

# BROADCASTING CABLE

MARCH 12, 2001

www.broadcastingcable.com

## IT'S WAR!

500 affiliates gang together to charge that the major networks are trying to kill them. And they won't stand for it

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## ONE-STOP SHOPPING FOR ADS

How media giants are using cross-platforms to sell here, and there, and there, too

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## GRANITE: A LITTLE MORE SOLID

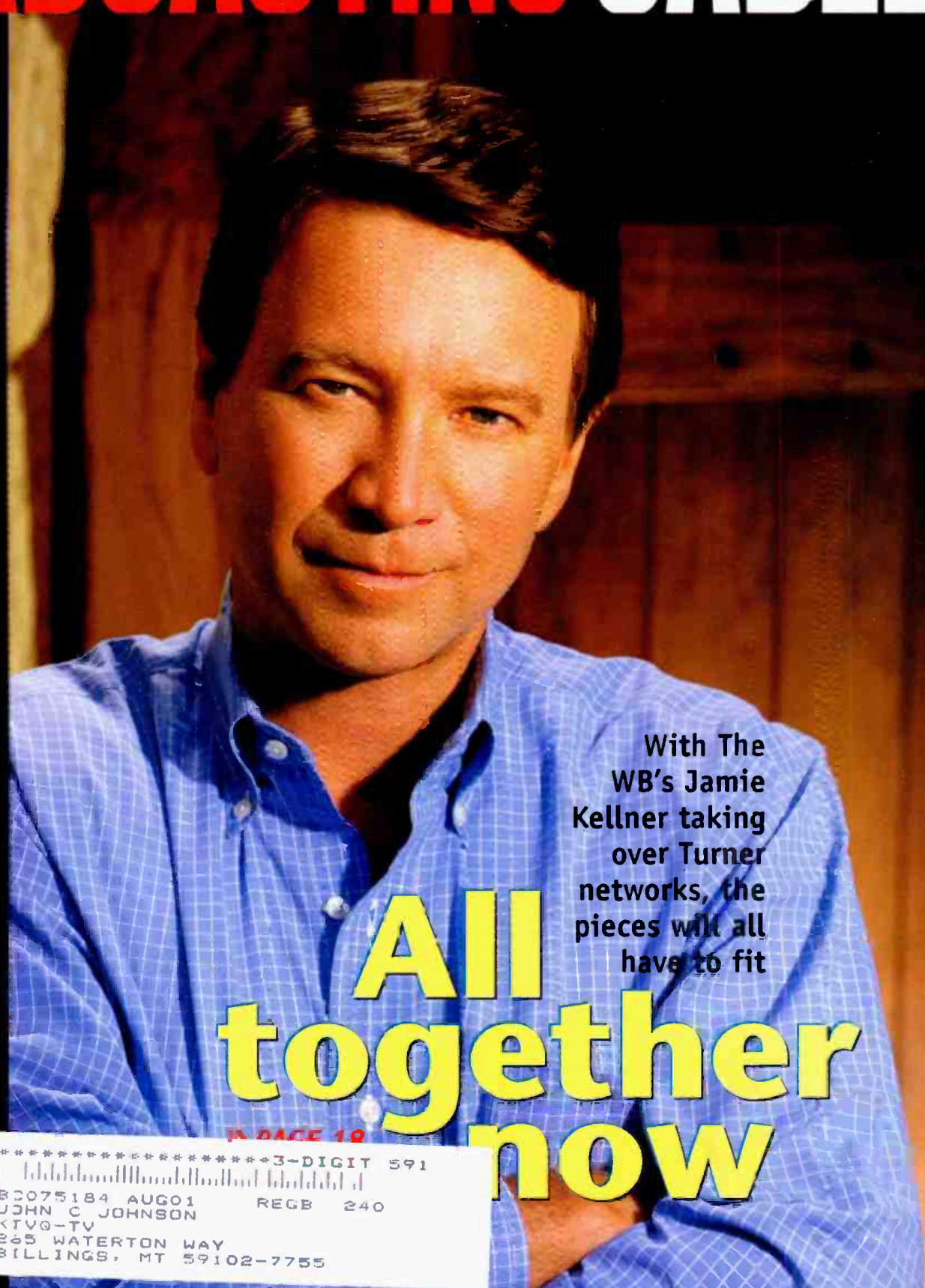
Pounded by Wall Street, Granite Broadcasting gets a break from NBC, and some financial help from bankers, too

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## SANTEE TRAGEDY: SAD. OVER.

Remarkably, Santana High horror quickly becomes a minor story. Why?

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With The WB's Jamie Kellner taking over Turner networks, the pieces will all have to fit

# All together now

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## Top of the Week March 12, 2001



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Photo: The WB / James Sorensen

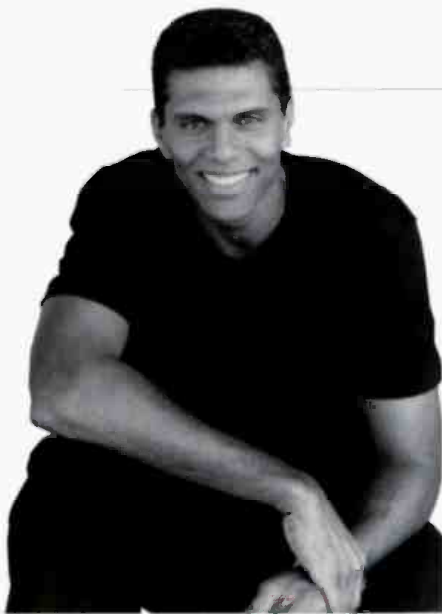
### COVER STORY

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**PROGRAMMING**

## The real deals

Twentieth Television may have decided not to go forward with talk project *The Real Deal* for next year, but the studio apparently thinks several of the show's prospective co-hosts are 'the real deal.' *Growing Pains*'s Alan Thicke is out of the mix, but sources say former Chicago Bull and current Fox Sports commentator Reggie Theus (above) and comics Kevin Meaney, Mike Richards and Marianne Curan are all still under consideration.

The studio has confirmed that it's planning a syndicated vehicle with Jillian Barberie, co-anchor of KTTV(TV) Los Angeles' *Good Day L.A.*

# BC EYE

**PROGRAMMING**

## Fancying fangs

While Discovery's *Shark Week* has drawn viewers with its exploration of the sea's most efficient killing machine, newly launched National Geographic Channel is looking to take a bite out of the nature-loving population with *Snake Week*.

The five-hour documentaries, scheduled to air March 19-23, will look at the habits and habitats of everything from king cobras and lanceheads to the herpetologists who seek them out. Why snakes? They are "highly misunderstood," says National Geographic Channel President Laureen Ong. "We probably have the premiere library of documented snakes." They are apparently also ratings-generators. Looking back to the success of National Geographic's *Explorer* series, she says, "Snakes have been among our highest-rated programs."



### MARK YOUR CALENDARS

Now that the major networks have ordered their pilots, it's time to meet with the folks who pay the bills. Starting next week, the networks will give advertising types on both coasts a peek at their development prospects. Here's the skinny: CBS will be at the Ed Sullivan Theater in Manhattan March 15, then at Carnegie Hall on May 16. NBC executives will be on the set of *The West Wing* March 19, then in New York, probably at Radio City Music Hall May 14. The WB is holding court at its Burbank facility March 20, then at the Manhattan Sheraton May 15. ABC's West Coast meeting is scheduled for March 21 (likely on the Disney lot in Burbank), then at Manhattan's New

Amsterdam Theater May 15. Fox is hosting a gathering at the Beverly Hills Four Seasons March 20, then aboard the U.S.S. Intrepid ship/museum in New York May 17. Finally, UPN will be on the co-owned Paramount Studios lot March 19, then at Madison Square Garden May 17.

### NEW PRESIDENT FOR PANASONIC BROADCAST

No official word yet, but look for Panasonic Broadcast and Digital Systems to name a new president. Frank DeFina, president of Panasonic Security and Digital Imaging Co., will take over the reins of the Broadcast and Digital Systems division from Steve Yuhas, who has held them since February. Yuhas remains atop the company's systems sector.



**HONORS**

## Journalists in high places

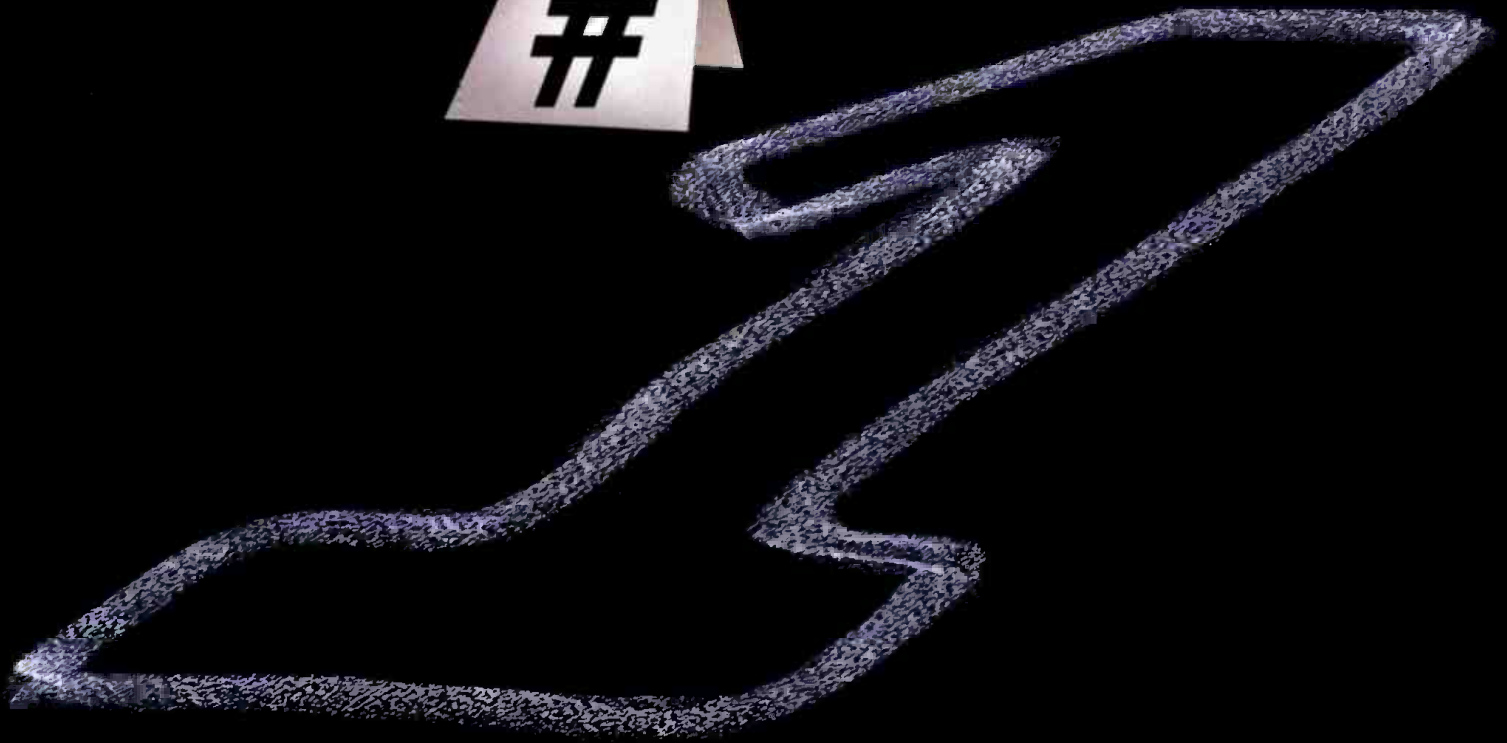
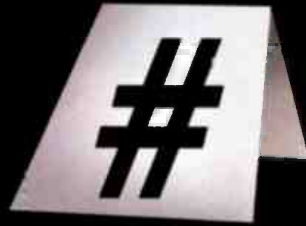
Members of the Radio and Television News Directors Board of Trustees had a busy day before their annual awards dinner at the Ritz Carlton in Washington last week (see page 43).

Board members started the day by meeting with White House spokesman Ari Fleischer, then lunching with House Energy and Commerce Committee Chairman Billy Tauzin (R-La.).

In the afternoon, they talked with the ranking member of the House Telecommunications Subcommittee, Rep. Ed Markey (D-Mass.), and finished up their pre-gala meet-and-greets with FCC Chairman Michael Powell (above).

They then donned their finest and spent the evening wining, dining and watching NBC News correspondent Andrea Mitchell hand out awards.

Trustees include Chair Robert Garcia of CNN Radio; Vice Chair Loren Tobia of WTVH-TV Syracuse, N.Y.; Treasurer Gene Mater of the Freedom Forum, Arlington, Va.; Cissy Baker of Tribune Broadcasting; former FCC Commissioner Patricia Diaz Dennis, now with SBC Communications; *NBC Dateline* Anchor Jane Pauley; and ABC News Correspondent Carole Simpson.



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\*Source: Nielsen HomeVideo Index, March 2001 vs. March 2000.



# It's war!

## Affiliates go to FCC with attack on networks

By Steve McClellan

The networks are screwing us. And not just with good old-fashioned, time-honored business tactics but with practices that are flat-out illegal. Or ought to be.

So said more than 600 of the nation's local TV stations affiliated with ABC, CBS and NBC in a complaint filed with the FCC that demanded a commission inquiry into the entire network-affiliate relationship. Many of those broadcasters will be in Washington this week to press their case on Capitol Hill.

The networks were taken by surprise and reacted angrily, using words like "base-

less" and "irresponsible" to describe the affiliates' salvos. And all of the networks suspected that very recent events were behind the filing, not the alleged long history of abuse cited in the affiliate complaint.

The networks all said privately that, as one executive put it, the affiliates "freaked" when the courts rejected the FCC's cable-concentration rules two weeks ago, fearing that the 35%

national-broadcast-ownership cap would be next. Another network official said that the stations would have a hard time gaining sympathy from regulators because their profit margins average 50% to 60%, while network margins are more like 5% (although the network parent companies have profit margins that far exceed that).

Some affiliates admitted that the timing was not coincidental but insisted that the

complaint was about much more than just the ownership cap. Most stations want the current limit kept in place, while the networks want it lifted to 50% or higher.

Alan Frank, president of the Post-Newsweek Stations, said work on last week's filing began in 1999, and it's mostly a litany of network practices that have the effect of taking programming control of stations away from local licensees, a



"These are very clear rules that are being broken," said NASA Chairman Alan Frank of the networks' practices.

## The network-affiliate-D.C. relationship

Out of fear that networks' economic muscle would undermine local control of stations, Congress ordered the FCC to set rules for affiliate relations in 1941. The "chain broadcasting" rules have been modified over the years. Here's where they stand today:

- **Right to reject:** Allows affiliates to refuse specific network programs.
- **Time options:** Prohibits networks from holding options on affiliates' time without committing to provide programming.
- **Exclusive affiliation ban:** Networks cannot bar affiliates from airing programming provided by other sources.
- **Territorial exclusivity ban:** An affiliate cannot forbid local competitors from broadcasting network programming that the affiliate declines to air.
- **Dual network rule:** The Big Four nets are barred from buying each other. They are allowed to start new networks and buy ones

launched after 1996 (Pax TV, for instance). The FCC has proposed letting them acquire The WB or UPN. In fact, the agency granted CBS a waiver to buy UPN.

Many network rules have fallen by the wayside. In 1993, a federal court struck down the financial interest and syndication rules barring networks from owning their programming. In 1995, the FCC eliminated rules that barred nets from owning stations in small markets and from forming "secondary affiliations" with already affiliated stations, if an unaffiliated station remained in a market.

A rule blocking affiliates from airing more than three hours of network programming during prime time was dropped. Proposals to relax the right to reject, time option, exclusive affiliation and exclusivity rules have been pending for six years.

—Bill McConnell





violation of the Communications Act and FCC rules.

Frank is chairman of the Network Affiliated Stations Alliance (NASA), the 15-year-old trade group that represents the common interests of Big Three affiliates and that filed last week's petition with the FCC. (The Fox affiliates aren't a part of the group, although last week's complaint was peppered with references to alleged Fox network rule violations.)

The affiliate boards of all three networks unanimously voted in favor of demanding an FCC inquiry, Frank said. And those votes, he added, began three weeks ago, well before the courts tossed out the cable concentration rules.

Andy Fisher, president of Cox Television and one of the NASA coordinators, said the document was assembled over two years. The affiliates made their move en masse, he said, "because individual owners tell us they are fearful of retribution. They felt that as owners they had no easy recourse and that they would be targeted for financial retribution. So many owners are concerned; they called upon NASA because what had at one time been a trickle of events had become a pattern."

By casting the networks' behavior as a series of rule violations, NASA appears to be appealing to FCC Chairman Michael Powell's stated desire to transform the FCC into an enforcement agency likely to step in after harmful actions have been demonstrated, rather than a commission making rules before there's a problem. Frank and other NASA officials briefed Powell and key House Commerce Committee members Rep. Billy Tauzin (R-La.) and Rep. Edward Markey (D-Mass.) last Thursday. They were scheduled to meet with Rep. John Dingell, Senators Conrad Burns (R-Mont.) and Ernest Hollings (D-S.C.) and other FCC commissioners Friday.

Powell's office would not comment on the NASA's petition. Other FCC staffers, however, said it's hard to gauge the chairman's likely reaction. "Their request flies in the face of what Powell stands for because they are looking for government interven-

## Grievance list

TV stations will be transformed into "mere passive conduits for their networks' national programming," the National Affiliated Stations Alliance (NASA) warned in its request for a government investigation into the networks' muscle-flexing. NASA submitted a list of alleged violations of FCC rules and "improper network practices."



The affiliates complain that, at the end of NFL games, ABC touts ESPN.

### ALLEGED RULES VIOLATIONS

■ **Each of the Big Four networks has unduly restricted the affiliates' ability to preempt network programming.**

During the 1994 Lillehammer Winter Olympics, CBS required affiliates to carry all of the events the network covered or lose rights to air Olympic games altogether. NBC tried unsuccessfully to impose similar restrictions last year during the first game of the American League Division Series by initially forbidding affiliates from preempting the game for the first 2000 Presidential debate. CBS has also pressured affiliates to clear its low-rated, two-hour *The Early Show* and refused repeated requests to permit local affiliates to air only one hour of the program so stations can offer local news.

