in fund-raising and serves as an advocate for the School.

Qualifications

Qualifications suitable for appointment to the rank of tenured professor and successful administrative experience are expected. Candidates should have appropriate academic degrees and/or extensive professional experience.

Additional information is available on the School's Web page: <http://www.scripps.ohiou.edu/>

Application Process

Initial screening of applicants will begin September 30, 1999, and will continue until the position is filled. Each application should include a curriculum vita and names, addresses (including e-mail) and telephone numbers of three references who may be contacted. Nominations and applications should be sent to: Professor Sandra Haggerty, Chair of the Director Search Committee, College of Communication, 497 Radio-TV Building, Ohio University, Athens, OH 45701 (740.593.4883, FAX: 740.593.0459, e-mail: haggerty@ohio.edu)

Equal opportunity/affirmative action employer.



HELP WANTED SALES

Sales Executive: Can you sell? Have you seen enough sales people across the desk to know you can do it yourself? Have you worked in radio or television news? Do you have technical aptitude? If you answered yes to at least three of these questions, please send your resume and salary requirements to Broadcasting and Cable Magazine Box 01584. We are a Washington, D.C. based news technology company looking for the right sales professional to make sales and manage a large territory working with leading and innovative broadcasters. You need to be highly organized, able to travel extensively and present a professional image to our most important customers.

EMPLOYMENT SERVICES

Just For Starters: Entry-level jobs and "hands-on" internships in TV and radio news. National listings. For a sample lead sheet call: 800-680-7513.

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Used videotape: Cash for 3/4" SP, M2-90's, Betacam SP's. Call Carpel Video 301-694-3500.

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FOR SALE

RCA TTU-66 UHF Transmitter, dual RCA TTUE-44 exciters, one ITS exciter, and RCA TFU-28 DAS channel 51 pylon antenna. Great for service or parts, still in operation at this time.

Contact: Richard Large 619-505-5150

OSU Invitation To Bid: OSU offers for sale by sealed bid a 38-foot mobile production truck in operational condition. Shook-built truck on Volvo chassis with new (1998) stainless steel bays. Equipment includes GVG300-3AN switcher, iN-FINITE 060 with 3 frame buffers, 32-input audio, 4-hard/2-HH cameras, 3 slo-mo VTR's, and much more. For more information, please contact Sam Welch, Educational Television Services, 405-744-5960, Stillwater, OK. Bid closes August 16, 1999 at 1:30pm.

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FOR SALE STATIONS

Mobile/Pensacola 2X LPTV, priced to sell \$500K
S. Florida C2 50kw resort market, cash flow \$1.3M
Southeast SX LPTV Network, seller motivated \$4.0M
Miami Market, LPTV, Network, cash flow \$3.5M
Jacksonville AM, fulltime, cash flow, great signal \$925K
Ft. Pierce/Stuart/Vero AM fulltime, new equip \$950K
AL/FL/GA 2X AM & 2 FM Group \$1.9M
FL (Jax Market) C3, positive cash flow \$2.7M
AM/FM St. Louis market, seller motivated \$595K
AM/FM N. Fla. small market, great assets \$595K

HADDEN & ASSOC.

(O) 407-365-7832 (FAX) 407-366-8801

For Sale: UHF Television Station CP. Medium Southeast market, network availability; \$2 million. Contact: Norman Fischer & Associates, Inc., P.O. Box 5308, Austin, TX 78763. norman@www.nfainc.com (512) 476-9457.

WANTED TO BUY STATIONS

Mid-America Broadcasting is looking to acquire the following stations or combos: FM, FM/AM, or FM C.P. in a rated market. Cash flow is preferred but not required. Mid-America Broadcasting will spend up to \$3.5 million in cash and if necessary finance the balance. Brokers welcome. Please direct information to: Mid-America Broadcasting, Richard J. Doud, President, 423 Celebration Avenue, Celebration, FL 34747. (407) 566-0624 (Phone); (407) 566-0625 (Fax); midamabroad@aol.com.

COLLECTION AGENCY

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Attorney (former broadcast/cable ad sales manager NBC-TV, Katz, Petry, Lifetime) and staff handle the USA's top media firm's collection accounts offering:

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When sending your ad-sales collection claims to CCR, please include your rate card and a list of avails. Because after we "sell" your over-due clients on the wisdom of paying the balance, we'll include a new order in the deal (if you like).

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CCR • George Stella

1025 Old Country Road • Suite 303S

Westbury, NY 11590

Tel: 516-997-2000 • 212-766-0851 • Fax: 516-997-2071

E-Mail: CCRCollect@AOL.com

BROADCASTING & CABLE'S CLASSIFIED RATES

All orders to place classified ads & all correspondence pertaining to this section should be sent to BROADCASTING & CABLE, Classified Department, 245 West 17th Street, New York, NY 10011. For information call Brent Newmoyer at (212) 337-6962 or Yuki Atsumi at (212) 337-6960.

Payable in advance. Check, money order or credit card (Visa, Mastercard or American Express). Full and correct payment must be in writing by either letter or Fax (212) 206-8327. If payment is made by credit card, indicate card number, expiration date and daytime phone number.

Deadline is Monday at 5:00pm Eastern Time for the following Monday's issue. Earlier deadlines apply for issues published during a week containing a legal holiday. A special notice announcing the earlier deadline will be published. Orders, changes, and/or cancellations must be submitted in writing. NO TELEPHONE ORDERS, CHANGES, AND/OR CANCELLATIONS WILL BE ACCEPTED.

When placing an ad, indicate the EXACT category desired: Television, Radio, Cable or Allied Fields; Help Wanted or Situations Wanted; Management, Sales, News, etc. If this information is omitted, we will determine the appropriate category according to the copy. NO make goods will run if all information is not included. No personal ads.

The publisher is not responsible for errors in printing due to illegible copy—all copy must be clearly typed or printed. Any and all errors must be reported to the Classified Advertising Department within 7 days of publication date. No credits or make goods will be made on errors which do not materially affect the advertisement. Publisher reserves the right to alter classified copy to conform with the provisions of Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended. Publisher reserves the right to abbreviate, alter or reject any copy.

Rates: Classified listings (non-display). Per issue: Help Wanted: \$2.50 per word, \$50 weekly minimum. Situations Wanted: 1.35¢ per word, \$27 weekly minimum. Optional formats: Bold Type: \$2.90 per word, Screened Background: \$3.00, Expanded Type: \$3.70 Bold, Screened, Expanded Type: \$4.20 per word. All other classifications: \$2.50 per word, \$50 weekly minimum.

Word count: Count each abbreviation, initial, single figure or group of figures or letters as one word each. Symbols such as 35mm, COD, PD etc., count as one word each. A phone number with area code and the zip code count as one word each.

Rates: Classified display (minimum 1 inch, upward in half inch increments). Per issue: Help Wanted: \$218 per inch. Situations Wanted: \$109 per inch. Public Notice & Business Opportunities advertising require display space. Agency commission only on display space (when camera-ready art is provided). Frequency rates available.

Color Classified Rates

Non-Display: Highlighted Position Title: \$75. Display: Logo 4/C: \$250. All 4/C: \$500.