■ **Fox has demanded complete control of affiliates' digital TV channels.** In addition to violating the "right to refuse" and licensee control requirements, NASA says, Fox's digital mandate violates the prohibition on forced optioning of time to a network and the prohibition against exclusive affiliations that bar stations from accepting other programming.

■ **NBC, ABC and Fox are using affiliation agreements to interfere with station sales.** NBC in 1999 scared away potential buyers for KRON-TV San Francisco by threatening to strip its affiliation if Chronicle Broadcasting sold to anybody else. New agreements required by ABC and Fox give the nets sole discretion to approve affiliation transfers.

### ALLEGED 'IMPROPER' PRACTICES

■ **The networks are collaborating on news coverage to the detriment of their affiliates.** Botched election-night poll reports resulted from network cost-cutting moves, primarily reliance on the Voter News Service (VNS)—the joint venture of the Big Four, CNN and the Associated Press. Similarly, the Big Four created Network News Service in June to pool video footage and are pressuring affiliates to use it rather than independent services like CNN Newsource.

■ **The networks are "repurposing" programming, once exclusive to affiliates, on co-owned cable networks and Web sites.** "Only CBS and ABC provide their affiliates with any exclusivity," the affiliates say. "CBS has asked to renegotiate this provision, and the exclusivity provided by ABC is highly qualified." The networks are also using their broadcast programming to promote related programming on cable networks. At the end of NFL games, for instance, ABC has urged viewers to turn to ESPN.

■ **The networks favor their own stations over affiliates.** ABC rejected repeated affiliate requests to move *Who Wants to Be a Millionaire?* from 9 p.m. to 10 p.m. to use as a lead-in for local news, before relenting during the fourth and last week of sweeps, although ABC's WPVI-TV Philadelphia was permitted to delay the show by an hour a week earlier.

■ **The networks' other interests give them too much clout.** NBC's investment in Paxson gives the network the ability to threaten affiliates that resist network demands with the prospect of moving the network programming to a Paxson station.

—B.McC.

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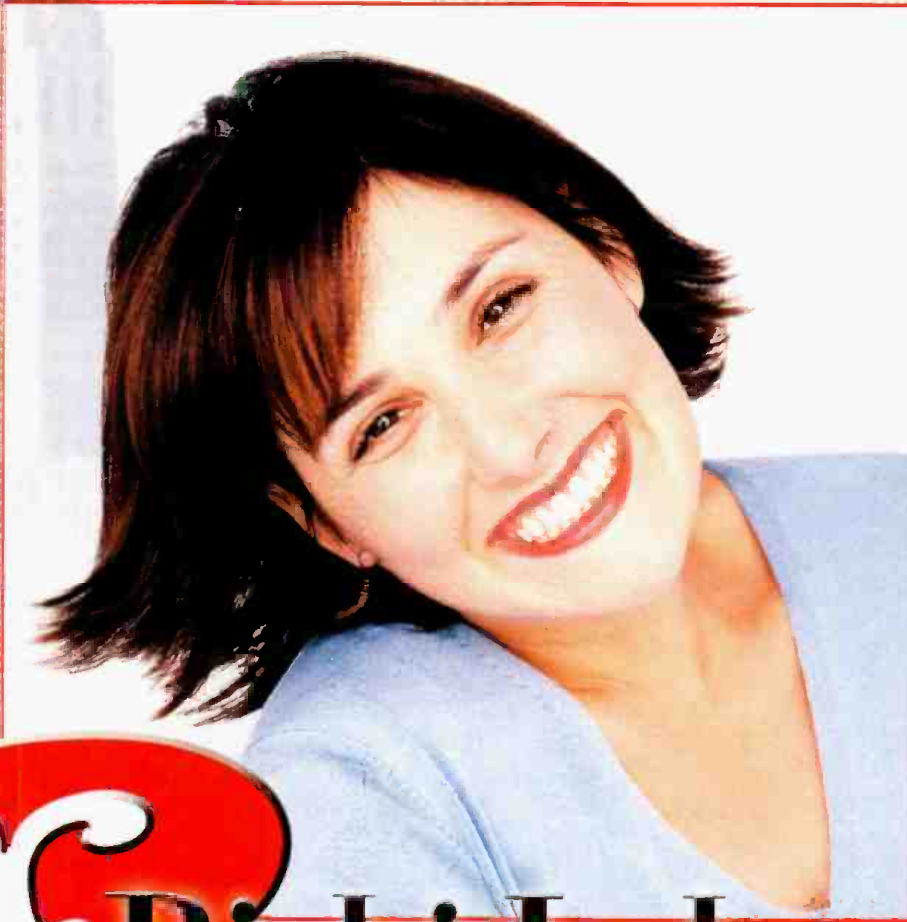
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Source: NSI, New York, WHYW, 10:30A  
WRAP Overnights, HH Rtg, Feb. '01  
New Court = Judge Hatchett, Power of Attorney, Moral Court, Curtis Court



# Leading Ladies!



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Source: NSI, New York, WWOR, 5:00P, WRAP Sweeps (#1 in show, A18-34 Rtg, Jan. '01)  
WRAP Overights NH Rtg, Feb. '01, (fastest growing, primary telecasts only vs Nov. '00)  
Talk Shows - Ricki, Oprah, Rosie, Leno, Letterman, C. Kilborn, C. O'Brien, View, Maury/Venus, Montel, Rosie, Maury, Springer, Jenny, Sally, Latifah, Dr. Laura

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tion into a contractual relationship," said one agency aide. "On the other hand, the stars seem to be aligned if you're talking about network abuses. First, there was the Voter News disaster, then the demise of Geocast," a digital pooling service for broadcasters, and, finally, repeated "pushing of the networks on licensees' spectrum."

Bruce Baker, executive vice president, Cox Broadcasting, and current chairman of the ABC affiliate board, said the board voted last week to support the filing but had been aware that the petition was being prepared and considered for at least nine months. He and the board, he said, feel that the networks are in violation of the rules. "I think we need to have resolution as to what the future of localism is going to be in terms of a priority with the FCC."

Last week's petition came after years of bitter wrangling between networks and affiliates over such issues as network program exclusivity, reduced compensation, how to use the digital spectrum and even network demands that stations start paying them to help defray the costs of programming.

The sword-rattling rose to a fevered pitch a few years ago, when both Disney's Michael Eisner and NBC's Bob Wright publicly stated that putting their respective over-the-air networks on cable and off broadcast affiliates was a real option.

Much of that was rehashed in the filing, along with references to network repurposing and even of NBC's preempting a presidential debate last fall in order to air a Major League Baseball playoff game.

The petition seems to hang its case on what affiliates believe are three central and widespread abuses, including forcing stations to clear virtually all network programs. As a result, the filing stated, stations abdicate their legal responsibility to program in the best interests of the local community.

The affiliates also charged ABC, Fox and NBC with abuse of station transfer clauses that force stations to agree to almost any network terms to buy or sell an affiliate station. Under those clauses, the networks reserve the right to approve the sale of their

affiliates. And the clauses let networks manipulate prices and deal themselves into the action unfairly, the petition stated. The most notable example of that was NBC's attempt to scare buyers away from KRON-TV San Francisco. The filing contained a letter from NBC's Wright that purported to do just that.

The third point is what the filing described as Fox's illegal demand to control its affiliates' digital spectrum, in violation of the Communications Act and FCC rules. Fox said it was studying the petition

and would not comment further until completing its review.

"These are very clear rules that are being broken," said Frank, of the network's practices. And they go "to the whole idea of what our broadcast system is about. The local broadcaster is responsible for what is on their air. That's the whole basis of our system of localism and diversity of viewpoints," he said, adding that the rules being violated are "critical to our preservation." ■

—Additional reporting by Bill McConnell and Dan Trigoboff

## McGorry, Oliver promoted

*Sales executives Orcutt, Payne also get expanded B&C roles*



William McGorry



Larry Oliver



Marcia Orcutt



Rob Payne

**B**ROADCASTING & CABLE executives William McGorry and Larry Oliver have been promoted, Tad Smith, president of the media division of Cahners Business Information, announced.

McGorry, who had been group vice president for the Television and Telecommunications Group, was named senior vice president of that group. Oliver, who had been group publisher, was named vice president and group publisher, Television Group.

In his major new role, McGorry will have overall responsibility for print products and the Internet sites and portals, including the BROADCASTING & CABLE Web site and the TVinsite portal. Oliver, who will report to McGorry, will oversee sales and marketing efforts for three television-centered publications, including BROADCASTING & CABLE, and will develop new-business and editorial-growth areas for print and electronic media.

In announcing the promotions, Smith

lauded the executives' ability to grow businesses and their "positive 'can-do' attitudes."

Separately, BROADCASTING & CABLE Associate Publisher Denise O'Connor announced two sales-staff promotions:

■ Marcia Orcutt, who has been with the magazine since 1999 as its advertising director, syndication, was named advertising director. In her new role, Orcutt will oversee the sales and operations efforts of BROADCASTING & CABLE. In the past, Orcutt worked as Western sales director for *Electronic Media*.

■ Rob Payne, who has been an account executive for the magazine since 1998, was named national sales-development manager. In his new post, he'll develop new business opportunities for both print and Internet products. Payne previously worked for Cahner's *TV Asia*.

"We're delighted to have executives of the caliber of Marcia and Rob as part of our team," O'Connor said, citing Orcutt's and Payne's expertise and dedication. ■



# Herzog heads home

Goes back to cable as president of USA Network

By John M. Higgins

**D**ifferent network, same question. Can Doug Herzog do conventional television?

As Herzog makes a surprise move to take charge of USA Network, he faces an issue that surrounded him when he first took his last job, president of Fox Network, on the big broadcasting side of the business. Certainly Herzog can create certain kinds of hit shows on the cheap for cable networks ecstatic to get a 1.0 Nielsen rating.

Herzog proved that as president of Comedy Central, where he landed *South Park*, and as head of programming for MTV, where he virtually birthed reality TV with *The Real World*.

But Herzog's new position at USA Network calls for him to develop conventional sitcoms, hour-long action shows and movies for a broad entertainment audience.

Despite a lengthy career in television, he has developed those kinds of shows only at Fox Network, a job so ugly that, at the end, he was fighting as hard to get out of his contract as Fox brass was angling to oust him.

"Doug knows his audiences, but a year at Fox didn't make him a Hollywood television executive," said one former colleague.

USA Cable President Stephen Chao disagrees. "I wouldn't say he has limited experience," Chao said, pointing to the Herzog-developed Fox show *Malcolm in the Middle* as "the only successful sitcom of the past couple of years." But he acknowledged that "development is one of those processes that is arduous."



Doug Herzog's new post at USA will require him to develop programming for a broad TV audience.

Herzog said he's perfectly comfortable in that programming groove, emphasizing that he's not taking USA in a dramatically new direction or into a narrower demo. "I see the opportunity to take a very big network, a very broad network, take it to the next level. It's strong and healthy but needs to re-establish itself."

Aside from the WWF, which it lost to TNN, USA Network has been unable to develop successful series.

In his three years at the network, Chao has tried numerous properties, such as *Cover Me*; *The War Next Door*; and *Manhattan, AZ*, but only the mom-and-daughter bounty-hunter show, *The Huntress*, is working.

Pointing to the Herzog-developed Fox show *Malcolm in the Middle* as 'the only successful sitcom of the past couple of years ... I wouldn't say he has limited experience.'

—Stephen Chao,  
USA Cable president

The network has been ticking up in the post-WWF ratings, particularly in February, but that's largely on the strength of events like mini-series *Attila*, not its steady programming menu of off-broadcast acquired series, original series and theatrical movies.

"What they don't have to their credit, to date, is a stone-cold cable-series hit," Herzog said. "Their competition hasn't either. TBS, TNT, FX have nothing. The guys who have succeeded are the niche guys."

Industry executives had been buzzing in recent weeks that Chao might be out of the company entirely, but USA Networks executives insist that Herzog's move solidifies Chao's position as chairman of USA Cable and all of its divisions. Said one USA Networks executive, "This is not any change in Chao's status, which has been as hands-on as he needs to be." ■

## IN BRIEF

### SEINFELD'S ALEXANDER TO STAR ON ABC

Another former *Seinfeld* star is on his way back to network TV. Jason Alexander's comedy pilot *Bob Patterson* from 20th Century Fox TV has been picked up at ABC. The series stars Alexander as an over-the-top motivational speaker.

### BUSH WANTS TO DELAY SPECTRUM AUCTIONS

The Bush administration plans to send legislation to Capitol Hill in April that would move the statutory deadlines for analog spectrum auctions to 2004 for ch. 60-69 (currently Sept. 12, 2001) and to 2006 for ch. 52-59 (currently 2002), administration officials said last week. The legislation also would levy analog spectrum fees of \$200 million per year starting in 2002, but House Energy and Commerce Committee Chairman Billy Tauzin (R-La.) has said that proposal is "dead on arrival."

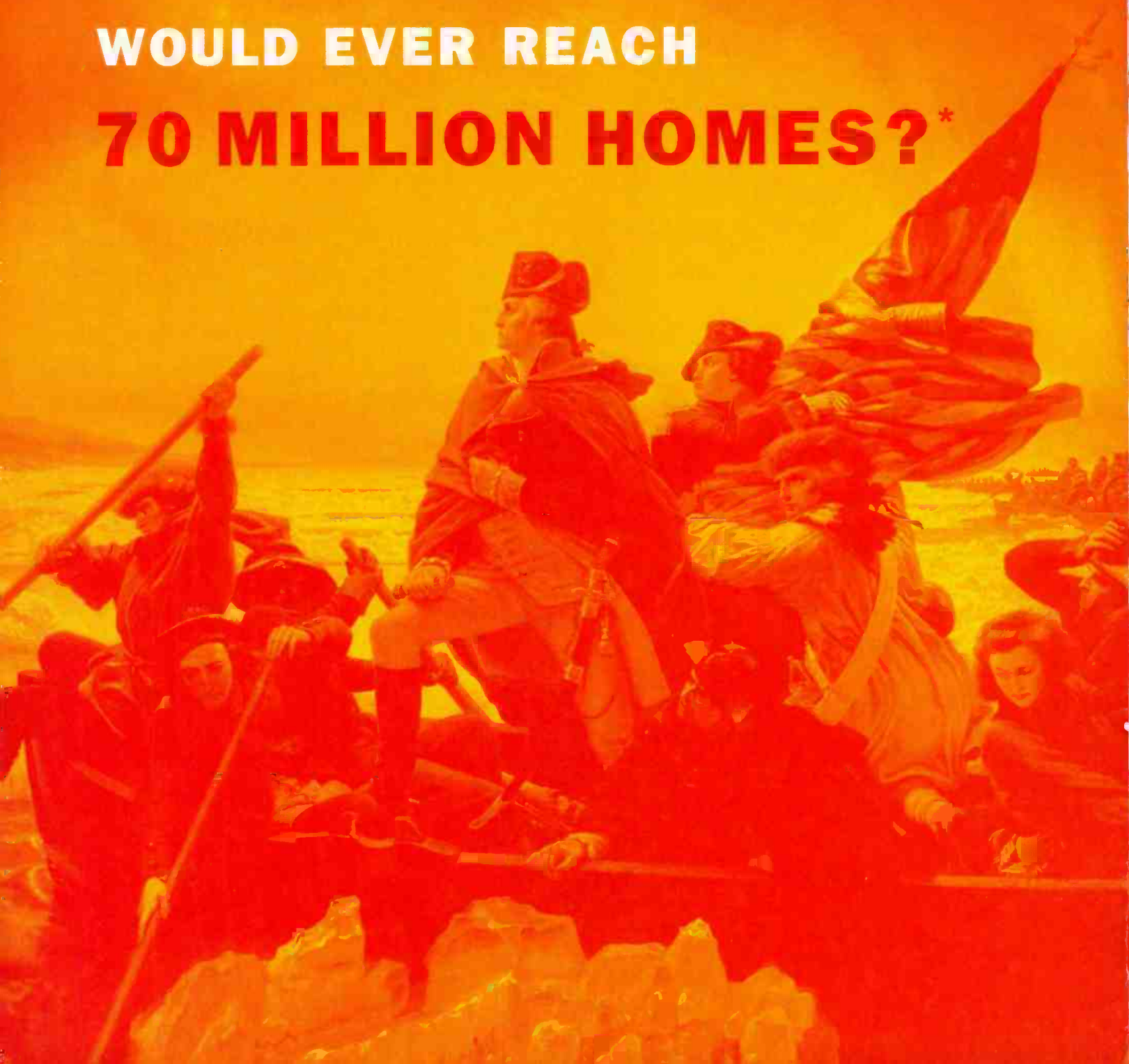
### KIDS WB! ADDS THREE

Kids WB! unveiled its plans for the upcoming 2001-02 season. For its weekend slate, it has ordered its first-ever live-action series, *The Nightmare Room*, an anthology series based on author R.L. Stine's new book series; an animated version of film *The Mummy*; and 3-D/CGI series *Cubix*. To its weekday lineup, the network added *Rescue Heroes: Global Response Team* and *Sherlock Holmes in the 22nd Century*.

### CLINTON TARGETS DIGITAL DIVIDE

Sen. Hillary Rodham Clinton (D-N.Y.) introduced seven bills aimed at bringing high-speed networks to underserved areas, as well as creating new jobs in New York. Three are specifically targeted at broadband networks for rural areas and inner cities.

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## IN BRIEF

**HARD KNOX IN THE BIG CITIES**

New Line Television landed key big-city clearances for its fall 2001 action hour *Hard Knox*, scoring WCBS-TV New York, KCAL-TV Los Angeles and WGN-TV Chicago. It's now cleared in 86% of the country.

**SANDO MOVES TO CBS ENTERPRISES**

Arthur Sando, head of corporate communications for King World from 1995 to 1998, is returning as senior vice president of communications at CBS Enterprises, the Viacom-owned division that now includes King World. Most recently, he was senior vice president at broadband provider Winstar Communications.

**STATION SAID TO SELL NEWS COVERAGE**

Cox-owned WPXI-TV Pittsburgh offered news coverage in exchange for advertisers, according to the *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*.