Online Rates: \$50 additional to cost of ad in magazine

Blind Box Service: (In addition to basic advertising costs) Situations Wanted: No charge. All other classifications: \$35 per issue. The charge for the blind box service applies to advertisers running listings and display ads. Each advertisement must have a separate box number. BROADCASTING & CABLE will now forward tapes, but will not forward transcripts, portfolios, writing samples, or other oversized materials; such are returned to sender. Do not use folders, binders or the like. Replies to ads with Blind Box numbers should be addressed to: Box (number), c/o Broadcasting & Cable, 245 W. 17th Street, New York, NY 10011

Confidential Service. To protect your identity seal your reply in an envelope addressed to the box number. In a separate note list the companies and subsidiaries you do not want your reply to reach. Then, enclose both in a second envelope addressed to CONFIDENTIAL SERVICE, Broadcasting & Cable Magazine, at the address above.

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DATEBOOK

MAJOR MEETINGS

Aug. 31-Sept. 3—National Association of Broadcasters Radio Show. Orange County Convention Center, Orlando, Fla. Contact: (202) 429-5419.

Sept. 27—Interface XIII. Ronald Reagan International Trade Center, Washington. Contact: Steve Labunski (212) 337-7158.

Sept. 29-Oct. 2—Radio-Television News Directors Association Conference and Exhibition. Charlotte Convention Center, Charlotte, N. C. Contact: Rick Osmanski (202) 467-5200.

Oct. 3-6—Video Transport Services Annual Conference. Hilton Universal City and Towers, Los Angeles. Contact: Sunny Despain (212) 465-6780.

Oct. 12-14—Mid-America Cable Telecommunications Association Mid-America Show. Overland Park International Trade Center, Overland Park, Kan. Contact: Patty O'Connor, (785) 841-9241.

Oct. 26-28—1998 Eastern Show, Cable Conference and Exhibition presented by the **Southern Cable Telecommunications**

Association. Orange County Convention Center, Orlando, Fla. Contact: Patti Hall (404) 255-1608.

Nov. 8—9th annual Broadcasting and Cable Hall of Fame Reception and Program. New York Marriott Marquis Hotel, New York. Contact: Steve Labunski (212) 337-7158.

Dec. 14-17—The Western Show Conference and Exhibition presented by the **California Cable Television Association.** Los Angeles Convention Center. Contact: (510) 428-2225.

Jan. 24-29, 2000—36th annual National Association of Television Programming Executives Conference and Exhibition. Ernest N. Morial Convention Center, New Orleans. Contact: (310) 453-4440.

April 10-13, 2000—National Association of Broadcasters Annual Convention. Las Vegas Convention Center, Las Vegas. Contact: (202) 429-5300.

May 7-10, 2000—Cable 2000, 49th annual National Cable Television Association convention and exhibition. Ernest N. Morial Convention Center, New Orleans. Contact: Bobbie Boyd (202) 775-3669.

THIS WEEK

Aug. 4—HRTS Newsmaker Luncheon Kids Day. Beverly Hilton Hotel, Beverly Hills, Calif. Contact: (818) 789-1182.

Aug. 4-7—Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication/Association of Schools of Journalism and Mass Communication 82nd Annual Convention. Ernest N. Morial Convention Center, New Orleans. Contact: (803) 777-2005.

AUGUST

Aug. 18—New York Chapter of the National Lesbian and Gay Journalists Association "The Commercial Closet" Video Presentation. The Gay and Lesbian Community Center, New York. Contact: Michael Collins (203) 281-8984.

Aug. 19-21—American Women in Radio and Television Annual Convention. The Drake Hotel, Chicago. Contact: (703) 506-3290.

Aug. 25-27—National Association of Broadcasters/Latin America Annual Conference. Loews Miami Beach, Miami Beach, Fla. Contact: Mark Rebholz (202) 775-3527.

Aug. 31-Sept. 3—National Association of Broadcasters Radio Show. Orange County Convention Center, Orlando, Fla. Contact: (202) 429-3191.

SEPTEMBER

Sept. 8-10—Women in Cable and Telecommunications Executive Development Seminar. Hilton Hotel, Loveland, Colo. Contact: Pamela Williams (312) 634-2330.

Sept. 9—Television Bureau of Advertising 1999 Annual Forecasting Conference. Time Life Building, New York. Contact: (212) 486-1111.

Sept. 9-12—Michigan Association of Broadcasters Annual Conference. Mackinac Island Hotel, Mackinac Island, Mich. Contact: Mike Steger (517) 484-7444.

Sept. 10-14—International Broadcasting Convention Annual Conference. Savoy House, Amsterdam, Netherlands. Contact: Hilary Robinson 44-171-240-3839.

Sept. 13-14—National Association of Minorities in Communications 13th Annual Urban Markets Conference. The Millennium Broadway, New York. Contact: Michael Stiver (212) 838-2660, ext. 21.

Sept. 16—SkyFORUMXII, direct-to-home satellite TV business symposium presented by the **Satellite Broadcasting and Communications Association** The Marriott Marquis Hotel, New York. Contact: Carrie Cole, (703) 549-6990.

Sept. 16-19—National Lesbian and Gay Journalists Association 8th Annual Convention. Sheraton Hotel, Atlanta. Contact: (202) 588-9888.

Sept. 16-18—Tennessee Association of Broadcasters 52nd Annual Convention. Holiday Inn

Choo-Choo, Chattanooga, Tenn. Contact: Jill Green (615) 399-3791.

Sept. 20-23—National Association of Broadcasters TV Hundred Plus Conference. Marriott Hotel, Nashville. Contact: Mike Steger (202) 775-3527.

Sept. 20-Oct. 2—Radio-Television News Directors Association International Conference and Exhibition. Charlotte Convention Center, Charlotte, N. C. Contact: Carolyn Wilkins (202) 429-5366.

Sept. 22—HRTS Newsmaker Luncheon Network Entertainment Presidents. Century Plaza Hotel, Los Angeles. Contact: (818) 789-1182.

Sept. 26-28—National Religious Broadcasters Eastern Regional Conference. Sandy Cove Bible Conference Center, Baltimore. Contact: Bill Blount (401) 737-0700.

Sept. 28—The Carmel Group Convergence '99: The Five Burning Questions. The Westin Hotel, Santa Clara, Calif. Contact: (831) 645-1055.

Sept. 29-Oct. 2—Radio-Television News Directors Association International Conference and Exhibition. Charlotte Convention Center, Charlotte, N. C. Contact: Rick Osmanski (202) 467-5200.

Sept. 30—PricewaterhouseCoopers 1999 Global Convergence Summit. The Marriott Marquis Hotel, New York. Contact: Deborah Scruby (212) 259-4250.

Sept. 30-Oct. 1—Iowa Public Television Iowa DTV Symposium 1999. West Des Moines Marriott, West Des Moines, Iowa. Contact: Marcia Wych (515) 242-4139.

Sept. 30-Oct. 2—National Religious Broadcasters Southeastern Regional Convention. Stone Mountain Inn, Stone Mountain, Ga. Contact: Regina McGraw (404) 728-6727.

OCTOBER

Oct. 3-5—National Religious Broadcasters Western Regional Convention. Antlers Adam's Mark Hotel, Colorado Springs, Colo. Contact: Gary Curtis (818) 779-8400.

Oct. 3-6—Video Transport Services Annual Conference. Hilton Universal City and Towers, Los Angeles. Contact: Sunny Despain (212) 465-6780.

Oct. 4-6—Southern Cable Telecommunications Association Eastern Show. Orange County Convention Center, Orlando, Fla. Contact: Patti Hall (404) 255-1608.

Oct. 5-13—Telecom '99 8th world telecommunications exposition and forum. PALEXPO, Geneva, Switzerland. Contact: +41 22 730 5111.

Oct. 12-14—Atlantic Cable Show East Coast Cable '99. Waterfront Convention Center, Baltimore. Contact: (609) 848-1000.