"The WPXI pitch document, which also details a number of 10- and 30-second commercials and when those would air," Rob Owen writes, "indicates the Fayette County Fair would have to pay \$15,000 but would receive \$34,000 in promotional value, including [correspondent Rick] Earle's news coverage of the event, valued at \$2,000. A weather broadcast live from the fair is valued at \$2,000."

Station General Manager John Howells did not return phone calls from BROADCASTING & CABLE but told the local newspaper that the document was against policy and has been corrected. Earle has said he knew nothing of the proposal.

# Bravo gets serious

Shells out record \$1.2M per episode for *West Wing* cable rights

By John M. Higgins and Susanne Ault

A year ago, Bravo executives' idea of a big, promotable off-net drama series airing on Bravo was *Moonlighting*, a tread-worn 15-year-old series that had been bouncing around cable networks for years. The Bruce Willis/Cybill Shepherd hit played prominently in fringe, 7 p.m. ET and again at 11 p.m. The only evidence of a special financial commitment was new Claymation bumpers featuring the actors that lead in and out of commercial breaks.

Bravo is clearly getting more serious. In locking down cable rights to NBC White House series *The West Wing* at \$1.2 million an episode, the network not only beat out at least four rivals, but demonstrated a vastly greater willingness to pay for stronger ratings.

Bravo General Manager Ed Carroll had coveted the series almost since it went on the air. "The subject matter is so smart, the writing is so quick-witted, it's liberal," he says. "We knew that it was a unique, great match for Bravo." The show is also particularly strong in Bravo's target demo of adults 25-54.

Bravo has the exclusive weekday cable rights to all off-net episodes produced through 2009. Warner keeps rights to weekend airings, which it plans to syndicate to broadcast stations.

That's a record price, beating TNT's deal for *ER*. That deal totaled \$1.2 million per episode, but TNT—not sister AOL Time Warner division Warner—kept and resold weekend rights to broadcasters for \$400,000 per episode. It proved to be an expensive mistake because *ER*'s ratings tanked for TNT.

The *West Wing* deal is a symbol of Bravo's long evolution from artsy pay network to commercial-free basic cable to ad-supported cable. The network began selling ad time last year.

Bravo's prime time ratings are now sitting in Nielsen's cable basement at around 0.3.



The *White House* drama will be stripped, but the cable net hasn't decided on a time slot yet. Prime time is a possibility.

Assuming brisk growth in the two years before *West Wing* hits Bravo's air, Carroll believes the deal will work if the network gets a 20% -25% increase in households when the show arrives.

This is by far Bravo's heftiest, highest-profile acquisition to date. Its previous major series purchase was the off-HBO episodes of *The Larry Sanders Show*, at a reported \$225,000 per episode. That's a much weaker property despite its cult following.

Selling action for *The West Wing* heated up last month.

The speculation was that certain outlets, including A&E, wanted a run of the drama as early as next season, aiming to air it concurrently with NBC's prime time broadcast (similar to *Once & Again*'s dual ABC/Lifetime run). Other suitors were TNT, USA Network and, surprisingly, Court TV.

Bravo plans to strip the series but won't pick a time slot just yet. It averted a plan to block the show from prime time. Carroll says the only restriction is that old episodes can't air opposite NBC's slot for new episodes.

The big question is whether *West Wing* is too topical, that it will go stale quickly.

Carroll doesn't think so: "The writing is fresh, the stories are strong, they're going to keep delivering." ■

**"We knew that it was a unique, great match."**

—Ed Carroll, Bravo





Media were quickly on the scene at Santana High; here a reporter interviews a student who was grazed by a bullet.

AP photo / Nick Ut

# Violence at school yet again

*Latest shootings bring sense of déjà vu; coverage curtailed*

By Dan Trigoboff

Once again, a violent rampage in a suburban high school dominated the news across the country. At least until Dick Cheney entered a Washington hospital that same day complaining of chest pains.

After Columbine so gripped the nation in 1999, last Monday's high school shootings in Santee, a San Diego suburb, seemed, unfortunately, like an old story.

Columbine unfolded largely on television, punctuated by vivid images, real dangers, unprecedented loss and some outstanding reporting mixed with some journalistic excess. Political and social leaders kept the story alive long after the dead were carried away with calls for greater control of guns and the media, as well as revelations about plots and cults.

This time, "while lawmakers issued the usual expressions of sympathy and dismay ...

the talk was mostly of tax cuts and, on the Senate floor, workplace rules," the *Washington Post* noted.

Tom Rosenstiel, director of Project for Excellence in Journalism, pointed out that even "press conferences about tax policy are overcovered. Columbine was overcovered." Coverage of the shootings by student Charles Williams at Santana High School was "more restrained," he said.

Restraint, said KNSD-TV San Diego news director Jim Sanders, defines "the gatekeeper role we have to play. It's exponentially more difficult when you compress that time line in which broadcasting decisions are made ... when you're on live. And the first decision is whether or not to go live.

"You cannot report or make decisions off the police scanners," he explained. "It's too fragmented, too immediate. An officer on the scene is seeing a very narrow picture of reality. You can't take that perspective. It's not right, not ethical, probably not even legal."

KGTV (TV) San Diego planned the ultimate restraint for Friday night, blacking out the screen for an hour. Instead, the station was set to scroll messages for families to turn the set off and talk with each other.

"Monday was my birthday," said KGO-TV San Francisco news director Mike Stutz. "I was 49 when I came in. I had aged at least five years when the day ended."

KSWB news director Suzanne Black admitted what everybody else was thinking when she first heard the news: another Columbine.

If national attention faded, San Diego stations KNSD, KGTV, K15B-TV and KSWB-TV continued through last week with follow-up coverage as well as memorials and court hearings often fed to cable news channels.

Veteran KNSD newsman Gene Cubbison reminded viewers that the first nationally covered school shooting took place in San Diego, in 1979. ■



Inside Edition carried exclusive video of Charles Williams taken before the shootings.

## OPEN PHONES

Lawmakers expect passage of a House bill granting relief to regional phone companies so they can send data long-distance over high-speed networks, said Reps. Rick Boucher (D-Va.) and John Dingell (D-Mich.) in separate speeches at a USTA conference in Washington last week.

Boucher would like to give companies offering converged technologies—such as voice, data and video services over one network—a new regulatory definition that will allow the government only to lightly monitor them.

## NEW PROGRAMMING CHIEF AT KING WORLD

Steven Nalevansky is new senior vice president of programming and development at King World, replacing Andy Friendly, who stepped down earlier this month. Nalevansky worked under Friendly for about a year and half before developing projects for Twentieth Television under his own banner, Montecito Valley Productions.

## ABC NEWS RESEARCH DIRECTOR DIES

ABC Director of News Research C.B. Hayden died last week at 47. He had been with the network for 21 years, starting as information specialist.

## CORRECTIONS

In the March 5 article titled "Who's not on top?" NBC's median age for the February sweeps was incorrectly reported. The median age was unchanged from the year-ago period at 44.2.

In March 5 Changing Hands, the president of the Paxson TV group was incorrectly identified. It is Dean Goodman.

## FINANCIAL WRAP-UP

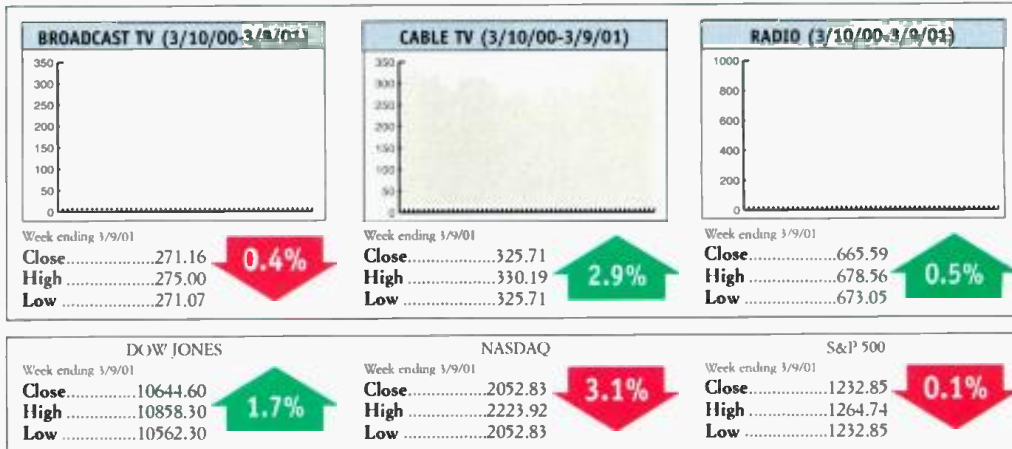
Week of March 5-9

### WINNERS

	3/9	% change
Shop At Home	\$2.00	31.96
Cumulus Media Inc.	\$5.74	15.82
Unitedglobalcom	\$18.00	13.83
Televest Comm.	\$20.50	11.19
Westwood One Inc.	\$23.30	9.91

### LOSERS

	3/9	% change
Liberty Digital	\$6.13	(23.44)
ValueVision Intl.	\$11.43	(17.79)
Liberty Satellite	\$2.75	(16.19)
Regent Comm.	\$7.29	(13.06)
Big City Radio	\$4.11	(9.87)



# Free time, front burner

Two bills are in the works to require broadcasters to give time to candidates

By Paige Albiniak

Free airtime is back. Starting March 19, Sen. John McCain (R-Ariz.) again will lead the campaign-finance-reform debate on the Senate floor. Although there is no free-airtime provision in McCain's core bill, at least two Senators are preparing to add amendments to the legislation McCain has cosponsored with Sen. Russ Feingold (D-Wis.) that would place free-airtime requirements on broadcasters. And McCain himself is drafting separate, new free-airtime legislation he plans to introduce once he completes his latest push for campaign-finance reform.

Sources say McCain's staff is writing a bill that would require broadcasters across the country to give a total of \$750 million worth of commercial ad time—just under the \$770 million politicians are estimated to have spent on political ads in 2000—for candidates who agree to campaign-spending limits. That bill also would require broadcasters to offer a candidate-centered discourse prior to an election.

McCain's staff says he doesn't want to introduce any free-time measures during the upcoming campaign-finance-reform debate

because he wants McCain-Feingold to pass.

Sens. Robert Torricelli (D-N.J.) and Susan Collins (R-Maine) also are considering offering amendments that would force broadcasters to do something to defray the high costs of running a political campaign.

The Alliance for Better Campaigns last week issued a report that accuses local TV stations of "gouging" politicians with extra-high ad rates.

Instead of offering candidates ad spots at the so-called "lowest-unit charge," which would allow them to buy spots at the lowest rate the station offered, stations instead sold candidates higher-priced spots that could not be preempted by other advertisers. That practice does not violate any rule or law.

"In 2000, this ... safeguard for candidates was overrun by the selling practices of stations, the buying demands of candidates, the sharp rise in issue-advocacy advertising, and the unprecedented flood of hard and soft money into political campaigns," said a report issued by the Alliance

for Better Campaigns.

"It's a vicious cycle," says Alliance Executive Director Paul Taylor. "Everyone is reinforcing everyone else's behavior. The more ad rates go up, the more candidates need to raise money, and the more stations take advantage by raising rates even more."

Broadcasters argue that they stick to the rules, getting a fair-market price for a fair-market product.

"We completely reject Paul Taylor's claims that stations are gouging candidates. Stations strictly adhere to FCC rules," says NAB spokesman Dennis Wharton.

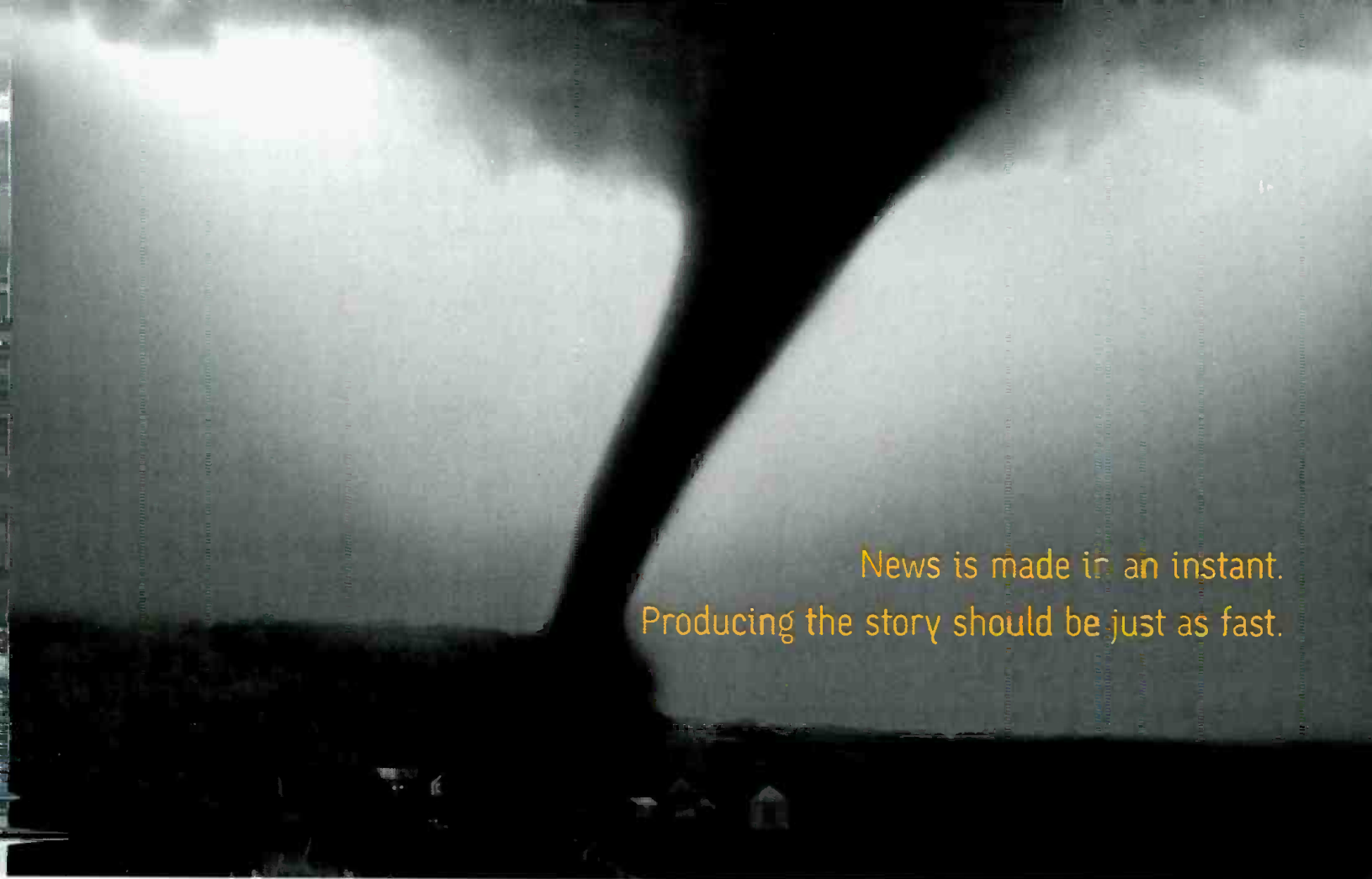
During the 2000 election, broadcasters said the only way to guarantee space for a spot was to pay premium prices.

Dwight Morris, president, Campaign Study Group in Virginia, says politicians, on average, still spend about 35% to 40% of their campaign budget on TV advertising. He adds that the median percentage going to TV hasn't changed in a decade. ■

The more ad rates go up, the more candidates need to raise money, and the more stations take advantage.

—Paul Taylor, executive director, Alliance for Better Campaigns





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# A gentler Jamie Kellner?

*New Turner chief says he aims to tread softly, but some are unconvinced*

By John M. Higgins

**W**hen has Jamie Kellner ever tweaked anything? That's the question many Turner Broadcasting System executives are asking as they ponder what the arrival of WB President Kellner means to their futures.

While Kellner maintains that he plans to go slow as he takes over as chairman and

CEO of AOL's new, combined TV-network group, Turner executives don't believe it. Kellner is a veteran of Fox Network's earliest, and most aggressive, days and of upstart WB Network, which has grown—though not thrived—by breaking TV molds and targeting teens with intermittently high-quality programming.

Kellner tried to be reassuring. "It's a

great group of people, it's a family," he said. "It's a good company. I will try not to mess anything up; I'll tweak it."

That's not widely believed. "Kellner is not a status quo guy; he turns everything on its head," said one AOL executive.

Whatever. It's his family of programming services now, from twangy Turner South to lonely CNNfn and The WB, of course, and

Photo: The WB / James Sorensen



in the synergy-centric new world of AOL Time Warner, working together is job one. Warner Bros. and Turner executives didn't always see it that way.

Kellner has always exploited demographic niches, aiming much younger than the Turner networks do. He excels in developing series but is taking over four news networks and two entertainment nets subsisting largely on original movies, theatrical releases and sports. Kellner has huge problems as CNN fades under attack from Fox News Channel. Entertainment networks TNT and TBS have shown strong improvement in their delivery of adults 18-49, up 20+% for the year to date. But the networks have essentially the same Nielsen household ratings they did in 1996. By all measurements, Cartoon Network is a

## He loves a good challenge

Only hours after officially being named chairman and CEO of Turner Broadcasting, Jamie Kellner was already thinking four moves ahead.

"I think next year could be a big year for the Hawks," said Kellner, whose new empire includes Turner's three professional sports teams in Atlanta. "They're onto something big."

That's the Kellner most in Hollywood know: the relentless visionary who helped build the Fox network and, more recently, The WB into prominence. Although danger may not be his middle name, Kellner definitely has taken a number of chances in his career, and most have paid off.

"He is a guy who, while everybody else is playing chess on a one-dimensional board, he's playing 3-D chess," says Jordan Levin, The WB's new co-president of entertainment. "I think this new position is a good challenge for him because he is taking mature brands vs. building a start-up brand. Jamie is clearly a guy who likes to be challenged and likes to do things that people think can't be done. The bigger the underdog he is, the happier he is."