Oct. 13-14—Television Bureau of Advertising 7th Annual Research Conference. McGraw-Hill Conference Center, New York. Contact: (212) 486-1111.

Oct. 14-16—National Religious Broadcasters Midwestern Regional Conference. Lied Conference Center, Nebraska City, Neb. Contact: Martin Jones (402) 464-6440.

Oct. 26-28—1998 Eastern Show, Cable Conference and Exhibition presented by the **Southern Cable Telecommunications Association.** Orange County Convention Center, Orlando, Fla. Contact: Patti Hall (404) 255-1608.

Oct. 28—HRTS Newsmaker Luncheon Jupiter Communications. Beverly Hilton Hotel, Beverly Hills, Calif. Contact: (818) 789-1182.

NOVEMBER

Nov. 8—9th annual Broadcasting and Cable Hall of Fame Reception and Program. New York Marriott Marquis Hotel, New York. Contact: Steve Labunski (212) 337-7158.

Nov. 19-20—Society of Motion Picture and Television Engineers 41st Technical Conference and Exhibition. Jacob Javits Convention Center, New York. Contact: (914) 761-1100.

Nov. 30—Cabletelevision Advertising Bureau Traffic and Billing/Sales Automation business interest group regional workshop. Wyndham Los Angeles Airport Hotel, Los Angeles. Contact: (212) 508-1229.

DECEMBER

Dec. 1-3—"DTV4," Digital TV Forum and Conference Presented by **World Research Group.** Hotel Inter Continental, Los Angeles. Contact: (800) 647-7600.

Dec. 14-17—The Western Show Conference and Exhibition presented by the **California Cable Television Association.** Los Angeles Convention Center. Contact: (510) 428-2225.

JANUARY 2000

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APRIL 2000

April 10-11, 2000—Television Bureau of Advertising Annual Marketing Conference. Las Vegas Hilton Hotel, Las Vegas. Contact: (212) 486-1111.

April 10-13, 2000—National Association of Broadcasters Annual Convention. Las Vegas Convention Center, Las Vegas. Contact: (202) 429-5300.

MAY 2000

May 7-10, 2000—Cable 2000, 49th annual National Cable Television Association Convention and Exhibition. Ernest N. Morial Convention Center, New Orleans. Contact: Bobbie Boyd (202) 775-3669

—Compiled by Nolan Marchand
(nmarchand@cahners.com)

CHANGING HANDS

The week's tabulation of station sales

TVS

WRUA(TV) Fajardo, P.R.

Price: \$335,000

Buyer: Eastern Television Corp., Bayamon, P.R. (Consuelo Morales Rivera, president); no other broadcast interests

Seller: Demarys de Jesus, Cidra, P.R.; no other broadcast interests

Facilities: Ch. 34, 50.1 kw, ant. 2,877 ft.

Affiliation: Dark

COMBOS

12 AMs and 31 FM's in nine states (see story, "Top of the Week")

Price: \$821.5 million

Buyer: Entercom Communications Corp., Bala Cynwyd, Pa. (David J. Field, president); owns 17 other AMs and 25 other FM's

Seller: Sinclair Broadcasting Group Inc., Baltimore (David D. Smith, president/CEO); owns/operates 59 TV's, four AMs and five FM's

WASP(AM) Brownsville and WASP-FM Oliver/Uniontown, Pa.

Price: \$2.875 million

Buyer: Keymarket Communications, Augusta, Ga. (Donald Alt, Kerby Confer and Lynn Deppen, principals). Principals own nine other AMs and 11 other FM's

Seller: Humes Broadcasting Corp., Brownsville (spouses James and Beth Humes, owners); no other broadcast interests

Facilities: AM: 1130 khz, 5 kw day; FM: 94.9 mhz, 25 kw, ant. 1,240 ft.

Formats: AM: news/talk; FM: country

Broker: William B. Schutz Jr.

KOWL(AM)-KRLT(FM) South Lake Tahoe, Calif.

Price: \$1.25 million

Buyer: Commonwealth Communications LLC, San Diego (Dex Allen, principal); no other broadcast interests. Allen also is president of California Communications /Commonwealth II, which owns/is buying KKSC(AM)-KSIQ(FM) El Centro, Calif., and KLMR(AM) Lamar/Pueblo/Colorado Springs, KSEC(FM) Lamar, Colo.

Seller: Regent Communications Inc., Covington, Ky. (William Stakelin, president); owns/is buying 11 AMs and 24 FM's

Facilities: AM: 1490 khz, 1 kw; FM: 93.9 mhz, 6 kw, ant. -190 ft.

Formats: AM: news/talk; FM: classic rock

PROPOSED STATION TRADES

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

THIS WEEK

TVs $\square$ \$335,000 $\square$ 1
Combos $\square$ \$826,786,000 $\square$ 5
FM's $\square$ \$22,095,000 $\square$ 11
AMs $\square$ \$1,233,000 $\square$ 2
Total $\square$ \$850,449,000 $\square$ 19

SO FAR IN 1999

TVs $\square$ \$2,458,369,005 $\square$ 47
Combos $\square$ \$1,740,260,435 $\square$ 104
FM's $\square$ \$955,058,189 $\square$ 168
AMs $\square$ \$127,248,689 $\square$ 117
Total $\square$ \$5,280,936,318 $\square$ 436

55.9% of KOMW(AM)-KNCW(FM) and KZBE(FM) Omak, Wash.

Price: \$680,000 for stock

Buyer: North Cascades Broadcasting Inc., Omak (spouses John P. and Rebecca L. Andrist, principals); no other broadcast interests

Seller: Paul R. Brantner, Omak; no other broadcast interests

Facilities: KOMW: 680 khz, 5 kw day; KNCW: 92.7 mhz, 4.1 kw, ant. 941 ft.; KZBE: 104.3 mhz, 3.5 kw, ant. 981 ft.

Formats: KOMW: AC; KNCW: country; KZBE: news

KXAR-AM-FM Hope, Ark.

Price: \$481,000 (\$51,000 for AM; \$430,000 for FM)

Buyers: AM: Newport Broadcasting Co., Blytheville, Ark.; owns KHPA(FM) Hope and KTPA(AM) Prescott/Hope, KNBY(AM)-KOKR(FM) Newport and KOSE(AM) Osceola, Ark. FM: Arklatex LLC, Blytheville (Harold L. Sudbury Jr., principal of both); no other broadcast interests. Sudbury owns 88% of KLCN(AM)-KHLS(FM) Blytheville and 60% of KAMJ(FM) Gosnell and KOSE-FM Osceola, Ark.

Seller: KDB Inc., Hope (Bill Hoglund, Dennis Niederer and Ken Sibley, principals). Principals own KVMA(AM) Magnolia, Ark.

Facilities: AM: 1490 khz, 690 w; FM: 101.7 mhz, 59 kw, ant. 492 ft.

NEXSTAR BROADCASTING GROUP, L.P.

Perry A. Sook, President and Chief Executive Officer

has agreed to acquire

WCIA-TV, WMBD-TV, WCFN-TV

Champaign, Illinois

Peoria, Illinois

Springfield, Illinois

for

\$110,300,000

from

MIDWEST TELEVISION INC.

August C. Meyer, Jr., President

*Patrick Communications was proud to serve
as the broker in this transaction.*

PATRICK



COMMUNICATIONS

(410) 740-0250, www.patcomm.com

Formats: AM: country; FM: urban contemporary

FMS

KOOJ-FM New Iberia/Baton Rouge, La.