Since starting his career in 1969 at CBS, Kellner has gone about things differently from most in the industry. After stints

at Warner Enterprises and Orion Pictures, where he served as president and COO at Fox, Kellner was the first employee hired by many TV executives believed

credit OK send no money now!  
 Kellner is a guy who appreciates a good challenge. One way to explain why he stepped into a role that many had thought was not possible, says Kellner, is that he had thought that marketing division under Kellner based on his track record, it's a good challenge."

With such shows as *The Simpsons*, Kellner has taken some time off. A year later, he returned to Tribune Broadcasting, Warner Bros. after its January 1995 launch. The network has seen the best percentage increases during

the last year. The network's parent company went public in 1999. All 10 home stations are HD affiliates, including the TV St. Louis—the WB's highest-rated affiliate for the past two years. Kellner also owns the syndication rights to *Saturday Night Live* with the show's creator, Lorne Michaels, and is an investor in several technology companies.

Kellner, who will remain The WB's CEO, says he will shuttle back and forth from his new home in Atlanta to Los Angeles once a month to remain involved with the network. "I'll be around," he says of The WB. "They'll be fine without me. I'm quite comfortable with the network creatively and where it's going. And when it comes to picking up the pilots or picking up series and stuff like that, I will be there."

—Joe Schlosser

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Warner Bros., wanted to take the network's red ink on its bottom line. Also, the intense political rivalries between Warner Bros. and other parts of the company made extensive cooperation difficult.

"They've eliminated the structural stupidity of the past," said Sanford Bernstein media analyst Tom Wolzien. "It always was a dumb way to run it."

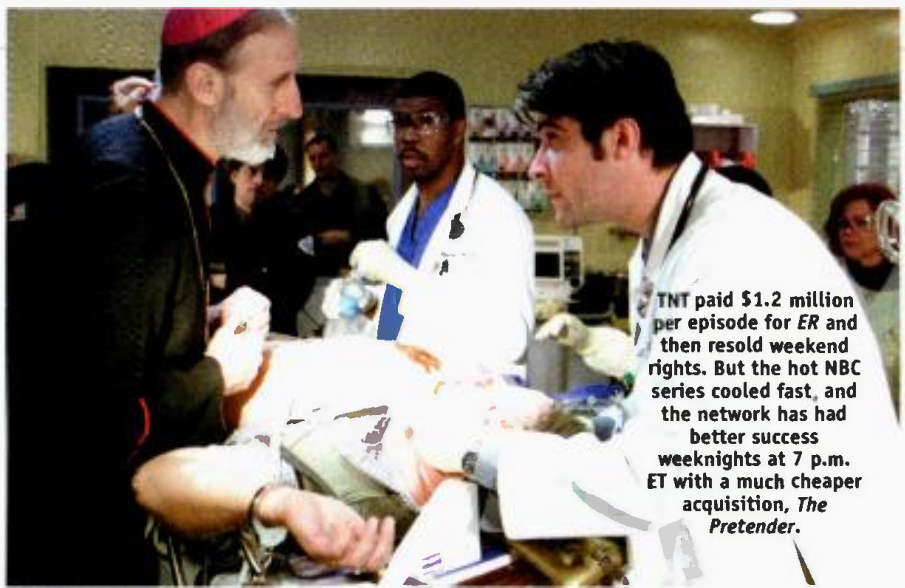
Kellner acknowledges the historical turf

wars, adding that he's as guilty of territorialism as anyone else, never sharing programming with TNT, for example.

"The big opportunity is if we can start developing programming from WB to TNT and TBS," Kellner said, pointing to NBC's deals to allow USA Network to rerun fresh episodes of *Law & Order: Special Victims Unit* within a few days after they first air on the broadcast network. "We'll be stronger than our competitors because our networks are stronger."

Now, perhaps, The WB will be as aggressively cross-promoted on TNT as TBS and CNN are.

More important, Kellner knows how to program networks and, particularly, knows how to develop series. TNT and TBS have been hugely successful and profitable with their formula of theatrical movies, lots of sports plus a smattering of original movies. But neither network has ever accomplished much in series TV, unless you count



TNT paid \$1.2 million per episode for *ER* and then resold weekend rights. But the hot NBC series cooled fast, and the network has had better success weeknights at 7 p.m. ET with a much cheaper acquisition, *The Pretender*.

*Ripley's Believe It or Not.*

McGuirk's move is easy to comprehend: He didn't want to be the hatchet man. Yes, after 28 years at the company, it's a good time for any multimillionaire to take things slowly. And, as McGuirk confided to an industry executive six months ago, even after Time Warner first bought TBS, "he viewed himself as working for Ted, and Ted's not really involved anymore."

But just as important, according to insiders, is that, between a recession-induced anorexia and AOL's quest for efficiency, McGuirk saw restructuring and layoffs in TBS' future and didn't want to swing the ax. While layoffs have swept CNN, Warner Music and Time Inc., Turner's entertainment networks have been pretty much untouched.

"He's looking at it and saying, 'This is family. I'm not going to downsize all these people,'" said one Time Warner executive.

AOL executives say that there are no further layoffs planned. But when AOL sees how the Turner networks fare in the upfront ad market, Wall

Street executives think, employees will be in the crosshairs once again. AOL senior executives "want to shoot people," said one analyst. "They want to make Turner a lot leaner."

There's nothing subtle about the exit of TBS President Steve Heyer, who "will be leaving the company to pursue other interests," the company said. The good news is that those other interests are running a business-ventures unit at Coca-Cola.

Heyer is an ad-sales wiz and former consultant who was considered the golden boy who would rise high at Time Warner. He has been credited with success in his relentless research-driven campaign to close the price gap between a commercial reaching a thousand viewers on cable and the same spot reaching a thousand viewers on broadcast.

Executives close to Heyer say that he wanted to run all of Turner but determined months ago that AOL COO Bob Pittman wouldn't let him do it, preferring a seasoned programming executive with a less abrasive management style.

The most immediate question is, who will be swept up in the inevitable executive shuffle? WB insiders say that, since Kellner remains the top executive at that network, he isn't looking to raid it for talent. TBS insiders say that division heads haven't spent enough time with Kellner to decide who should be nervous. But everyone has noticed that Kellner's old Fox pal Garth Ancier is still on the street after exiting NBC. ■



TNT's renewed stab at original series, *Bull*, mirrored Wall Street in plot—and ratings. Despite a months-long promotional push, TNT squeezed only a 1.2 household Nielsen rating out of *Bull*, 30% to 40% below the net's prime time average.



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Rich Bilotti, Managing Director, Equity Research,  
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Merrill Brown, Editor in Chief, MSNBC.com

Francois Carayol, Chairman & CEO, CANAL+ Technologies,  
EVP, CANAL+ Group

Richard Cardran, President, Tableau Media

Tim Carruthers, Sr. Director of Production, iBeam

William Bryce Combs, COO, GeoVideo Networks

Michael Davies, Executive Producer, Who Wants To Be A Millionaire

Rob Davis, Executive Producer, Spiderdance, Inc.

Jerry Della Femina, Chairman, Della Femina, Rothschild,  
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Richard Glover, EVP, Internet Media, ABC Inc. &  
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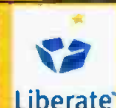
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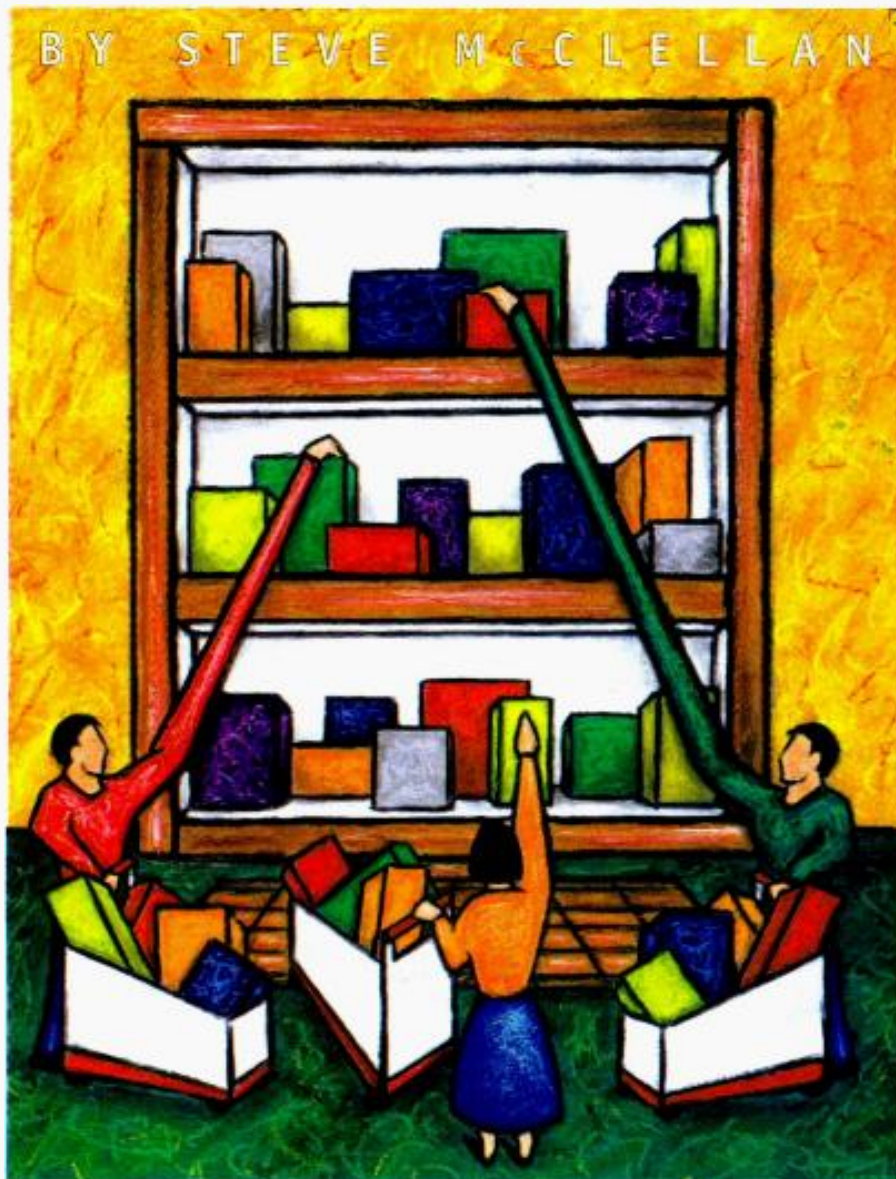


Illustration: Laertis / ©SIS

*Agencies expect cross-platform deals to be the norm in five years*

**F**or years, big media companies including Time Warner, Disney, Viacom and News Corp. have been aggressively pushing the idea of “cross-platform,” or integrated, marketing and advertising packages. Now, it appears that advertisers are buying into the concept in a big way.

At a recent conference sponsored by the American Association of Advertising Agencies, executives at three agencies with combined billings of \$37 billion predicted that, five years from now, at least 40% of their U.S. billings will be tied to integrated marketing deals that involve multiple platforms of promotion and advertising.

Starcom Mediavest’s Kevin Malloy predicted that perhaps 50% to 60% of his firm’s U.S. billings and 25% to 30% of roughly \$12 billion in worldwide billings (from such clients as Procter & Gamble, Kraft and Burger King) would be tied to integrated marketing deals. No one really knows what the current figure is industrywide, but estimates are it’s 7% to 8% of domestic billings.

“I guess that 40% of our company investment will be done in some form of converged manner,” says Lou Schultz, chairman, Initiative Media North America, which has billings of approximately \$13 billion and such clients as AOL, Home Depot and Bell South.

Sean Cunningham, executive vice president and media director at Universal McCann, which has \$12 billion in annual billings and clients that include Sprint, Johnson & Johnson and Microsoft, is even more bullish. Up to 50% of Universal McCann’s billings, he says, might be tied to integrated marketing and ad packages.

Such numbers come as a welcome surprise to sellers. While they’ve been beating the drum for integrated marketing business, many advertisers and agencies have been skeptical. “When Sean Cunningham said that, I just about jumped out of my seat,” says Larry Goodman, president of CNN marketing and sales. “It was like, whoa, this is great!”

In some ways, he adds, it’s not surprising. In fact, his company was the first major



media concern to create a separate cross-platform sales unit, in 1994. The four major network companies have all followed suit in the past three years—Fox and CBS in 1998, ABC and NBC more recently.

But to hear several of the largest ad agencies publicly state for the first time that cross-platform advertising and marketing is the way their business will be conducted in the future reaffirms efforts on the sell side, Goodman says.

Cunningham's prediction came just two weeks after Universal McCann announced formation of a separate unit to analyze and execute cross-media and integrated-marketing deals, apparently the first major agency to do so.

Not everyone on the buy side is convinced that the cross-platform strategy will be the dominant advertising paradigm. "I continue to be skeptical about the reality of these opportunities," says Allen Banks, executive vice president, Saatchi & Saatchi, whose agency does \$7 billion in annual billings. "My skepticism has been based on the fact that, more often than not, these cross-media opportunities are the result of media owners' saying 'I've got some television, outdoor and newspapers; let's go out and sell all these things in a package.' But the package doesn't fit and meet the needs of the advertiser." In fact, he notes, agencies do cross-media deals for their clients all the time, just with different sellers: "That's what our role is."

Banks wouldn't hazard a guess on what percentage of Saatchi's billings might be tied to converged-media deals five years hence. "If I had to guess, I'd be very leery to guess anywhere near those kinds of numbers" put forth by Schultz, Malloy and Cunningham.

But most of the big agencies have executives, if not dedicated units, in place to specialize in cross-platform deals. TN Media, New York, is restructuring itself into Pervasive Media, in part to get the media-planning and -buying functions to communicate with each other better, says John Lazarus, director of national broadcast buying. He will take on the new role of overseeing integrated marketing strategies

for the firm's clients.

"Every selling organization is gearing up and creating dedicated integrated sales units," he points out, "and the forward-thinking agencies are starting to put this in place also. The advertisers are very much in support of this," he adds, "because it combines real value and promotion maybe with some efficiencies."

This latest great push toward integrated marketing and advertising is being driven by two seemingly contradictory things: media fragmentation, which is pushing and pulling consumers in more ways than ever, and media consolidation, through which, according to Goodman, a handful of behemoth media companies control more than 90% of the available electronic media impressions.

The big challenge for advertisers is to grab consumers' attention in an increasingly fragmented media world at a time when demands on their time and attention are greater than ever. What advertisers and agencies now believe, says Lazarus, is that, in a highly consolidated media world, there are benefits "to have all these assets of one sales organization driving one marketing message. As long as they can interrelate the platforms, you have this common message. Wherever consumers turn, your message is there. That's the strength of it."

So synergy works after all. At least that's the message that AOL, Viacom, Disney

## Many voices, one message

Launching its Blue credit card, American Express turned to News Corp.

The focal point of the marketing campaign was a free concert in New York's Central Park billed "American Express Brings You Central Park in Blue." Headlined by Grammy winner Sheryl Crow, it was aggressively promoted by local News Corp. outlets, the *New York Post* and WNYW(TV) New York, as well as by Fox.com and co-owned TV Guide.

The concert itself aired on the Fox network with simulcasts on the SFX radio network and on Fox and Amex Web sites. It was also rebroadcast on co-owned cable network FX. The Blue credit card was targeted to active, tech-savvy thirtysomethings, pretty much Fox's target audience, and ads for it ran throughout the season on Fox.

The Amex campaign was fairly simple compared with one Fox put together last fall. "The Simpsons Global Fanfest" combined 30 advertisers and 26 News Corp. media units around the world to mark the 10th anniversary of the prime time cartoon. Advertisers included

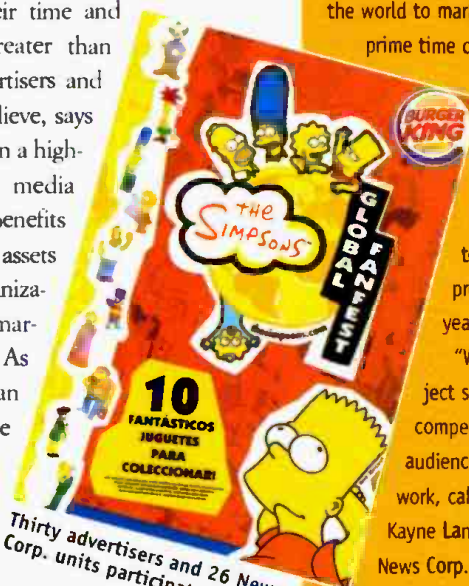
7-Eleven, Burger King, Wal-Mart, Pepsi and Frito-Lay.

In-store events (like 7-Eleven's "Springfield for a Day"), product launches, contests, sweepstakes and on-air promotions all factored into the year-long campaign.

"When you can integrate a project so that it's a consistent and compelling message to your target audience across the Internet, network, cable, print, radio, etc.," says Kayne Lanahan, senior vice president, News Corp. One, which oversees cross-platform sales, "it's like you're lining up all of your guns. If you can do it through one company, particularly through a piece of their branded content. It's a slam-dunk." —S.McC.



Fox devised a global campaign to celebrate 10 years of *The Simpsons*.



Thirty advertisers and 26 News Corp. units participated.

## Cross-media specialists

Most of the big media companies have dedicated units specializing in cross-platform marketing and advertising:

■ **AOL.** Global Client Solutions Group, set up in 1994 as Turner Marketing Solutions Group, is now headed by Joe Mangione, senior vice president. The group has done more than 50 deals in seven years, including ones with Dodge, Cigna and Nestlé and one tying advertisers to Election 2000.

■ **News Corp.** News Corp One, established in April of 1998 and headed by Senior Vice President Kayne Lanahan, last year put together a huge integrated marketing project that tied *The Simpsons* to 30 advertisers and 26 News Corp. media units worldwide (see story page 23).

■ **Viacom.** Viacom Plus, originally formed as CBS Plus in 1998 and renamed last year to reflect the completed merger of the two companies, is headed by Senior Vice President Lisa McCarthy, who reports directly to Viacom President and COO Mel Karmazin. Recent deals include an eight-division campaign for Fidelity Investments and a five-division campaign with Chrysler.