Price: \$9.5 million

Buyer: Citadel Communications Corp., Las Vegas (Lawrence R. Wilson, president); owns/is buying 35 AMs and 83 other FMs, including WIBR(AM) and WXOK(AM) Baton Rouge, WCAC(FM) (formerly WKJN-FM) Hammond/Baton Rouge, WEMX(FM) Kentwood/Baton Rouge and KQXL-FM New Roads/Baton Rouge, La.

Seller: KTBT Radio Broadcasting Co., Baton Rouge (John Spain, president); owns three AMs and three FMs

Facilities: 93.7 mhz, 97 kw, ant. 997 ft.

Format: Urban Contemporary

Broker: Bergner & Co.

KWIC(FM) Topeka and KQTP(FM) St. Marys/Topeka, Kan.

Price: \$3 million

Buyer: Cumulus Media Inc., Milwaukee (Richard W. Weening, chairman; Lew Dickey, vice chairman); owns/is buying 70 AMs and 157 FMs

Seller: Shawnee Broadcasting Corp., Newburgh, N.Y. (Joerg G. Klebe, principal). Klebe owns one AM and two FMs

Facilities: KWIC: 99.3 mhz, 6 kw, ant. 292 ft.; KQTP: 102.9 mhz, 50 kw, ant. 320 ft.

Format: KWIC: AC; KQTP: oldies

Broker: McCoy Broadcast Brokerage

WYCL(FM) Pensacola, Fla.

Price: \$2 million

Buyer: Concord Media Group, Odessa, Fla. (Mark W. Jorgenson, president); owns three AMs and two FMs. Jorgenson is a principal of ZGS Broadcasting, which owns two AMs and three TVs

Seller: Paxson Communications Corp., West Palm Beach, Fla. (Lowell W. "Bud" Paxson, chairman/owner); owns/is buying 54 TVs. Note: Paxson last year filed to sell station to Cap-Star Broadcasting Partners LP (B&C, April 6, 1998)

Facilities: 107.3 mhz, 100 kw, ant. 1,407 ft.

Format: Oldies

WVVE(FM) Stonington/New London, Conn.

Price: \$1.9 million

Buyer: Spring Broadcasting LLC, New York (William Sherard, president); owns three AMs and four other FMs

Seller: Shoreline Communications

Inc., Mystic, Conn. (David J. Quinn, president); no other broadcast interests

Facilities: 102.3 mhz, 3 kw, ant. 328 ft.

Format: Good-time oldies

WMHX(FM) Louisville, Ky.

Price: \$1.77 million

Buyer: Cox Broadcasting Inc., Atlanta (Nicholas D. Trigony, president; Robert F. Neil, president, Cox Radio Inc.); owns/is buying 11 TVs, 17 AMs and 38 other FMs

Seller: Owen Co. Inc., Louisville (George Owen, president); no other broadcast interests

Facilities: 103.9 mhz, 1.35 kw, ant. 490 ft.

Format: Smooth jazz

KOEZ(FM) Newton/Wichita, Kan.

Price: \$1.5 million

Buyer: Kansas Radio Assets I LLC, East Lansing, Mich. (Michael H. Oesterle, managing director); no other broadcast interests

Seller: KJRG Inc., Newton (Gordon Anderson, principal); owns KJRG(AM) Newton/Wichita

Facilities: 92.3 mhz, 100 kw, ant. 650 ft.

Format: Easy music

WEBZ(FM) Port St. Joe/Panama City, Fla.

Price: \$1 million

Buyer: Clear Channel Communications Inc., San Antonio, Texas (L. Lowry Mays, chairman); owns/is buying 22 TVs, 158 AMs and 287 other FMs

Seller: DP Media Inc, Palm Beach, Fla. (Roslyck Paxson, president); owns/is buying nine TVs. Paxson, who is Bud Paxson's daughter-in-law, owns two TVs

Facilities: 93.5 mhz, 14.5 kw, ant. 659 ft.

Format: Classic rock

KMKZ(FM) Lahoma/Enid, Okla.

Price: \$525,000

Buyer: Champlin Broadcasting Inc., Enid (Hiram H. Champlin, president). Champlin owns KCRC(AM)-KNID(FM), KBFQ(AM) and KXLS-FM Enid

Seller: Donald W. McCoy, Enid; no other broadcast interests

Facilities: 95.7 mhz, 9.6 kw, ant. 502 ft.

Format: Classic rock

Broker: Media Services Inc.

KCDL(FM) Cordell, Okla.

Price: \$350,000

Buyer: Wright Broadcasting Systems Inc., Weatherford, Okla. (G. Harold Wright Jr., president); owns KQMX(FM)

Clinton and KWEY-AM-FM Weatherford, Okla.

Seller: Dove Media Inc., Ardmore, Okla. (Bruce H. Campbell, vice president); owns KTUE(AM)-KLGD(FM) (formerly KJMX) Tulsa, Texas, and construction permit to build FM in Winters, Texas

Facilities: 99.3 mhz, 10.5 kw, ant. 505 ft.

Format: Real country

WNXR(FM) Iron River, Wis.

Price: \$300,000

Buyer: Gerald J. Hackman, Ashland, Wis.; owns WBSZ(FM) Ashland and 66.7% of WATW(AM)-WJH(FM) Ashland

Seller: Capital Broadcast Services, Iron River (Arthur F. Raymond, president); no other broadcast interests

Facilities: 107.3 mhz, 50 kw, ant. 380 ft.

Format: AC

Construction permit for KBKH(FM)

Illwaco Wash./Portland, Ore.

Price: \$250,000

Buyer: New Northwest Broadcasters II Inc., Bellevue, Wash. (Michael W. O'Shea, chairman; Ivan E. Braiker, president) owns/is buying three AMs and seven FMs. O'Shea and Braiker also own two AMs and six FMs

Seller: Richard M. Schafbuch, Portland; no other broadcast interests

Facilities: 103.9 mhz, 25 kw, ant. 328 ft.

Broker: Montcalm Inc.

AMS

WWON(AM) Fenton, Mich.

Price: \$708,000

Buyer: Birach Broadcasting Corp., Southfield, Mich. (Sima Birach, president/owner); owns six other AMs

Seller: GWC Inc., Fenton (Larry Robinson, chief executive); no other broadcast interests

Facilities: 1160 khz, 1 kw

Format: Urban

WTTN(AM) Watertown, Wis.

Price: \$525,000

Buyer: Good Karma Broadcasting LLC, Beaver Dam, Wis. (Craig Karmazin, owner); owns WBEV(AM)-WXRO(FM) Beaver Dam and WTLX(FM) Columbus/Beaver Dam, Wis.

Seller: Watertown Radio Inc., Watertown (Charles P. Mills, owner). Mills owns WKTT(FM) Cleveland, Wis.

Facilities: 1580 khz, 1 kw day, 7.8 w night

Format: Country

—Compiled by Alisa Holmes

A style like no other

The broadcast industry gave Gloria Tristani a seasonably chilly reception back in November 1997. The new FCC commissioner was aloof, some said. Another chorus labeled her inaccessible. It was an assessment based, in large measure, on what they considered her single-minded focus on pro-consumer and rural telecommunications policy—initiatives that only offered the industry more regulation and expense.

Tristani's advocacy remains. The broadcasters' opinion of the New Mexico Democrat appears to be changing, however.

"We've met with her frequently and have come to know her as someone who will provide broadcasters a fair hearing," says Eddie Fritts, president of the National Association of Broadcasters.

Although Tristani and broadcasters still disagree on many issues, her rocky relationship with the industry has U-turned from her first year in office. Then, broadcasters were complaining that she often seemed to have made up her mind on controversial issues—such as free airtime for political candidates or broadcast-industry consolidation—before hearing their side of the story. Industry lobbyists also groused that Tristani was stingy with her time when meeting with them and, in a perceived sign of disinterest, posed few questions to her corporate callers.

Now broadcasters may also have come to realize that Tristani doles out her time just as carefully even to those who share her liberal views on telecommunications policy. "We don't get more than 15 minutes with her, either," says Andrew Schwartzman, president of Media Access Project. "She doesn't believe in long meetings. This is a perfectly acceptable administrative style."

True to character, Tristani refused several requests for interviews and declined to respond to written questions for this article. Staffers blamed her unwillingness on a busy schedule.

Since being picked by FCC Chairman William Kennard to lead a task force overseeing the rollout of the V-Chip TV rating system, she has slowly won over much of the industry. In turn, she has praised most broadcast and cable networks for surpassing their voluntary guidelines for transmittal codes that allow the V-Chip-equipped TVs to switch off programs parents don't want their children to see.



"If there ever were a time for the commission to ensure that consumers' interests don't take a back seat to the interests of telecom giants, it is now."

Maria Gloria Tristani

Commissioner, Federal Communications Commission, Washington; b. Dec. 20, 1953, San Juan, P.R.; B.A., Columbia University, 1987; J.D., Univ. of New Mexico, 1990; aide, Sen. Jeff Bingaman (D-N.M.), 1983-87; lawyer, Keleher & McLeod, Albuquerque, N.M., 1990-1994; commissioner (elected), New Mexico State Corporation Commission, 1995-1997; m. Gerard W. Thomson; children: Vanesa, 18, Jorge, 6.

Born in Puerto Rico, Tristani has rich political roots in New Mexico. Her grandfather, Dennis Chavez, was U.S. senator for 29 years. She also worked on the staff of Sen. Jeff Bingaman during the mid-1980s. After completing her law degree at the University of New Mexico she won her first political race in 1994, defeating the Democratic incumbent to win a seat on the State Corporation Commission, which regulates insurance, trucking and telephone companies. Her experience on the panel and a recommendation from Bingaman won her a nomination to the FCC post.

Tristani's independent streak extends to her relations with other commissioners, including Kennard, who is probably her closest ally. On several occasions she has criticized him for what she considers his mishandling of FCC policies and procedures.

For instance, she has urged Kennard to at least stem the consolidation wave unleashed by the 1996 Telecommunications Act. Just use the agency's flexibility to tweak ownership regulations, she has said.

Another campaign, with Commissioner Susan Ness as an ally, is an effort to reverse FCC policy that green-lights some radio station mergers—even when an unacceptable level of market concentration appears evident.

Tristani has also complained that Kennard's reluctance to take up the issue until a sweeping review of broadcast ownership limits is completed is "a smokescreen for inaction." On at least three occasions, Tristani has sided with the commission's most conservative member, Republican Harold Furchtgott-Roth, after "extraordinary" breaks from FCC procedure.

But on the most policy issues, Tristani is an old-fashioned liberal, wary of the consolidation trend unleashed by the 1996 telecom act. "If there ever were a time for the commission to ensure that consumers' interests don't take a back seat to the interests of telecom giants, it is now," she told the National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners last fall.

It's that kind of talk that prompted one industry source to quip that "she's no Jim Quello," referring to the former commissioner who was often an aggressive advocate for broadcasters.

Tristani, no doubt, would consider that comment a compliment. —Bill McConnell

BROADCAST TV



Gaither

Lee Gaither, director, narrative series, The Disney Channel, Burbank, Calif., joins NBC Entertainment there as VP, Saturday morning programs.

Anne H. Egerton, senior VP, NBC Law, Burbank,

Calif., named senior VP and general counsel, NBC West Coast.

Chris Stocking, international television manager, North America, Associated Press Television News, Washington, named director, client operations. He will relocate to London.

Appointments, WABC-TV New York: **Scott Dempsey**, manager, national television sales, WDIV-TV Detroit, joins as national sales manager; **Dan Donovan**, local account executive, named local sales manager.

Appointments, Fox Television Sales, Dallas: **Sean Berndt**, account executive, named group sales manager; **Brian Davis**, group sales manager, named VP and general sales manager.

Michael Weiner, manager, planning and analysis, Tribune Broadcasting, Chicago, joins affiliate KCPQ-TV Seattle as director, finance.



Anderson

Todd Anderson, general sales manager, KVRN(TV) Fargo, N.D., joins KQDS(TV) Duluth, Minn., as general manager.

Kimberly Steele, senior account executive, KSAZ-TV Phoenix, joins KNXV-TV there as

national sales manager.

Patti St. Pierre, sales account executive, WPRI-TV/WNAC-TV Providence, R.I., named national sales manager.

Sarah Smith, national sales manager, WFAA-TV Dallas, joins KVUE-TV Austin, Texas, as director, sales and marketing, and general sales manager.

Rosana Ruiz, sales representative, Norfolk Tides Baseball Club, Norfolk, Va.,

joins WTVZ(TV) there as sales account executive.

PROGRAMMING

Appointments, Buena Vista Television, Burbank, Calif.: **Howard Levy**, VP, ad sales, New York, named executive VP. He is based in New York. **Jim Engleman**, VP, ad sales, Midwest region, named senior VP. He is based in Chicago.

Edward Kurpis, VP, finance and administration, NBC, New York, joins BNN, an independent television and new media company there as senior VP and chief financial officer.

JOURNALISM



Alston

John Alston, anchor, WPWB-TV Sacramento, Calif., joins WCAU-TV Philadelphia as weekend anchor and reporter.

Angela Davis, anchor, WFAA-TV Dallas, rejoins KSTP-TV Minneapolis/Saint Paul in same capacity.

Nikki Egan, news producer, KMBC-TV Kansas City, Mo., joins WPBF-TV West Palm Beach, Fla., as executive producer, *EyewitnessNews 25*.

Andrea Parquet-Taylor, managing editor, WXYZ-TV Detroit, joins WRAL-TV Raleigh, N.C., as assistant news director.

Appointments, WDAF-TV Kansas City, Mo.: **Darin Nadler**, producer/director, WEEK-TV Peoria, Ill., joins as director; **Steve Kaut**, reporter, *Olathe Daily News*, Olathe, Mo., joins as news assignment editor; **Brett Flood**, assistant producer, named producer.

Appointments, KING-TV Seattle: **Greg Thies**, news operations manager, KIRO-TV Seattle, joins as news operations manager; **Dave Humphrey**, producer, KIRO-TV Seattle, joins as executive producer.

Amy Anderson, general assignment reporter, KODE-TV Joplin, Mo., named co-anchor.

Troy Thomas, executive producer, WDIV-TV Detroit, joins NorthWest Cable News, Seattle, as assistant news director.

RADIO

Mark O'Brien, VP, general manager, WASH-FM Washington, joins WWDC-FM/AM there in same capacity. He will continue his current duties.

Richard Mack, VP, general manager, WWDC-FM/AM Washington, joins WFOX-FM Atlanta in same capacity.

Shawn Skramstad, manager, Starcom Inc., Fargo, N.D., joins KQDS-FM/AM Duluth, Minn., as general manager.

Appointments, Mega Communications, Boston: **Maria Elena Verdugo**, general sales manager, Hartford, Conn., named general manager; **Jorge Mier**, program director, WONQ(AM) Orlando, Fla., joins in same capacity.