■ **ABC Unlimited.** Formed in September 2000, the division packages an array of media and promotion outlets within the Disney corporation. Bill Bund heads the unit, reporting to Laura Nathanson, executive vice president, national sales, ABC Television Network. The first announced deal was with EAS Corp., giving the company exposure to 13 Disney and ABC properties.

■ **NBC Connect.** Formed late last year to package NBC assets, including the TV and cable networks, owned TV stations and Web sites, the unit is headed by the senior vice president of business development, Jay Linden, who reports to NBC Sales President Keith Turner. In some cases, third-party partners will be brought to fill gaps, such as print or radio, according to Turner.

and News Corp. have been pitching and that advertisers are beginning to accept.

CNN's Goodman says AOL President Bob Pittman is a big believer in integrated marketing and cross-platform sales.

That thinking at least in part drove last week's reorganization of the Turner cable networks into a new unit that will also include The WB and will be headed by The WB Chairman Jamie Kellner (see page 18).

Among the Big Four networks, Fox was the first to set up a cross-platform marketing unit—in spring 1998 under Kayne Lanahan, senior vice president, News Corp One.

"There are levels of what I would define as cross-platform," she says. "One is to just bundle together deals across a media company and across an agency. But there's also a much deeper, richer kind of approach that has to do more with fully integrated marketing client-based objectives and custom programs." The latter type, she says, will benefit clients more: "how to work with one media company across content, media, promotion, event marketing and public relations and wrap it all up in an integrated communications package."

Viacom President Mel Karmazin created CBS Plus, which became Viacom Plus after the two companies merged last year. "Mel felt there was interest from a lot of advertisers to work across divisions but no mechanism to make it happen," explains Lisa McCarthy, senior vice president, Viacom Plus. "At the time, he also felt we were really much stronger when it came to local radio and out-of-home and there should be a way to leverage who we were."

Both buyers and sellers say cross-platform packages are more about good marketing and promotion ideas than about

pricing discounts. At the same time, sellers admit that one objective in offering an advertiser an array of media is to get a greater share of that client's ad budget. If that happens, says TN Media's Lazarus, "we expect some economic accommodations," or better pricing. But, he adds, "this is not to drive prices low. You're asking [the media companies] to

build promotions for you. You're asking them to do some on-site things. There has to be some charge for the services. You're really building a promotional platform that will drive brand business."

According to Laura Nathanson, executive vice president, national sales, ABC Television Network, it took about a year of planning to put together ABC Unlimited, the integrated-marketing unit for Disney-owned media that

report to her. "We didn't want this to be about forced sales or discounts; it's got to be fair-market value," she says. "The biggest challenge is coming up with the big marketing idea that ties it all together."

At NBC, Sales President Keith Turner recently put NBC Connect in place. It can package the TV network, owned stations, Internet, cable properties, NBC Enterprises, and even the NBC stores and outside print partners. "It's still very much a work in progress," he says. "But talking to one person instead of 12 is certainly an easier way to do business."

And if enough business is tied to a deal, he adds, the buyer "will recognize some economies, too." ■



Jay Linden runs NBC Connect, formed late last year to package NBC assets, including the TV and cable networks, owned TV stations and Web sites.

'Wherever consumers turn, your message is there. That's the strength of it.'

—John Lazarus, TN Media



Lisa McCarthy, head of dedicated cross-platform marketing unit Viacom Plus, reports directly to Viacom President Mel Karmazin.



# No more Pyrrhic victories

*NBC retains Frasier, but only after months of Viacom-Paramount-CBS angst*

By Joe Schlosser

**N**BC's just-completed negotiations for *Frasier* put the spotlight on the new way of doing business in consolidation-happy Hollywood. But the network never wants to go through it quite this way again.

After months of speculation that Viacom's Paramount Network Television might take its prized sitcom to CBS, also a Viacom property, NBC was able to retain the popular sitcom and, at the same time, keep the status quo in Hollywood—at least for now.

NBC locked the Emmy Award-winning series through its 11th season (2003-04) in a deal that is worth roughly \$375 million, or \$5.2 million per episode, over the next three seasons. And with the new pact, NBC will receive more rerun rights, while Paramount and *Frasier* star Kelsey Grammer have added development commitments from the network.

The *Frasier* renewal had been the center of attention on both the network and studio fronts for months now, as industry insiders waited to see whether consolidation and the new alignments in Hollywood would change how the business is done. Viacom's Paramount-CBS relationship is only one of several studio-network relationships in town now. Fox has 20th Century Fox, The WB has Warner Bros., ABC has Touchstone, and even UPN has Paramount.

But NBC executives, who don't have any alignments to speak of, were faced with

**Touchstone VP Stephen McPherson says the day a studio takes a show off a rival network and onto its own will be a dark day in Hollywood.**



After much speculation on whether NBC's *Frasier* and 20th Century Fox's *Buffy The Vampire Slayer* would move to other networks, *Frasier* has been locked in by NBC, while *Buffy* remains up in the air.



renewing the show or losing it to CBS in the fall. NBC had until March 1 to renew the sitcom or lose its exclusive bargaining position and face a bidding war with rival networks. Paramount extended the deadline because talks were moving forward.

NBC West Coast President Scott Sassa says this will be the last time he's faced with such a scenario because NBC originally bought *Frasier* before CBS was part of Viacom. "This sort of fell through a crack. In our deals now with companies like Fox, Disney or Paramount, there is language that precludes them from being able to deal a show back to their own network. This particular deal didn't have it."

Sassa says the "language" in NBC's contracts with such studios is a lot stronger now and "basically says it can't go to an ABC or an affiliated network." The only way a show could go to a rival network, he added, would be if NBC cancels it.

Was *Frasier* headed for CBS? Sassa says, "I know people will make many different claims, but we'll never know the truth."

Paramount TV Group Chairman Kerry

McCluggage downplays the suggestion the studio was essentially working a way to deliver a hit comedy to its sister network. "In *Frasier*, there was no issue about self-dealing," he says. "It was about the market value of the programming of this particular program, and, frankly, had NBC not made the deal, I think there would have been at least two networks interested in this show because of its level of quality and performance."

The deal comes just weeks before the major networks start assembling their fall lineups and also at a time when two other shows are facing similar circumstances. A pair of 20th Century Fox series, *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* at The WB and *Dharma & Greg* at ABC, are up for renewal and could find new homes next season. The co-owned Fox network is the likely suitor for *Buffy* if The WB fails to renew it. Industry insiders say they expect both shows to stay put, too. A spokesman for 20th Century Fox TV had no comment.

Stephen McPherson, executive vice president for Touchstone Television, a unit of Disney, which owns ABC, says the day a studio takes a show off a rival network and onto its own will be a dark day in Hollywood. "I think it's going to be a damaging blow if a network at some point loses a show to a rival network because of a studio play." ■

# StationBreak

BY DAN TRIGOB OFF

## SNIPING OVER NEWS IN VEGAS

The editor of *The Las Vegas Review Journal* last week unloaded on a local station. KTNV-TV Las Vegas, wrote Thomas Mitchell, "is to journalism as the Mustang Ranch is to a convent." In the column in which he made the comparison to the well-known legal brothel, Mitchell said his paper had fought a lengthy and expensive battle to strengthen Nevada's shield law. But he said the station "flipped away" its rights by allowing reporter Kit Williams to testify at a homicide trial regarding a jailhouse interview "without so much as a whimper of protest." Mitchell told BROADCASTING & CABLE: "We can't afford to let this get away from us."

Lawyers for Clark Morse, accused of driving drunk, killing one woman, crippling another and leaving the scene, agreed with Mitchell that the station's refusal to fight the subpoena of Kit Williams caused the station to be used as an arm of the prosecution.

But KTNV General Manager

Kris Foate says the case was a "study of margins and specifics" and had a precise fact pattern that was excepted by U.S. Supreme Court precedent. "It took the exact instance of our reporter as a direct witness to a defendant's confession without the existence of notes or tape" to fall through cracks in shield laws. "We would have vigorously fought turning over tapes or notes," said Foate. In this case, she said, the station followed the advice of its own attorneys.

Lucy Dalglish, the executive director of the Reporters Committee for Freedom of the Press, noted that Williams did not testify about anything that was not reported in her original story. "I'm not saying this is a good accommodation," she said. "But it is not an uncommon one."

## SCHOOL'S OUT

WROC-TV Rochester, N.Y., broadcast an erroneous closing of city schools after someone apparently misappropriated a password used to communicate such closings between

school officials and the media. Because of the confusion generated, the schools were eventually closed for the day. The station had no idea why it was selected for the false report or who made the misleading call. "I would only hope that the individual school districts do as much to protect the passwords as we do," said News Director Bob Kirk, who noted that the password, which is changed periodically, had been changed since the incident.

## BIG BLOWN CALL IN LITTLE ROCK

Underreporting severe weather has its risks, too. A Little Rock, Ark., weekend weatherman was fired after telling viewers not to worry about tornado warnings on other stations and from emergency service sirens.

Shea Rial was first suspended, then lost his job at KTHV-TV, because of that late-February performance, which included an apology blaming the misreading on faulty equipment. But the station said that, although one of several machines used in weather fore-

casting was malfunctioning, there was more than enough other evidence to have properly reported the danger to the community, especially for a skilled meteorologist like Rial.

Mark Raines, news director at the Gannett-owned CBS affiliate, said it is station policy not to comment on personnel issues but the station "received a lot of calls from viewers who couldn't believe we dropped the ball. Neither could I. We take weather coverage very seriously here. This could have put someone's life in danger."

## UNSAFE MANEUVER

The National Transportation Safety Board said it was a reckless maneuver by WTVJ(TV) Miami news chopper pilot Ruben Rivero that caused the crash that killed him and cameraman Rob Pierce a year ago. A report from the NTSB attributed the accident to the "pilot's ostentatious display and in-flight decision to perform an abrupt low altitude pitch-up maneuver (aerobatic flight). This resulted in the main rotor blades colliding with and separating the tail boom assembly while maneuvering and the helicopter's subsequent in-flight collision with terrain." Rivero had a good reputation among pilots and journalists, but early local reports also said witnesses thought the chopper was involved in some sort of aerial horseplay.

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





# A cache of characters

*Marvel Studios plans animated TV spin-offs of 20 superhero theatrical films*

By Susanne Ault

Developing a good TV show is hard to do, but how can you fail with superheroes running the show? Marvel Studios, the production company behind last summer's smash film *The X-Men* and summer 2002's big buzz *Spiderman*, is hoping to power its way through a slew of TV projects with, well, superhuman strength.

After seeing The WB snatch up its series, *X-Men Evolution*, last fall, Marvel Studios (a subsidiary of comics publisher Marvel Entertainment Group) is aiming to push through similar animated spin-offs for its nearly 20 films in development.

That certainly sounds like a job for a superhero, but Marvel Studios has about 4,600 comic-book-based characters from which to choose for future story lines and plans to launch one TV animated tie-in per film.

Among those coming soon are *The Hulk*, to be directed by *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon's* Ang Lee; and 20th Century Fox's *The Fantastic Four* and *The Iron Fist*, starring Ray Park (*Star Wars' Darth Maul*).

First on deck, set for fall 2002, is a new *Spiderman* animated series. *Spiderman* film distributor Columbia TriStar also is on

board as a producer for the show. Although no firm deals have been struck—The WB, Fox, Nickelodeon and the Cartoon Network are current targets—"we know it will air," says Rick Ungar, president of Marvel characters group. "There is no shortage of people interested in the series."

Crafting a live-action TV companion to upcoming Marvel films might work out fine, "but the TV version will end up being a low-budget version of what's on the big screen. So there's no reason to do it," insists Marvel Studios CEO Avi Arad, adding that animation can be punched up just as well without investing in a lot in special effects.

Yet Marvel is also readying live-action syndicated series for 2002, to be based on comic properties not in its film pipeline. The company is looking for a suitable follow-up to its 2001 hour, Tribune Entertainment-distributed *Mutant X*.

*Daughters of the Dragon*, chronicling three sisters/agents, and *Black Cat*, about a world-renowned female cat burglar, are considered Marvel's best shots for next year. Granted, *Daughters* and *Black Cat* don't seem as surefire as the more popular *X-Men*, but "it's about finding great sto-

ries," Arad asserts. "It's not about whether someone knows the name."

He also points out that the "comic-book-geek community is highly aware." Beyond the obvious worship for uber-hero *Spiderman* and the hundreds of Web sites depicting lesser-known *Iron Fist*, he maintains that comic-book fans can build "a groundswell" for lower-profile characters "that is startling."

For example, under-the-radar 1998 Marvel film *Blade*, starring Wesley Snipes, opened at \$17 million, which is "astounding," says Arad. "Think about it: Julia Roberts and Brad Pitt open at \$20 million," he comments on *The Mexican*, and DreamWorks is "spending a fortune promoting that movie. So it gives you an idea about the power of the comics community."

Tribune seems happy to consider other Marvel series, since it has positioned *Mutant X*, about a group of genetically engineered humans, as its marquee action-hour project for next fall.

"There's no reason this couldn't be the first of a couple of projects," says Tribune Entertainment chief Dick Askin. *Mutant X* has yet to debut, so "it's a little too early to tell," he admits, "but we're really optimistic about our relationship with Marvel." ■



A *Spiderman* series will debut at the time of the movie's theatrical release.



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# CableWatch

FEB. 26-MARCH 4 Cable programming ratings according to Nielsen Media Research

## C A B L E ' S T O P 2 0

Ranked by rating. Cable rating is coverage area rating within each basic cable network's universe; U.S. rating is of 100.8 million TV households. Sources: Nielsen Media Research, Turner Entertainment.

Rank	Program	Network	Day	Time	Duration	Rating Cable	HHs U.S.	Cable (000)	Share
1	WWF Entertainment	TNN	Mon	10:00P	66	5.3	4.3	4253	8.6
2	WWF Entertainment	TNN	Mon	9:00P	60	4.9	3.9	3932	7.0
3	m/"False Arrest, Part II"	LIF	Sun	6:00P	120	4.1	3.3	3255	6.6
4	m/"Echoes In The Darkness, 2"	LIF	Sun	1:30P	150	3.5	2.8	2835	7.8
5	Strong Medicine	LIF	Sun	8:00P	60	3.4	2.7	2705	4.8
6	m/"Cop Land"	USA	Tue	9:00P	120	3.3	2.6	2648	5.0
7	m/"False Arrest, Part I"	LIF	Sun	4:00P	120	3.2	2.6	2563	6.2
8	m/"Deliberate Stranger, Part 2"	LIF	Sat	4:00P	120	3.1	2.5	2482	7.2
9	Rugrats	NICK	Sat	9:00A	30	3.0	2.5	2451	9.5
9	Rugrats	NICK	Mon	7:30P	30	3.0	2.4	2417	4.8
11	The FBI Files	DISC	Tue	10:00P	60	2.9	2.4	2380	4.7
11	JAG	USA	Mon	7:00P	60	2.9	2.4	2374	4.8
11	Rugrats	NICK	Sat	9:30A	30	2.9	2.3	2347	8.5
11	Rocket Power	NICK	Sat	8:30A-	30	2.9	2.3	2329	9.5
11	Hey Arnold	NICK	Mon	7:00P	30	2.9	2.3	2307	4.8
16	m/"The Shawshank Redemption"	TBS	Sun	5:01P	179	2.8	2.3	2312	5.0
16	Rugrats	NICK	Sat	5:00P	30	2.8	2.3	2299	6.5
16	m/"The Untouchables"	TBS	Sun	8:00P	151	2.8	2.3	2297	4.0
16	Rugrats	NICK	Thu	7:30P	30	2.8	2.2	2250	4.7
16	Rugrats	NICK	Tue	7:30P	30	2.8	2.2	2235	4.5
16	Rugrats	NICK	Sat	4:30P	30	2.8	2.2	2232	6.4

## D E M O T R A C K E R : M A L E S 1 8 - 4 9

Ranked by rating. Cable rating is coverage area rating within each basic cable network's universe; U.S. rating is of 100.8 million TV households. Source: Fox Family Channel

Rank	Program	Network	Day	Time	Duration	Rating Cable	HHs U.S.	Cable (000)	Share
1	WWF Entertainment	TNN	Mon	10:00P	66	5.3	4.3	2638	14.3
2	WWF Entertainment	TNN	Mon	9:00P	60	4.6	3.7	2291	10.8
3	TBS Prime Movie	TBS	Sun	5:01P	179	2.6	2.1	1297	7.2
4	TBS Prime Movie	TBS	Sun	8:00P	151	2.3	1.9	1192	5.1
5	Network Window Movie	USA	Tue	9:00P	120	2.3	1.9	1157	6.0
6	WCW Monday Nitro Live!	TNT	Mon	8:00P	60	2.3	1.9	1154	6.0
7	Jackass	MTV	Sun	10:00P	30	2.3	1.8	1114	4.9
8	TBS Prime Movie	TBS	Sat	8:05P	175	2.2	1.9	1140	6.5
9	Busch Grand National Race	FX	Sat	3:17P	170	2.2	1.3	808	9.3
10	Jackass	MTV	Sun	9:00P	30	2.1	1.7	1033	4.3

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# Syndication Watch

FEB. 19-25 Syndicated programming ratings according to Nielsen Media Research

## TOP 25 SHOWS

Rank	Program	HH AA	HH GAA
1	Wheel of Fortune	11.0	11.0
2	Jeopardy	9.0	9.0
3	Entertainment Tonight	7.0	7.0
4	Oprah Winfrey Show	6.7	6.9
5	Judge Judy	6.5	9.4
6	Friends	6.0	6.9
7	Wheel of Fortune (wknd)	5.7	5.7
8	Entertainment Tonight (wknd)	5.1	5.2
9	Frasier	5.0	5.5
10	Seinfeld	5.0	5.0
11	Live With Regis	4.3	4.3
12	The X-Files	4.1	4.6
13	Hollywood Squares	4.1	4.1
14	Jerry Springer	4.0	4.4
15	Judge Joe Brown	3.9	5.1
16	Seinfeld (wknd)	3.8	3.8
17	Friends (wknd)	3.7	4.3
18	Drew Carey	3.7	4.1
19	Maurycy	3.7	4.0
20	Andromeda	3.5	3.7
21	Xena	3.5	3.7
22	Extra	3.5	3.5
23	Jeopardy (wknd)	3.5	3.5
24	Inside Edition	3.4	3.4
25	3rd Rock From the Sun	3.3	3.6

## TOP GAME SHOWS

Rank	Program	HH AA	HH GAA
1	Wheel of Fortune (wknd)	5.7	5.7
2	Entertainment Tonight (wknd)	8.9	8.9
3	X-Files	4.1	4.6
4	Andromeda	3.6	3.7
5	Xena	3.5	3.7

According to Nielsen Media Research Syndication Service Ranking Report Feb. 19-25, 2001

HH/AA = Average Audience Rating (households)

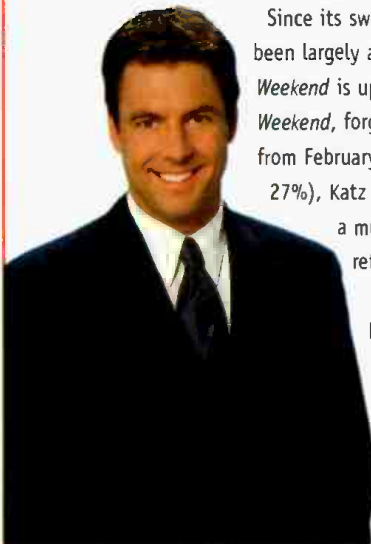
HH/GAA = Gross Aggregate Average

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

NA = Not Available

## Soaring with the stars

Shining as brightly as the stars it covers, *Entertainment Tonight Weekend* scored its highest sweeps average in eight years, soaring 30% over its performance in February 2000. Posting a 4.8 rating during the period Feb. 1-25, according to Nielsen Media Research, *ET Weekend* was the only weekly among the top-10 hours to make any gains over last year.



Mark Steines anchors *ET Weekend*, whose sweeps average was up 30% over February 2000.

Since its switch to a biographical format in February 1999—it had been largely an extension of the daily celebrity-news strip—*ET Weekend* is up a hefty 50%. As for why viewers are flocking to *ET Weekend*, forgoing competitors such as *The X-Files* (3.8, down 16% from February 2000), *Xena* (3.4, down 11%) and *ER* (3.3, down 27%), Katz TV's Bill Carroll contends that *ET Weekend* "is just doing a much better job. They have done an unbelievable job in refocusing the show."

By mirroring TV's current biography trend (for example, E! Entertainment's *True Hollywood Story* franchise and VH1's *Behind the Music*), Carroll explains, *ET Weekend* has been able to exploit "its unique asset: having one of the largest libraries of entertainment programming." In 20 years on the air, *ET Weekend* has collected a lot of archival material, which helps in piecing together nostalgic episodes like "TV's Greatest Scandals" or "What Ever Happened To..."

But it's a wrong assessment, he adds, to think *ET Weekend* is doing well at the expense of other weekly efforts. Also among shows whose numbers are off from last year are *Stargate SG-1* (3.0, down 21%), *V.I.P.* (2.5, down 19%), *Earth: Final Contact* (2.3, down 4%) and *Beastmaster* (2.2, down 12%).

"With more cable options, with fewer of these shows running in prime time because of increased programming from growing networks WB and UPN, shows are going to be down," Carroll explains. "So anything down by under 15% is nominal. If everything were down by 30%, I would be concerned. But 10% or 15% is normal breakage."

—Susanne Ault

# #1 in Miami!

**WSVN/FOX**  
10-11am

Took its new time period  
from 3<sup>rd</sup> to 1<sup>st</sup>  
In just one sweep!

Source: NIELSEN MEDIA RESEARCH, Feb. 2001 vs. Nov. 2000, HH Reg.

# Programming

## BroadcastWatch

COMPILED BY KENNETH RAY

FEB. 26-MAR. 4 Broadcast network prime time ratings according to Nielsen Media Research

Week	abc	CBS	NBC	FOX	PAX TV	U/P/N	WB
22	8.3/13	9.2/14	9.2/14	8.9/13	0.9/1	2.3/3	3.9/6
8:00	63. Best Commercials Never Seen 5.8/9	27. King of Queens 9.2/14		32. Boston Public 8.6/13	132. Miracle Pets 0.6/1	91. Moesha 2.4/4	70. 7th Heaven 5.2/8
8:30		32. Yes, Dear 8.5/13				91. The Parkers 2.4/4	
9:00	23. ABC Monday Night Movie—Life With Judy Garland: Me and My Shadow, Pt. 2 9.6/15	9. Ev Lvs Raymd 11.9/17	24. Dateline NBC 9.3/14	24. Ally McBeal 9.3/14	122. Touched by an Angel 0.8/1	94. The Hughleys 2.3/3	88. Roswell 2.5/4
9:30		17. Becker 10.3/15				95. Girlfriends 2.1/3	
10:00		48. Family Law 7.6/12	30. Third Watch 8.8/15		109. Diagnosis Murder 1.3/2		
10:30							
8:00	8.2/13	9.4/15	7.5/12	6.4/10	1.2/2	2.5/4	3.4/5
8:30	37. The Mole 8.3/13	12. JAG 10.9/17	27. Frasier 9.2/14	55. That '70s Show 6.6/10	132. Mysterious Ways 0.6/1	88. UPN's Movie Tuesday—The Players Club 2.5/4	82. Buffy the Vampire Slayer 3.5/5
9:00	Presidential Address to Congress	Presidential-Address to Congress	Presidential Address to Congress	Presidential Address to Congress	106. Touched by an Angel 1.4/2		83. Angel 3.4/5
9:30							
10:00	32. News Analysis 8.5/13	43. News Analysis 7.8/12			105. Diagnosis Murder 1.6/3		
10:30	40. NYPD Blue 8.1/14	35. Judging Amy 8.4/15	82. Dateline NBC 6.0/10				
8:00	9.0/14	5.6/9	11.2/17	8.8/14	0.9/2	2.7/4	2.3/4
8:30	21. The Mole 9.7/15	73. Some/Friends* 5.0/8	40. Ed 8.1/13	56. That '70s Show 6.4/10	132. Twice in a Life 0.6/1	95. 7 Days 2.1/3	85. Dawson's Creek 2.9/5
9:00		71. Bette 5.1/8		57. Grounded/Life 6.3/10			
9:30	52. Drew Carey 7.2/11	63. CBS Wednesday Movie—Sanctuary 5.8/9	7. The West Wing 12.5/18	11. Temptation Island 11.3/17	120. Touched by an Angel 1.0/2	84. Star Trek: Voyager 3.2/5	103. Jack & Jill 1.7/3
10:00	53. Spin City 7.0/10						
10:30	18. Who Wants to Be a Millionaire? 10.2/17		5. Law & Order 13.0/21		115. Diagnosis Murder 1.1/2		
8:00	8.3/13	13.8/22	12.6/20	3.3/5	1.0/1	4.5/7	2.6/4
8:30	76. Whose Line Is It 4.8/8	1. Survivor II 18.0/28	19. Friends 9.9/16	81. World's Funniest 3.7/6	122. It's a Miracle 0.8/1		88. Gilmore Girls 2.5/4
9:00	71. Whose Line Is It 5.1/8		15. Friends 10.5/16			78. WWF Smackdown! 4.5/7	
9:30	8. Who Wants to Be a Millionaire? 12.3/18	3. CSI 14.8/22	14. Will & Grace 10.7/16	86. TV Guide Truth Behind the Rumors 2.8/4	122. Touched by an Angel 0.8/1		86. Charmed 2.8/4
10:00			27. Just Shoot Me 9.2/14				
10:30	44. Primetime 7.7/13	35. Big Apple* 8.4/14	2. ER 17.5/29		109. Diagnosis Murder 1.3/2		
8:00	7.7/14	6.1/11	9.2/16	4.6/8	1.0/2	1.2/2	1.9/3
8:30	79. Two Guys a Girl 4.1/7	50. Diagnosis Murder 7.4/13	21. Providence 9.7/17	77. Fox Movie Special—Soldier 4.6/8	122. Encounters With the Unexplained 0.8/1	115. Gary & Mike 1.1/2	95. Sabrina/Witch 2.1/4
9:00						112. Celebrity Death 1.2/2	100. Popstars 2.0/4
9:30	12. Who Wants to Be a Millionaire? 10.9/19	68. 50th Annual Miss USA Pageant 5.5/10	44. Dateline NBC 7.7/13		115. Touched by an Angel 1.1/2	109. Gary & Mike 1.3/2	103. Popular 1.7/3
10:00						116. Celebrity Death 1.1/2	
10:30	38. 20/20 8.2/14		16. Law & Order: Special Victims Unit 10.4/18		115. Diagnosis Murder 1.1/2		
8:00	5.7/10	7.0/13	2.4/4	5.7/10	0.8/1	KEY: RANKING/SHOW TITLE/PROGRAM RATING/SHARE • TOP TEN SHOWS OF THE WEEK ARE NUMBERED IN RED • TV UNIVERSE ESTIMATED AT 102.2 MILLION HOUSEHOLDS; ONE RATINGS POINT IS EQUAL TO 1,022,000 TV HOMES • YELLOW TINT IS WINNER OF TIME SLOT • (NR)—NOT RANKED; RATING/SHARE ESTIMATED FOR PERIOD SHOWN • *PREMIERE • PROGRAMS LESS THAN 15 MINUTES IN LENGTH NOT SHOWN • S-T-D = SEASON TO DATE • SOURCES: NIELSEN MEDIA RESEARCH, CBS RESEARCH	
8:30		67. That's Life 5.6/10	91. NBC NFL Football—Los Angeles Xtreme vs. New York/New Jersey Hitmen 2.4/4	73. Cops 5.0/9	128. Miracle Pets 0.7/1		
9:00	66. ABC Saturday Night Movie—The Birdcage 5.7/10	54. Kate Brasher 6.9/12		63. Cops 5.8/11			
9:30		31. The District 8.6/15	95. NFL Postgame 2.1/4	60. AMW: America Fights Back 6.1/11	121. Touched by an Angel 0.9/2		
10:00					128. Mysterious Ways 0.7/1		
10:30							
7:00	11.7/18	8.6/13	7.0/11	7.6/12	0.8/1	1.2/2	1.6/2
7:30	51. America's Funniest Home Videos 7.3/12	10. 60 Minutes 11.4/19	69. Biblical Mysteries 5.4/9	75. Futurama 4.9/8	128. Candid Camera 0.7/1		101. Jamie Foxx 1.9/3
8:00				58. King of/Hill 6.2/10	128. Candid Camera 0.7/1		101. The PJs 1.9/3
8:30	6. Who Wants to Be a Millionaire? 12.8/19	42. Touched by an Angel 8.0/12	58. Dateline NBC 6.2/9	20. The Simpsons 9.8/15	122. It's a Miracle 0.8/1	112. UPN NFL Football—Orlando Rage vs. Memphis Maniax 1.2/2	95. Steve Harvey 2.1/3
9:00				24. Malcolm/Middl 9.3/14			106. Popstars 1.4/2
9:30	4. ABC Original—Oprah Winfrey Presents: Amy & Isabell 13.4/20	44. CBS Sunday Movie—Eraser 8.2/13	38. NBC Sunday Night Movie—Jackie, Ethel, Joan: The Women of Camelot, Pt. 1 8.2/12	44. The Lone Gunmen 7.7/11	122. Pax Big Event Sunday—Murder 101 0.8/1		106. Popstars 1.4/2
10:00							112. Nikki 1.2/2
10:30							
8:00	8.6/14	8.5/14	8.4/14	6.6/10	0.9/1	2.3/4	2.6/4
8:30	8.6/14	8.6/14	8.3/13	6.4/10	0.9/1	2.6/4	2.6/4



# Thank you, Joe Collins and the Time Warner Team

for your commitment to cable's latest public service.

## Time Warner Gives Lift to C-SPAN3

By LINDA MOSS

**C**-SPAN3, which rolled out as a full-fledged network last month, received a major distribution boost last week when it won a slot on Time Warner Cable's digital platform, officials said.

The second spin-off of public-affairs network C-SPAN is expected to gain about 1.7 million Time Warner digital subscribers through its slot on Athena, the MSO's digital service. The move elevates C-SPAN3's distribution to roughly 3.1 million homes, according to officials.

That figure includes launches in many of Time Warner's major markets, such as New York City and San Diego, said C-SPAN director of affiliate relations Peter Kiley.

"It's just a tremendous commitment from [Time Warner Cable chairman] Joe Collins," Kiley said.

quired by Charter Communications Inc. also offer it on analog.

C-SPAN3 is the expanded version of C-SPAN Extreme, which debuted in 1997. It broadcast from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday to Friday with a limited lineup of live and taped political events as an adjunct to C-SPAN's gavel-to-gavel House of Representatives coverage and C-SPAN2's coverage of the U.S. Senate.

Jan. 22, C-SPAN

which looks at political and government figures.

The core network C-SPAN now reaches 79.4 million subscribers, while C-SPAN2 is in 60.7 million households.

On Time Warner, C-SPAN3 takes over a berth that was set aside for CNBC2. NBC Cable is planning to roll out that digital network, which will include programming and content from CNBC Asia and Europe, CNBC.com and lengthier inter-

Multichannel News  
February 19, 2001

C-SPAN3 is C-SPAN's 24-hour digital service that offers your customers more choice in public affairs television. To launch C-SPAN3, contact Peter Kiley at (202) 626-4874.

**C-SPAN. Created by Cable. Offered as a Public Service.**

**c-span.org**

## IN BRIEF

**VALUEVISION NETWORK BECOMES SHOPNBC**

Home shopping network ValueVision will be renamed ShopNBC in June, said the company, which is 40% owned by NBC and GE. Last year, the companies said a rebranding was in the works to more closely reflect the cable shopping network's relationship with NBC. The shopping network is available in about 36 million cable television and satellite households, including DirectTV and Dish Network.

Separately, ValueVision reported fourth-quarter pretax operating income of \$7 million, up 87%, on \$13.4 million in revenue, a five-fold increase. For the year, pretax earnings were up 127%, to \$20, on a 47% revenue gain, to \$369 million. The company projects a 28% increase in revenue for fiscal 2001 with a 75% increase in pretax earnings.

**CHRIS-CRAFT LOGS RECORD INCOME**

Chris-Craft reported that consolidated operating income for 2000 was a record \$115.2 million, a 22% jump. The company attributed the gains in part to a favorable IRS ruling and to huge savings accruing from the sale of its 50% stake in UPN to Viacom last March.

UPN, which Chris-Craft co-founded in 1995 with Paramount, now a division of Viacom, has been a money pit over the years. But Chris-Craft's losses associated with UPN dropped by two-thirds last year, to \$35.7 million from about \$97 million in 1999.

Total TV-station operating revenue rose 8% last year, to a record \$495.3 million. Pretax earnings at the stations rose 11%, to \$146 million.

# Getting ready for NBC

## Cash infusion moves Granite toward Bay Area network affiliation

**By Dan Trigoboff**

Thanks to the much needed financial relief it got last week, Granite Broadcasting has taken some giant steps toward owning and operating the San Francisco Bay Area's NBC affiliate next year, and further dealings with NBC, the station group says, demonstrate the network's commitment to their continuing relationship.

Granite has been pounded by Wall Street since last year's extraordinary reverse-compensation deal under which its KNTV San Jose, Calif., station will become an NBC affiliate.

It also faced a difficult period for cash flow between the end of KNTV's ABC affiliation last summer and the one scheduled to begin with NBC on Jan. 1.

But last week, Granite CEO Don Cornwell announced that his company had received financing and renegotiated its payment schedule with NBC.

The network agreed to modify the payment terms, deferring half the \$61 million until 2005, three years after the station is scheduled to become the San Francisco-Oakland-San Jose NBC affiliate, Granite said.

Granite noted that it will immediately pay the other half from a new \$205 million senior credit facility led by Goldman, Sachs & Co.

The remaining proceeds, combined with other cash, will be used to "provide the necessary resources to finance a transition period during which Granite will continue to pre-

pare KNTV to become the San Francisco NBC affiliate on Jan. 1, 2002, and develop its two top-10-market WB stations."

"We are now in a position," said Cornwell, "to cruise through what most people expect to be a rough year to get to 2002."

In addition, Granite and NBC have commenced a secondary affiliation for KNTV, which immediately gains first rights to NBC programming preempted by current local affiliate KRON-TV.

Granite said the deal "serves as a head start to the formal launch and signifies

NBC's commitment to make the transition a success."

"I think that's one of the reasons NBC said they wanted us to have a secondary affiliation right now," stated Cornwell. "They are particularly interested in having the issue of where their affiliate is going to be put to bed.

They want us to start putting their brand on our station as soon as possible and put to bed ... a continuous undercurrent of rumor and innuendo."

NBC and longtime Bay Area affiliate KRON scheduled a parting of the ways beginning next year, after a contentious bidding process

in which Young Broadcasting outbid NBC for the station.

But some in the Bay Area community as well as on Wall Street have continued to believe that Young and NBC would come to an agreement that would keep KRON as an NBC affiliate or owned station. ■



**Granite Broadcasting's Don Cornwell says, "We are now in a position to cruise through what most people expect to be a rough year to get to 2002."**

**Granite and NBC have already commenced a secondary affiliation for KNTV San Jose, Calif.**



# Changing Hands

## TVs

### Construction permit for TV at Grand Forks/Fargo, N.D.

**Price:** At least \$750,000 (includes 5% equity in buyer worth at least \$250,000)

**Buyer:** GIG of North Dakota LLC, Sioux Falls, S.D. (Charles D. Poppen, president/owner); no other full-power broadcast interests

**Seller:** Cardinal Broadcasting Corp., New York (Robert Price, president); is building TV in Vic-sburg, Miss.; owns 12% of WLPX-TV Greenville, N.C.

**Facilities:** Ch. 27

## Combos

### WZZB(AM)-WQKC(FM) Seymour, Ind., and WAVG(AM) Jeffersonville, Ind./Louisville, Ky.

**Price:** \$3.4 million (for stock)

**Buyer:** Susquehanna Radio Corp., York, Pa. (David E. Kennedy, president); owns/is buying 27 other radios

**Seller:** Sunnyside Communications Inc., Jeffersonville (Blair W. Trask, president; James W. Robinson, 35.2% owner; Ronald Fifer, 26.2% owner); no other broadcast interests

**Facilities:** WZZB: 1390 kHz, 1 kW day, 74 W night; WQKC: 93.7 MHz, 25 kW, ant. 699 ft.; WAVG: 1450 kHz, 1 kW

**Format:** WZZB: full-service, news, sports; WQKC: country; WAVG: classic hit country

### WGHC(AM)-WRBN(FM) Clayton, WEHR(FM), Elberton and WNEG(AM) Toccoa/Athens, Ga., and WFSC(AM)-WNCC(FM) (formerly WRFR) Franklin, N.C.