Allyson Butler, media director, August, Lang & Husak, Washington, joins WJMO-FM there as director, marketing.

Kippie Romero, sales manager, KEYN-FM/KFH(AM)/KQAM(AM) Wichita, Kan., joins Radio Advertising Bureau, New York, as VP, training and director, sales training academy.

CABLE

Appointments, Showtime Networks Inc., New York: **Jamie Padnos**, director, program planning, named VP; **Kent Sevenser**, counsel-entertainment, named VP; **Sharon Whitt**, counsel, sales and marketing, Showtime Networks Inc., New York, named VP.

Appointments, ESPN, Bristol, Conn.: **Aaron Taylor**, VP, account director, Young and Rubicam, New York, joins as director, advertising and program marketing. He is based in New York. **Jon Landa**, senior account executive, West Region, named director, affiliate sales and marketing. He is based in Los Angeles.

Appointments, Lifetime Television, New York: **Elise Bromberg**, manager, media relations and promotion, Columbia TriStar Television, Los Angeles, joins as director, media relations, West Coast. She will continue to be based in Los Angeles. **Alyssa Ziegler**, VP, Bender, Goldman & Helper, New York, joins as director, public affairs. She will continue to be based in New York.

Tim Megaw, head, broadcasting and TV sales, QVC-UK, West Chester, Pa., named VP, broadcasting.



Daniel Rodgers, creative director, Ark Multimedia Publishing, Hampton, Va., joins The Inspirational Network, Charlotte, N.C., as art director.

Rodgers

Kymberly Nelson, VP, division manager, Pearson/All

American Television, Chicago, joins The Box Music Network there as director, advertising sales, Midwest region.

Michael Ritz, executive publisher, *Coach & Athletic Director*, Scholastic Inc., New York, joins Turner Learning there as director, business development.



Gendimenico

Appointments, BBC Worldwide Americas, New York: **Nancy Gendimenico**, VP, retail services, United Media, New York, joins as VP, licensing and merchandising; **Luc LaFontan**, project manager,

information technologies, named director, information technologies, North America.



Fry

R. Paul Fry, VP and general manager, KONG-TV Seattle, Wash., joins NorthWest Cable News there in same capacity.

Lauren de la Fuente, VP, off-air creative, USA Network and The Sci-Fi Channel, Los

Angeles, joins Intertainer Inc., Culver City, Calif., as senior VP, marketing.

Bruce Raisner, sales manager, National Cable Communications, Boston, named director, training.

ADVERTISING/MARKETING/ PUBLIC RELATIONS

Denise Rolfe, East Coast director, creative services, Warner Bros. Marketing and Advertising, New York, joins Pegasus Communications Corp., Bala Cynwyd, Pa., as VP, marketing and promotion.



Preelooker

Javier Preelooker, account supervisor, Hispanic division, Grey Advertising, FOVA West, Los Angeles, joins Pittard Sullivan, Culver City, Calif., as account manager, Spanish-speaking markets.

Jay Keay, director,

new business development, WABC(AM) New York, joins Infinity Promotions Group there as managing director.

David Paxton, chief financial officer, Paxton Media Group, Paducah, Ky., named president and chief executive officer.

INTERNET

Appointments, Yack!, a guide to live Internet events and chats, New York:

Jeff Morris, senior VP, new media and technology, Showtime Networks Inc., New York, joins as chief executive officer; **Derek Reisfield**, president, CBS New Media Group and chairman, Marketwatch.com, New York, joins as chairman of the board.

Philip Ivanier, VP, business development, Magnifi Inc., Cupertino, Calif., joins NewsNet Central, which produces and distributes personalized content for television and the Internet, San Francisco, as VP, strategic planning and development.

Appointments, FasTV.com, Los Angeles: **Mark Goodstein**, principal, Full Moon Interactive Group, Los Angeles, joins as VP and general manager;

Randy Freedman, chief executive officer, TransGlobal Associates, Los Angeles, joins as VP, business and international affairs.

Nicholas Schacht, group president, IIR/ESI International, Arlington, Va., joins Global Learning Systems, Vienna, Va., as executive VP.

DEATHS

Martin Agronsky, 84, an early television newsman and a pioneer of the public affairs show featuring journalists as the principal guests, died July 25 from heart failure. The longtime journalist's *Agronsky & Co.* ran for 18 years, until 1988. But Agronsky's family told reporters that his proudest accomplishment was a 1952 Peabody Award won for reporting on Joseph McCarthy, reporting that cost his syn-

dicated radio broadcasts advertisers and drew criticism that called him a traitor and attacked him for being Jewish. Agronsky had a career in journalism that dated back to 1936, when he was a reporter for what is now the *Jerusalem Post*. During World War II, he was a radio news correspondent. At various times he worked for all three broadcast networks and for PBS. Widowed once and divorced once, Agronsky is survived by five children and four grandchildren.

Peter Bordes, 71, founder, chairman and chief executive officer, Greater Media, died July 19 of cancer. Under Bordes' leadership, the East-Brunswick, N.J.-based company grew to be one of the nation's larger privately held media companies, as it currently owns the 14th largest radio station group (by revenue) and publishes community newspapers in Central New Jersey. After serving as a lieutenant with the Coast Guard, Bordes entered the media business with the purchase of a small radio station in Southbridge, Mass., in 1956. The company's cable television business began in that community in 1970. Last month, Greater Media completed the sale of its cable systems in Massachusetts to Charter Communications and its Philadelphia system to Comcast. Bordes is survived by his wife, Lee, and four children.

Michael F. Maulano, 57, former national sales manager, KASA-TV Albuquerque, N.M., died July 12 in a car accident. Maulano's career began in 1968 as a planner buyer/buying supervisor for Benton and Bowles in New York. He moved into television sales at Avco TV in 1973. He held various sales positions in New York before moving into television station sales management as national sales manager for WNFT-TV in Jacksonville, Fla., in 1984. Four years later, Maulano became the national sales manager at KASA-TV and spent the next ten years there. He recently completed the SEC exam and became a certified futures trader. He is survived by his wife, Rhona, and his son, Michael.

Correction: In the July 26 issue of BROADCASTING & CABLE, the photo of Larry Fleece, executive producer, *Real TV*, Los Angeles, was misidentified.

—Compiled by Mara Reinstein
mreinstein@cahners.com

CNN says it held back from breaking into programming with news of the shooting rampage that left 12 dead within CNN's home turf in Atlanta last week because of conflicting reports from affiliates.

MSNBC was on the air first at 3:43 p.m. Thursday, followed by Fox News Channel seven minutes later and CNN seven minutes after that. Although this is the third news event from Atlanta for which CNN has pre-empted regular programming, the network was not first to report any of them, and said that while fast reporting is a priority, it does not override all priorities. "We are not in a day-to-day horserace, even in our own backyard," said a CNN spokesman. "Sometimes we are first. But the decision, as always, is to be accurate rather than first." Not surprisingly, cable news

and broadcast networks relied heavily on Atlanta affiliates, which were cited in local reports as restrained in terms of staying with long shots and not revealing much of police maneuvers.

Quieting speculation that Leslie Moonves would jump to Warner Bros., CBS last week said he has signed on again as president-CEO of CBS Television.

A new long-term agreement supplants a five-year pact set to expire next year. Having taken the network to No. 1 in households, it's presumed Moonves got a big raise, but terms were not disclosed. He has earned \$4 million a year in salary and bonuses for the past three years, according to a filing with the SEC. In 1997, he also received stock options for 500,000 shares with an exercise price of \$21.75, and 290,000 shares exercisable at \$24.31.

Jim Casserly, senior legal adviser to FCC Commissioner Susan Ness, will be leaving her office Aug. 6 to join the Washington law firm Mintz, Levin, Cohn, Ferris, Glovsky, and Popeo.

During his five years on Ness's staff, Casserly advised her on children's TV programming, spectrum auction rules and a wide range of telephone-related issues. Ness is still searching for a permanent senior adviser, but in the meantime, her wireless and international adviser Dan Connors will add those duties. Linda Kinney will be oversee telephone issues. White House Deputy Staff Secretary David Goodfriend was picked to become her mass media and cable adviser. He replaces Anita Wallgren, who left in May for Silicon Valley. Goodfriend, who takes his new post Aug. 23,

previously was a telecommunications lawyer for Willkie Farr & Gallagher. He has also worked as a House and Senate staffer.

King World Productions last week said its stable of programs is now encoded to be compatible with the V-Chip rating system.

The company's announcement came roughly a week after Rep. Edward Markey (D-Mass.) complained that syndicators were too slow in making their shows V-Chip encoded. Four King World shows, *The Oprah Winfrey Show*, *Hollywood Squares*, *The Roseanne Show* and *The Martin Short Show* are rated TV-PG. Rated TV-G are *Wheel of Fortune* and *Jeopardy!* A news show, *Inside Edition*, is not covered by the voluntary rating system.

A House panel last week passed a bill that would give permanent licenses to low-power TV stations.

Currently, the FCC grants temporary licenses to low-power TV stations, making it difficult for owners to secure financing. Low-power broadcasters would have to air 18 hours of programming per day and three hours of local programming per week to qualify for a permanent, or Class A, license. They would not be covered by a law that requires cable companies to carry all full-power local broadcasters. The National Association of Broadcasters does not support the bill, saying it could cause interference with full-power broadcasters' transition to digital television. Rep. Ron Klink (D-Pa.), a cosponsor of the bill, says he will continue to negotiate with the NAB. An amendment offered by Rep. Nathan Deal (R-Ga.), another cosponsor, would

PBS seeks preschoolers on Saturdays

PBS and Nelvana are getting into the Saturday morning children's programming game—and they are going after preschoolers.

Nelvana Communications has struck a three-year deal with PBS to produce the network's first-ever Saturday morning children's programming block that will feature animated series from some of the top names in children's literature. Nelvana executives say they will spend \$40 million over the course of three years to produce six half-hour series that will fill the weekly three-hour Saturday morning block. The yet-to-be named children's block will debut in the fall of 2000.

As part of the deal, PBS has agreed to take two of the six series after the first year and integrate them into the network's weekday children's lineup. PBS and Nelvana executives say they are programming high-end children's series for preschoolers—a virtually untapped weekend market. "There is no doubt that Saturday morning cartoons seem to be dominated on the commercial networks by school-age programming, programs for older kids, so we think there is a real opportunity here to provide quality preschool programming that parents can trust because it has the PBS name on it," says John Wilson, PBS' senior vice president of programming.

The programming block will include series based on best-selling children's books, including Maurice Sendak's *Seven Little Monsters*, William Joyce's *George Shrinks* and Don Freeman's *Corduroy Bear*. The other three series will be based on Rosemary Wells' *Timothy Goes To School*, Michael, Betty Paraskevas' *Junior Kroll* and Andrea Beck's *Elliot Moose*.

For Nelvana, the deal continues the Canada-based company's tradition of partnering with top children's authors and turning their works into major TV and merchandising brands. "This is the culmination of arranging with important literary talent for some time now," Nelvana Communications President Toper Taylor says.

— Joe Schlosser

give the FCC the authority to require low-power broadcasters to limit their signal power or move it to another frequency if it interferes with the digital signal of a full-power broadcaster.

Clear Channel Communications Inc. says it is creating the first radio superstation. The company's top-40 powerhouse, KIIIS-FM Los Angeles (brought into the fold by merger partner Jacor Communications Inc.), and InXsys Broadcast Networks are building an audio and video network for the Internet. "KIIISFMi" will offer new music and videos that have not yet reached the top 40. Chats, celebrity interviews and KIIIS-FM personalities including Rick Dees will be part of the mix.

Radio advertisers continue to spend less on the medium's key demographic, listeners ages 25-54, according to Interep Research. The per-

centage of dollars aimed at that segment of the population in the nation's top 25 radio markets dropped to 50.5% last year from 52.9% in 1997 and 54.4% in 1996, Interep said in a recent study. In the top 10 cities, the share of that spending dropped to 49% from 58% between last year and 1994. New York, the nation's largest radio market, and Minneapolis/St. Paul (No.

18) came in lowest last year, with 41% of total ad dollars spent targeting 25- to 54-year-olds. Pittsburgh (No. 21) was first with 59.4%.

Digital Video Broadcasting (DVB), got another shot in the arm last week when the Government of India declared that it will adopt DVB-T (ter-

restrial) for digital terrestrial broadcasting in India. The DVB organization also announced that Argentina is reconsidering its selection of the U.S. ATSC standard for DTV and will now take a second look at DVB-T. DVB-T's COFDM modulation scheme is being touted by Sinclair Broadcast Group as being superior to 8-VSB, the modulation system used by the ATSC standard (see cover story).

High Speed Access Corp. struck a five-year deal for up to \$25 million with Road Runner to give the Internet service access to HSAC's network integration services. The two companies will share subscription revenues with the respective cable operators wherever Road Runner uses the services. Road Runner receives a warrant to purchase HSAC common stock at \$5 per share for each home passed, up to five million shares.

Stations report revenue shortfall

Last week several major station groups reported dips in pro forma TV revenue and cash flow for the quarter. The declines were not unexpected, given earlier reports of a soft second-quarter ad environment—particularly for the national spot market.

Hearst Argyle Television said its pro forma (same station) revenue was down 6.9% to \$186 million, while operating cash flow was down 14% to \$85.4 million. Sinclair Broadcast Group said its pro forma TV station revenue was down 3%, while pro forma TV station cash flow was down 2.5%.

A.H. Belo Corp. said its same-station TV revenue was flat for the quarter, while same-station cash flow dipped 2%. Station executives reporting their numbers to analysts said a lackluster national spot market was a big part of the problem, while local sales showed fairly healthy results. For example, Belo told analysts that its local TV sales were up 10%, while national spot sales were down 13%.

TV executives told analysts that the third quarter ought to be better than the second quarter. Analysts said that Hearst Argyle executives are circumspect about how much better. "All they would say is that it will be a positive quarter," said one source who was briefed by the company last week. "They said September was, at this point, a wild card."

—Steve McClellan

PAX TV launches 'ambitious' fall schedule

PAX TV President and CEO Jeff Sagansky says the family-oriented network will move from off-network programming to all-original series in prime time within the next three years. Sagansky, speaking at the annual summer Television Critics Association in Los Angeles last week, also unveiled the network's plan for a nightly "Family Hour" at 8 p.m.

Monday through Friday, PAX TV will air an original, family-oriented series during the so-called Family Hour each week of the season. On Mondays, the new *Star Search* spin-off *Destination Stardom* will anchor the second-year network's prime time lineup. *Destination Stardom* is produced by Al Masini, the executive producer of former shows such as *Star Search* and *Solid Gold*. Tuesday nights at 8 p.m., PAX TV will lead off the night with *Chicken Soup for the Soul*. The network ran *Chicken Soup for the Soul* as a holiday special last year and it has turned the best-selling book/special into a weekly series. On Wednesdays, *Twice in a Lifetime* will air during the family-programming hour. Sagansky says the one-hour drama is a combination of *Touched by an Angel* and *Quantum Leap*. On Thursday and Friday nights at 8 p.m., PAX TV will air new episodes of returning series *It's a Miracle* and *Little Men*.