**Price:** \$3.022 million

**Buyer:** Sorenson Southeast Radio LLC, Sioux Falls, S.D. (Dean P. Sorenson, 100% managing member); is buying WSGC(AM) (formerly WWRK; see item, below) Elberton. Dean Sorenson is president/owner of Sorenson Broadcasting Corp., which owns 10 FMs and seven AMs. He also owns 51% of KROR(FM) Hastings, Neb.

**Seller:** Chase Broadcasting Inc., Athens, Ga. (Gordon K. Van Mol, owner). Van Mol also is selling WWRK-FM Elberton (see item, below)

**Facilities:** WGHC: 1370 kHz, 2.5 kW day; WRBN: 104.1 MHz, 480 W, ant. 817 ft.; WEHR: 105.1 MHz, 6 kW, ant. 328 ft.; WNEG: 630 kHz, 500 W day; WTSC: 1050

Station Trades	
By dollar volume and number of sales; does not include mergers or acquisitions involving substantial non-station assets	
THIS WEEK	
TV/Radio	\$0 □ 0
TVs	\$750,000 □ 1
Combos	\$6,422,000 □ 2
FMs	\$10,311,000 □ 5
AMs	\$0 □ 0
Total	\$17,483,000 □ 8
SO FAR IN 2001	
TV/Radio	\$200,000,000 □ 1
TVs	\$116,800,000 □ 10
Combos	\$2,339,067,000 □ 24
FMs	\$85,990,600 □ 46
AMs	\$55,521,054 □ 31
Total	\$2,797,378,654 □ 112

kHz, 1 kW day; WNCC: 96.7 MHz, 6 kW, ant. 204 ft.

**Format:** WGHC: adult standards, MOR; WRBN: AC; WEHR: AC; WNEG: MOR; WTSC: country; WNCC: AC

## FMs

### KLTV(FM) and KOUL(FM) Corpus Christi and KRAD(FM) Portland/Corpus Christi Texas

**Price:** \$6.5 million

**Buyer:** Rodriguez Communications LP, Dallas (Rodriguez Operating Inc., sole general partner [RIT Broadcasting Inc., 67.8% owner (Marcos & Sonya Rodriguez Family Trust, owner; James L. Anderson, trustee)]); owns/controls five other FMs and two AMs, all Texas. Anderson has interest in KXLB(AM) Sherman, Texas

**Seller:** Equicom Inc., Houston (Randall B. Hale, chairman); is selling 10 FMs and seven AMs, all Texas

**Facilities:** KLTV: 96.5 MHz, 97 kW, ant. 955 ft.; KOUL: 103.7 MHz, 100 kW, ant. 941 ft.; KRAD: 105.5 MHz, 1.9 kW, ant. 354 ft.

**Format:** KLTV: AC; KOUL: C&W; KRAD: contemporary mass appeal, modern rock

### KULF(FM) Brenham (between Houston and Bryan), Texas

**Price:** \$1.5 million

**Buyer:** Fort Bend Broadcasting Co., Houston (Roy E. Henderson, owner); owns/is buying five other FMs, including KMBV(FM) Navasota, Texas (see item, below). Henderson also owns 10 more FMs and three AMs; construction permits to build two Texas FMs, and 51% of KVCQ(FM) Cuero/Victoria, Texas

**Seller:** May Broadcasting Inc., Brenham (William R. Hicks, Janice May and Roy May Jr., owners). Hicks owns 89.2% of two AMs and one FM in College Station, Texas

**Facilities:** 94.1 MHz, 3 kW; ant. 100 meters (pending application to increase power and change transmitter location)

**Format:** Country

### 66.6% of construction permit for FM at Rio Grande, P.R.

**Price:** \$933,000 (\$466,500 to each 33.3% seller)

**Buyer:** United Broadcasters Co., Santurce, P.R. (spouses Josantania Mellado Romero and Carmen Gonzalez Vega, joint 50% owners, and spouses Luis A. Guzman-Llubes and Ana M. Velez-Borras, joint 50% owners); currently 33.3% owner of CP

**33.3% Seller:** Rio Grande Broadcasting Co. [Calle Julio and Noe Marin, joint 51% members], Caguas, P.R., and Irene Rodriguez Diaz De McComas, Guaynabo, P.R.; no other broadcast interests

**Facilities:** 97.3 MHz

### KMBV(FM) Navasota/Bryan, Texas

**Price:** \$900,000

**Buyer:** Fort Bend Broadcasting (see second FM item)

**Seller:** Nicol Broadcasting Ltd., Crockett, Texas (Nicol Family Partnership Ltd., owner; L.T. Nicol, president); owns KBHT(FM) Crockett

**Facilities:** 92.5 MHz, 6 kW, ant. 263 ft.

**Format:** AC

### WWRK-FM Elberton, Ga.

**Price:** At least \$478,000 (debt)

**Buyer:** Douglas M. Sutton Jr., Union, S.C.; owns two other FMs and two AMs, all in South Carolina

**Seller:** Gordon K. Van Mol, Athens, Ga.; owns Chase Broadcasting Inc., which is selling three FMs and three AMs, including WEHR(FM) Elberton (see item, above)

**Facilities:** 92.1 MHz, 3 kW, ant. 299 ft.

**Format:** Country

—Compiled by Elizabeth A. Rathbun

# Calling for Copps

*Democratic contender for FCC accustomed to battles*

By Bill McConnell

If Michael J. Copps wins a spot on the FCC, he might need a crash course on the telecommunications industry's many hot-button issues, but at least he's conditioned to taking heat over contentious public policy.

Copps, the leading candidate for the Democratic FCC seat now held by Susan Ness, is already used to the ferociousness of public policy debate.

During the past eight years, he was one of the Clinton administration's point people on such hot topics as normalizing trade with China, improving U.S. ties with Russia's Wild West-style and oft-corrupt business community and defending against claims that the administration put American jobs at risk with its devotion to free-trade.

For such an experienced flak-taker, hard-to-resolve agenda items on the FCC's slate—including fights over media ownership limits, digital television, cable Internet access and telephone competition—may not appear too fearsome.

First as deputy assistant secretary for basic industries and then as assistant secretary for trade development, Copps' main task was to improve access to foreign markets for nearly every sector of American industry, including telecommunications, manufacturing, construction, chemicals and finance. That duty obligated him to travel frequently, either overseas to promote open trade agreements or in the U.S. to rally support for Clinton administration policies among industry groups and often reluctant labor and environment groups.

"Many more jobs are created by the

expansion of trade than are lost by the expansion of trade," Copps, told the International Business Association in October.

Copps, who has the backing of Senate Commerce Committee ranking Democrat Ernest Hollings, declined comment for this story last week because President Bush has not yet announced nominations for any of the FCC's three open seats.

Copps' nomination appears to be the only FCC appointment close to a sure thing. Not only does Copps have the backing of Hollings, Senate Commerce Committee Chairman John McCain has promised the South Carolina lawmaker the pick of the first open Democratic seat. Senate Minority Leader Tom Daschle has also said he will

back Hollings' choice. Picks for the two available GOP seats still appear wide open.

Copps' rivals for a Democratic seat privately concede that they are focusing instead on a second opening that will become available by the

end of the year, when Gloria Tristani exits to run for office in New Mexico.

Copps is an old Washington hand. He worked 15 years as an aide to Hollings, rising to chief of staff for the senator's personal staff. He also worked as an industry lobbyist, first for Collins & Aikman Corp., then for the American Meat Institute. The Clinton administration, eager to bring Democratic trade experts into the Commerce Department after 12 years of Republicans in the White House, lured him back to government work in 1993.

Despite the high-profile Capitol Hill support, Copps is virtually unknown among Washington's telecom players.

For such an experienced flak-taker, hard-to-resolve agenda items on the FCC's slate may not appear too fearsome.

**Michael J. Copps**



**AGE:** 60

**CAREER:**

- Assistant secretary for trade development, U.S. Commerce Department 1998-2001
- Deputy assistant secretary, basic industries trade development, 1993-98
- Senior vice president, legislative affairs, American Meat Institute, 1989-93
- Government affairs director, Collins & Aikman Corp., 1985-89
- Chief of staff, administrative aide to Sen. Ernest Hollings, 1970-85
- Instructor, American history, Loyola University, New Orleans, 1967-70

**EDUCATION:**

- A.B., Wofford College, Spartanburg, S.C., 1963
- Ph.D., American History, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, 1967

**PERSONAL:**

Born, Milwaukee; married, five children

Stuart Eizenstat, former undersecretary for international trade and his former boss, did predict, however, that Copps will perform well if he wins an FCC seat. "He's extremely talented and had the confidence of Republicans and Democrats on Capitol Hill."

If Copps' public statements on behalf of the Clinton administration's trade policies are any indication of his views, he is likely to get along just fine with FCC Chairman Michael Powell, who has declared that the FCC will deregulate the telcoms. ■



# Case buoys cap scrappers

*Media dereg fans see court decision on cable reach as invitation to the party*

By Bill McConnell

The biggest players in the cable business are rejoicing over the court decision offering industry operators more freedom to merge with each other and to choose the channels they carry.

Although the ruling immediately affects only the cable business, many champions of broader media deregulation think it might be time to put some champagne on ice, too.

A three-judge panel of the federal appeals court in Washington ruled March 2 that the FCC failed to justify its 30% cap on one company's share of pay-TV subscribers. The FCC had argued the limit prevented any one operator from getting so big that it would have sufficient market power to block new programmers from entering the market. Writing for the court, Judge Stephen Williams said the FCC's "assumptions are mere conjecture."

Williams took an even dimmer view of a second restriction barring operators from devoting more than 40% of their first 75 channels to their own programming. This limit, he said, appeared to have been "plucked from thin air."

Noting that the Supreme Court only one week before upheld the 1992 law providing the basis for the caps, he scolded the FCC for not providing a stronger basis for its restrictions. "Constitutional authority to impose some limit is not authority to impose any limit imaginable," Williams wrote.

Many broadcast-industry attorneys say the court's decision gives them powerful legal support both for raising the 35% cap on a TV group's national audience share and for elimi-

nating restrictions on owning two TV stations in the same market.

"Intellectually, the decision supports the case for relaxing the cap and provides some impetus for the FCC to act" on the TV group audience cap, said NBC lobbyist Robert Okun.

Okun also said the decision will have major influence when the same court, though not necessarily the same three-judge panel, rules on the major networks' challenge to the national broadcast cap later this year. The court has agreed to hear challenges to the cap by NBC, Fox and CBS.

Unaffiliated stations now may have a better chance to form duopolies in small markets, said David Donovan, lobbyist for the Association of Local Television Stations. ALTV is fighting to reduce the "voice test" that bars TV duopolies when fewer than eight unaffiliated stations would remain in a market.

Opponents of cross-industry-ownership restrictions also are invigorated by the decision.

"The court insisted that regulation be based on real live facts rather than conjecture," said John Sturm, president of the Newspaper Association of America, which is fighting to eliminate the ban on same-market

TV/newspaper cross-ownership.

Of course, not all in the philosophically divided broadcast industry agree the decision will be so far-reaching. Jack Goodman, counsel for the National Association of Broadcasters, which defends the 35% cap on behalf of network affiliates afraid of losing contract leverage with their programming suppliers, said too much is being read into the decision. "It does mean the commission sooner or later will have to justify the numbers," he said. "But the court was not hostile to ownership caps as a way to preserve competition and diversity."

For cable, the broader effect may be to protect the industry from new mandates, such as open-access rules requiring cable companies to let competing Internet providers onto their broadband networks and expanded must-carry rules for local TV stations' digital signals. ■

**"Intellectually, the decision supports the case for relaxing the cap and provides some impetus for the FCC to act."**

—NBC lobbyist Robert Okun

## IN BRIEF

### FCC REFORM HEARING SET

The House Telecommunications Subcommittee, chaired by Rep. Fred Upton (R-Mich.), will hold its first hearing on FCC reform on Thursday, March 29. FCC Chairman Michael Powell is expected to testify. House Energy and Commerce Committee Chairman Billy Tauzin (R-La.) has said he will leave "first crack" at agency reform to Powell.

### DIGITAL DELAY

"It's a damn certainty" that broadcasters aren't going to give back the analog spectrum in 2006, said House Energy and Commerce Committee Chairman Billy Tauzin (R-La.) last week. Allowing the broadcasters to wait until 85% of U.S. households have access to digital TV is "apparently not working. We need to find some way to reach that number sooner," Tauzin said. "We're late, and that's not good for us."

### CAP RECAP

The FCC is reviewing a federal court decision that found the FCC's 30% cap on any one cable company's audience reach unjustified, said FCC Chairman Michael Powell last week. "We, of course, have an absolute obligation to evaluate, in any manner, on which we made a judgement stemming from that statute, and that includes AT&T and the merger condition," Powell said. "But as to what that conclusion will be, we're not prepared to say." The commission and the Department of Justice have not determined whether they will appeal the decision. The FCC also must review an agreement it made with AT&T last spring, as a condition for approving its merger with Media One, that AT&T would sell enough systems of programming interests to get below the 30% cap.

# Hill urges copyright deal

*Tauzin advises content community to be more forthcoming; Boucher suggests 'watermark' bill*

By Paige Albiniak

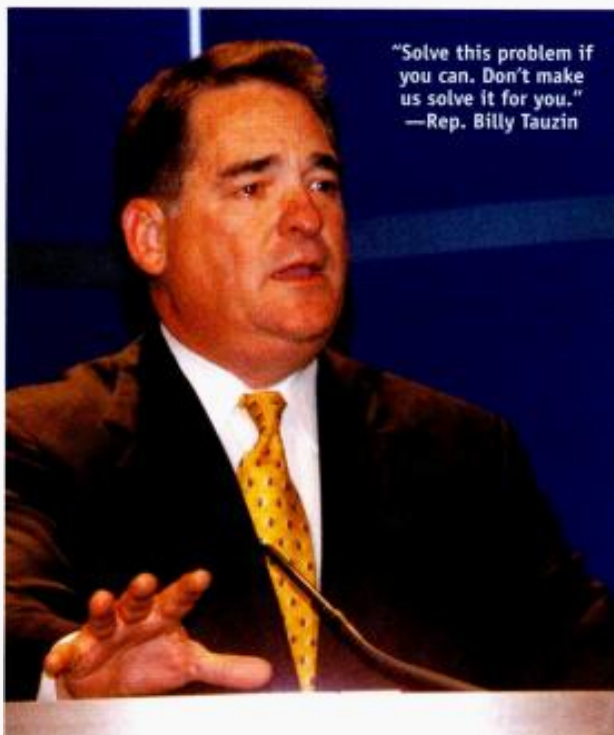
Lawmakers last week indicated their willingness to get in the middle of stalled negotiations between copyright holders and consumer electronics manufacturers about how free over-the-air broadcasts will be protected in the digital age.

"The message is strong," said House Energy and Commerce Committee Chairman Billy Tauzin (R-La.) at the Consumer Electronics Association's Digital Download conference in Washington. "Solve this problem if you can. Don't make us solve it for you."

"I'm urging that the content community be a little more forthcoming in these negotiations," said Rep. Rick Boucher (D-Va.) during a luncheon speech to the same conference.

Content holders and consumer electronics manufacturers have long been fighting over what level of copy protection certain content should get in the digital world. Consumer electronics manufacturers, which make copying devices such as videocassette recorders, are eager to protect consumers' rights to copy TV programs. Studios, which produce movies and TV programs, are concerned their content will lose market value if it can easily be copied and circulated over the Internet.

Meanwhile, lawmakers worry that the whole debate is slowing the country's transition to digital television because content providers are unwilling to transmit unprotected digital programming, so little high-quality digital content is available to lure



viewers to purchase digital TV sets. Without those potential eyeballs, broadcasters face little incentive to speed the conversion.

Two weeks ago, several members of Congress sent a letter to FCC Chairman Michael Powell expressing their concerns that the stalemate could freeze broadcasters out of top programming. They asked Powell to stay on top of the issue.

"If program producers cannot be assured that programming licensed to broadcast television is protected as securely as programming licensed to cable and other subscription-based channels, these producers will inevitably move their programming over to such channels where protections are clearly stronger," wrote Reps. Tauzin, John

Dingell (D-Mich.), Fred Upton (R-Mich.), Ed Markey (D-Mass.), Cliff Stearns (R-Fla.) and Chip Pickering (R-Miss.) and Sens. Fritz Hollings (D-S.C.), Ted Stevens (R-Alaska), John Breaux (D-La.) and Barbara Boxer (D-Calif.).

Last week, Boucher suggested there might be a need for a bill that would require VCRs and other copying devices to respond to digital "watermarks" that would include copy-protection instructions transmitted with free over-the-air digital broadcasts. Those instructions would tell VCRs to not copy any pay-per-view or video-on-demand; to make only one copy of premium programming, such as HBO; and to allow liberal copying of free over-the-air television. The difference between the copy regime in the analog and digital worlds, however, is that copy protections on high-end free over-the-air broadcast programming, such as some movies or special events, would be more strict. Today, any consumer can copy any free analog programming without restriction.