"For a new network, it seems pretty ambitious to be launching a new original show every weeknight," Sagansky says. "It is ambitious, but it's smart too." —Joe Schlosser

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COMMITTED TO THE FIRST AMENDMENT AND THE FIFTH ESTATE

Stop the swap

The Corporation for Public Broadcasting made the right decision last week when it decided that any station swapping donor lists with a political group should henceforth be ineligible for federal monies. The issue was raised after several big-name PBS stations conceded their list brokers had made such swaps.

CPB's move should stop the swaps (no federal money is a big disincentive) and obviate legislation. Although the lists were traded through brokers and were, theoretically, available to any political organization of any stripe, the practice is inappropriate in that it suggests a partisanship that is inconsistent with a charter to serve a diverse public. It also ungraciously paid back contributors to noncommercial broadcasting with a phone call during dinner from a political party's version of an aluminum-siding salesman.

Still, the issue has been something of a tempest in a teapot, or perhaps that should be a hurricane in a pitcher since it may have been whipped up in part (or at the least capitalized on) by Rep. Billy Tauzin (R-La.). The controversy allows him to scale back a public broadcasting funding proposal that was too rich for some in his party and that put him at odds with a political rival.

We have been advising public broadcasting for years to wean itself from the government. Trading lists was one way of doing that. As the heads of PBS, CPB and NPR now concede, it was a wrong one.

Pay the price

Broadcasters are being required to give up some of their ENG spectrum and buy new equipment to operate within narrower bandwidth. And quite justifiably, they want the

new users of that reclaimed spectrum to compensate them for the new gear. But those new users—wireless telephone operators—are balking. They say they are willing to cover only the depreciated value of the old equipment.

Broadcasters and their news operations should not be penalized in this spectrum reallocation. To force them to give up spectrum and then reimburse them only for the depreciated price of the obsolete equipment is like telling them they must buy a new Lexus (plus pay taxes, title, dealer prep, options and delivery) with the blue-book price you'll give them for their 6-year-old Accord. The depreciation-only plan gives broadcasters the short end of the dipstick. The FCC is expected to make a decision by fall, which would clear the way for the spectrum to be used for a global wireless telephone service. The right call is to make those new users pay the full price of relocation.

Get real

Would it be socially responsible for TV networks to cast more minorities? Yes. Will TV be more diverse when more minorities are making those casting decisions? Yes. Should anyone be surprised that TV doesn't reflect reality? No. TV has rarely been about reflecting reality. How many of us look or act like the people on TV? There may not be enough blacks or Asians or Latinos on TV, but there are also not enough awkward teenagers with awkward complexions or frazzled moms with bad hair days or middle-aged guys who look bad in shorts. That said, our concern with the growing pressure on the networks from minority groups—the Latinos joined the NAACP push last week—is that programmers will feel compelled to cast by formula and checklist and committee for fear of leaving out this group or offending that group. But to the extent that the dream factory can better reflect the range of colors and textures of the real world, we're all for it, so long as that does not translate into a quota system.

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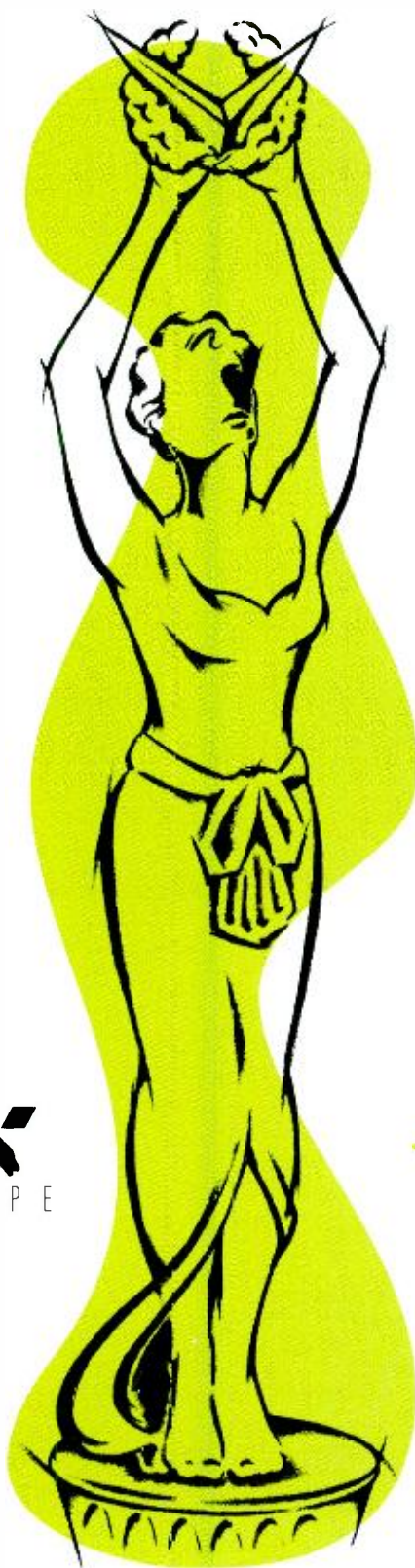
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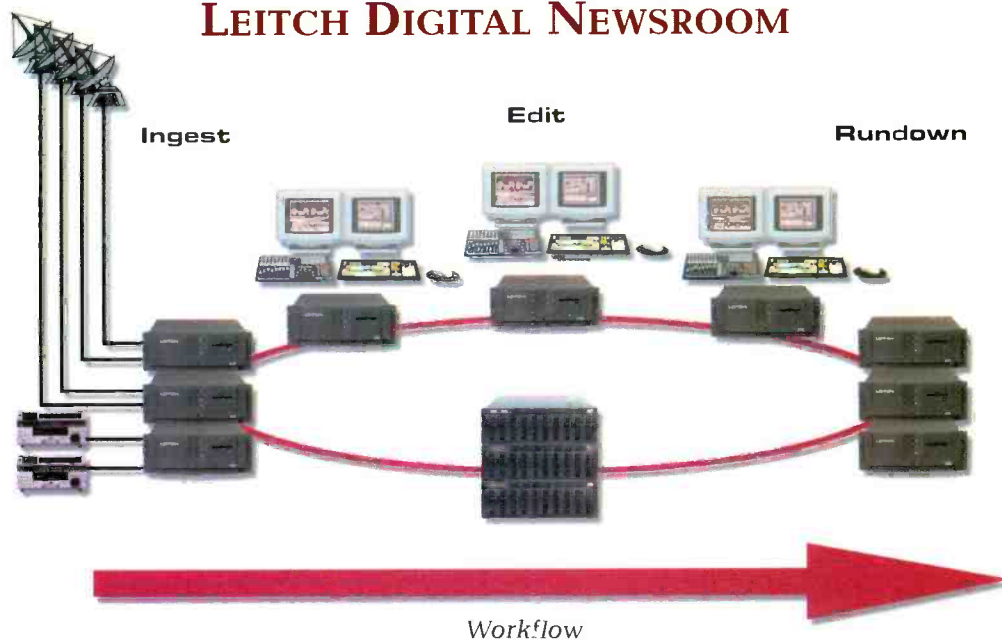
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