CEA praised Boucher's speech, which also suggested a number of modifications to current copyright law to protect fair-use copying of digital content. Studios don't

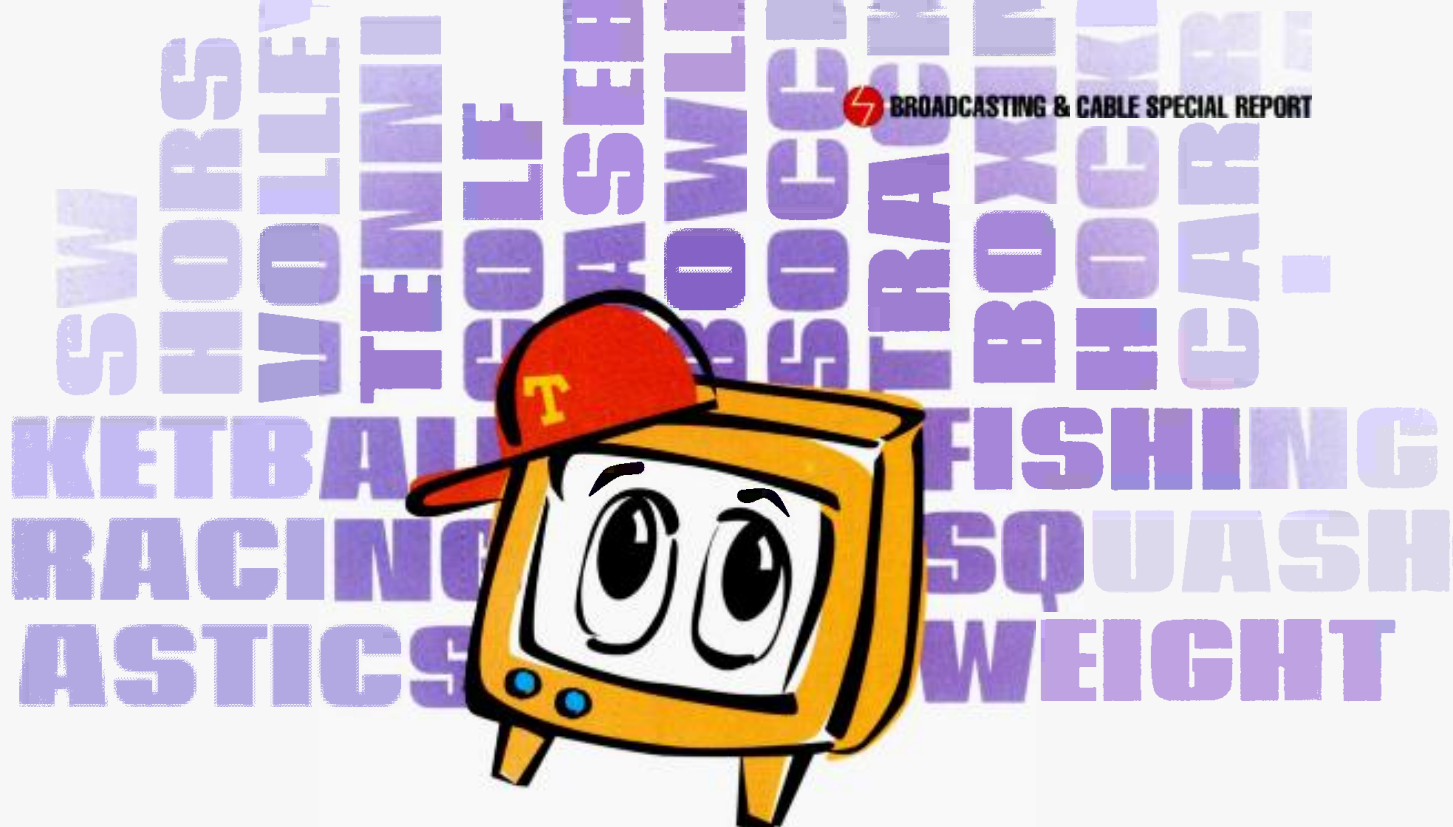
want Congress to get into fair-use issues but would support a watermark bill, said one studio executive.

Lawmakers are likely to address the issue at a hearing before the House Telecommunications Subcommittee March 15. Witnesses are expected to include representatives

from the National Association of Broadcasters, National Cable and Telecommunications Association, Motion Picture Association of America and Consumer Electronics Association, as well as a network TV representative. ■

**Lawmakers worry that the whole debate is slowing the country's transition to digital television.**





## So many sports...

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# SPORTS RIGHTS

## Baseball and Beyond

Issue Date: **April 2, 2001**  
 Space Closing: **March 23, 2001**  
 Materials Due: **March 27, 2001**

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## **NAB Sellers Guide Part 2: Major Station Groups**

**ISSUE DATE** ● March 26, 2001

**SPACE CLOSING DATE** ● March 16, 2001

**MATERIAL CLOSING DATE** ● March 20, 2001

## **Road to NAB 1: New Media**

**ISSUE DATE** ● April 9, 2001

**SPACE CLOSING DATE** ● March 30, 2001

**MATERIAL CLOSING DATE** ● April 3, 2001

## **Road to NAB 2**

**ISSUE DATE** ● April 16, 2001

**SPACE CLOSING DATE** ● April 6, 2001

**MATERIAL CLOSING DATE** ● April 10, 2001

## **NAB Convention Issue: Top 25 Station Groups**

**ISSUE DATE** ● April 23, 2001

**SPACE CLOSING DATE** ● April 13, 2001

**MATERIAL CLOSING DATE** ● April 17, 2001

**BONUS DISTRIBUTION AT NAB2001**

## **NAB Midweek Issue: Digital Facilities, Digital Leadership Awards**

**ISSUE DATE** ● April 25, 2001

**SPACE CLOSING DATE** ● April 13, 2001

**MATERIAL CLOSING DATE** ● April 17, 2001

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## IN BRIEF

### SEACHANGE EARNINGS

SeaChange International reported \$96.9 million in revenue for the year ended Jan. 31, up 14% over the previous year. In addition, net loss for the year was \$698,000 (3 cents per share), in contrast to net income of \$497,000 (2 cents a share) for 1999. President and CEO Bill Styslinger says that, although revenue for the fourth quarter was less than expected, \$15 million in recent VOD orders and a \$10 million investment by Comcast make him enthusiastic about the long-term outlook for growth.

### MICROSOFT TV LAUGHS

Comedy Central has signed a deal with Microsoft TV to create and develop interactive programming with Microsoft TV's Content Developer Program. This is Comedy Central's second recent announcement regarding enhanced TV; the network is working with PacketVideo to offer streaming video and original content to wireless customers. Comedy Central will also participate in Microsoft TV's Content Builder Initiative, which allows direct applications development and testing of enhanced TV entertainment on the Motorola DCT-5000 set-top box.

# Ready for 'centralcasting'

*Pinnacle looks to help broadcasters, networks capitalize on digital*

By Ken Kerschbaumer

Seeking to be known for much more than character generation, Pinnacle Systems continues to expand its product lines. And nothing demonstrates that ambition more than the company's involvement in "centralcasting."

Centralcasting—the use of one station as the broadcast operation of other stations—is likely to be the trend at this year's NAB, as broadcast networks and groups endeavor to take advantage of digital capabilities.

"The groups are trying to operate more like cable companies," says Pinnacle Director of Marketing Pat Burns. "There are some workflow issues and union issues, but I think this is something that will roll out over the next two to five years. And I think some people will be trying it out this year."

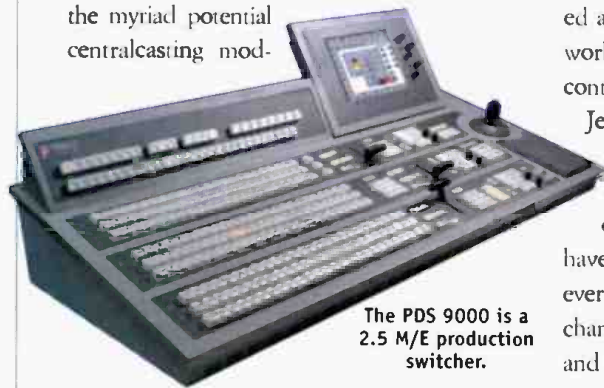
Pinnacle is approaching the myriad potential centralcasting mod-

els with what it is calling "distributed broadcast solutions," offering three broad concepts, according to Jim Jensen, business manager of the MediaStream product line. "First is centralcasting: Groups consolidate operations in a central location, eliminating manpower duplication," he explains. "Then there is content localization, which allows the network to create a local variation of itself. And last is automated content distribution—sending content over a wide-area network that other automation systems can work with."

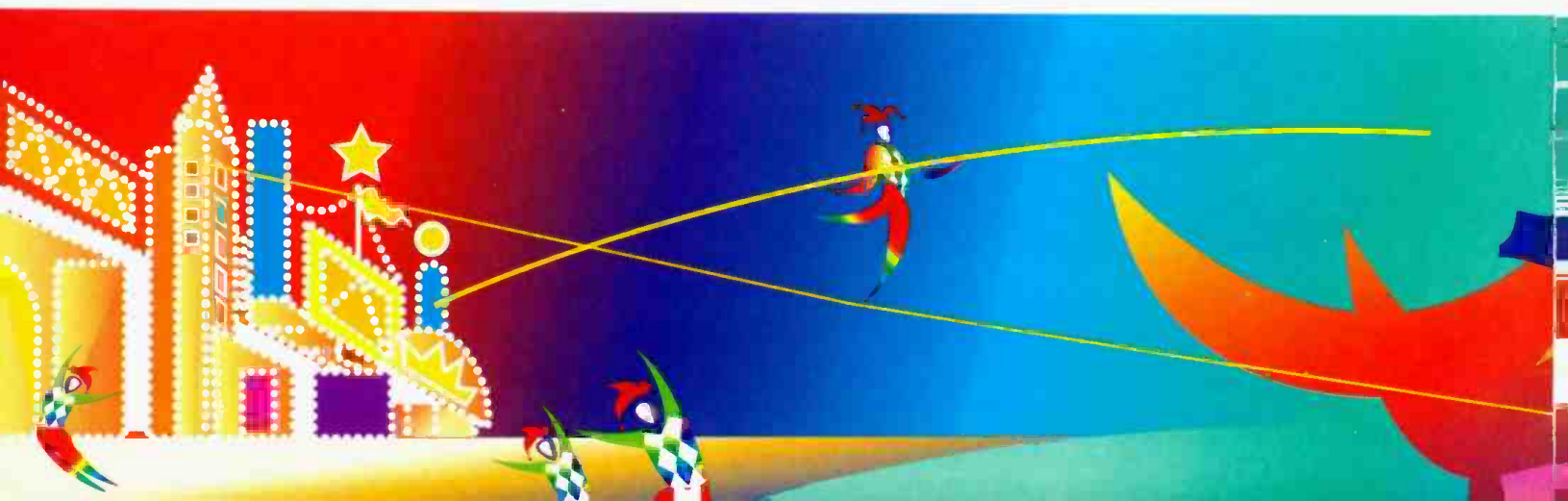
Pinnacle plans to offer a number of products to meet the demands of centralcasting and expects to work with other manufacturers and system integrators to get facilities up and running.

One such product is Palladium, which is designed to allow multiple users access to one content file, without the file's being duplicated across a facility. "Palladium is a new networked storage system that allows transparent content exchange and simpler automation."

Jensen explains. "You don't have to pay for the module that transfers the content, and you don't have to have replication of the storage. Reliability is the key so we have real-time failover, redundant paths to everything, dual connections for every fibre-channel connection, dual network switchers and dual RAID controllers.



The PDS 9000 is a 2.5 M/E production switcher.







The DVExcell is a frame-based 10-bit DVE that can have as many as 12 DVEs on screen at the same time.

“What users are interested in, along with sharing content, is sharing speed,” he adds. “Most of them are still tape based, but, to move over to a nonlinear tape-based system, they can take in a feed and start editing 10 seconds after it comes in. Our system doesn’t require that the files be closed.”

There will be a number of other introductions at NAB, as well. Pinnacle’s latest video-server introduction is the Thunder 2100, which is designed for live production. “It’s a still and clip player with two channels of video and each channel has video and key, says Burns. “RAID storage is built in. The nice thing is, this ties in with the PVS 9000 digital switcher, so the 2100 takes care of the still store and a couple of VTR decks.” He adds that a couple of Thunder 2100 servers—the PDS 9000 switcher (a 36-input, 2.5 M/E production switcher with nine built-in 3-D DVEs) and a still store—offer what he calls “a very nice suite” for about \$220,000.

There are also two new HD plug-in cards for the MediaStream server family, allowing SD servers to also store HD content. One is an ASI input card; the other is a decoder that

plugs into the existing product to produce one server with universal connectivity handling both SD and HD. The HD decoder will also allow for SD material to be upconverted.

“Our customers can buy these, plug them in and have an HD server,” says Jensen. “The cards run up to 60 Mb/s.

If they run at 45 Mb/s, they require three times the storage of standard-definition material, but, if you run at 20 Mb/s, storage is comparable to storage for standard def.”

Pinnacle first came to prominence with still stores, character generators and DVEs, and the company continues to make advances in those areas. For example, at NAB next month, the company will introduce Dekocast, which Burns calls “a station in a box. A lot of people are going to want that for lights-out remote operation.” The system offers a real-time character generator, video- and audio-clip player, audio mixer and router, multichannel DVE and a compositing engine.

In the area of DVEs, Pinnacle is introducing DVExcell. “It’s a frame-based 10-bit DVE,” notes Burns. “And you can have 12

DVEs on the screen. It has up to four channels of DVE; each has video and key, and each channel has a 3-D DVE plus two 2-D DVEs.”

Among other products to be introduced are DekoRocket, a 3-D template-based graphics system that has found sales success even before its introduction—27 units have been ordered for *Who Wants to Be a Millionaire?* ■

**New Palladium product is designed to allow multiple users access to one content file, without the file’s being duplicated across a facility.**

**IN BRIEF**

**PHILIPS OFFERS TRINIX**

Philips Broadcast will arrive at NAB with its new Trinx digital-video routing switcher. The router is available in two chassis sizes: an eight-rack unit (RU) chassis that fits up to 128x128 and a 15-RU version that has room for 256x256 inputs and outputs.

The company’s Triton router product line has also been extended and now accommodates analog video, digital video, HD video, stereo audio, AES/EBU digital audio and telecom/data switching. Matrix sizes are 32x32, 16x16, 8x8 and 16x2. In addition, three new versions of the DD35 production switcher are available: internal DVE and RAM recorder options, the Seraph HD35 switcher for HD production and a multidefinition switcher that allows production of both HD and SD program outputs from a single control panel.

**NEW AOLT V PRESIDENT**

Robert Friedman was named president of AOLT V last week, joining the company after serving as co-chairman of New Line Cinema’s worldwide theatrical marketing division. Friedman will report to America Online chief executive Barry Schuler and will take on the challenge of getting the AOLT V platform some momentum.



**A Question Of Balance**

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# Datebook

## This Week

**March 10-13 NAB Government Relations:** State Leadership Conference. J.W. Marriott Hotel, Washington. Contact: Kathleen Muller (202) 775-3527.

**March 15 American Women in Radio and Television** Hispanic & Urban Radio Forum and luncheon. The Yale Club, New York. Contact: Rosemarie Sharpe (212) 481-3038.

**March 16-18 Intercollegiate Broadcasting System** National College Radio Convention. Hotel Pennsylvania, New York. Contact: Norman Prusslin (845) 565-0003.

**March 17-18 Television News Center** Reporter Training. Reuters, 1333 H Street, NW, Washington. Contact: Herb Brubaker (301) 340-6160.

## Also in March

**March 20-23 CTAM** Digital & Pay Per View Conference. Hilton New Orleans Riverside, New Orleans. Contact: Seth Morrison (703) 549-4200.

**March 21 IRTS Foundation** Gold Medal Award Dinner. Waldorf-Astoria, New York. Contact: Michelle Marsala (212) 867-6650, ext. 303.

**March 22 National Academy of Television Arts & Sciences, New York Chapter** The 2001 Television-Internet Conference.

## Major Meetings

**April 21-26 National Association of Broadcasters** Annual Convention. Las Vegas Convention Center and Sands Expo Center, Las Vegas. Contact: Kathleen L. Muller (202) 775-3527. **TVB** Annual Marketing conference, **April 23-24**. Contact: Janice Garjian (212) 486-1111.

**May 21 George Foster Peabody Awards** 60th annual presentation. Waldorf-Astoria, New York. Contact: Louise Benjamin (706) 542-5019.

**June 10-13 National Cable Telecommunications Association** Annual Convention. McCormick Place, Chicago. Contact: Bobbie Boyd (202) 775-3669.

**Aug. 2-4 SBCA** National Satellite Convention and Exposition. Opryland Hotel, Nashville, Tenn. Contact: Laurie Nappi (703) 549-6990, ext. 366.

**Sept. 5-7 National Association of Broadcasters** Radio Show. Ernest Morial Convention Center, New Orleans. Contact: Gene Sanders (202) 429-4194.

**Sept. 12-15 Radio-Television News Directors Association** International Conference and Exhibition. Nashville, Tenn. Contact: Rick Osmanski (202) 467-5200.

**Nov. 12 BROADCASTING & CABLE** 11th Annual BROADCASTING & CABLE Hall of Fame. New York Marriott Marquis, New York. Contact: Steve Labunski (212) 337-7158.

**Nov. 27-30 California Cable Television Association** Western Show. Anaheim Convention Center, Anaheim, Calif. Contact: Paul Fadelli (510) 428-2225.

**Jan. 21-24, 2002 National Association of TV Program Executives** 38th annual Conference and Exhibition. Las Vegas Convention Center, Las Vegas. Contact: Lana Westermeier (310) 453-4440.

Marriott Marquis Hotel, New York. Contact: Gordon Hastings (212) 768-7050.

**March 29 ANA** Television Advertising Forum. The Plaza Hotel, New York.

Contact: Susan Pralgever (212) 455-8021. **March 30-31 AP/RTNDA/SPJ/Emerson College** Regional Conference and Awards Dinner, featuring *60 Minutes'* Andy Rooney. University of Mass. Boston campus, Boston. Contact: Bob Salsberg (617) 357-8100.

## April

**April 1-3 Association of America's Public Television Stations** Capitol Hill Day, Washington. Contact: Joyce Burgess Horton (202) 887-1700.

**April 3 SalomonSmithBarney** and **BROADCASTING & CABLE** The Big Picture: The Changing Media Landscape. Grand Hyatt Hotel, New York. Contact: Duncan King (212) 816-4723.

—Compiled by Beatrice Williams-Rude  
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**Unda-USA** National Catholic Association for Communicators announces

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# People F A C E T I M E



## Call it 'bribery'

Saying that qualification for public office "is no longer the ability to govern but the ability to raise money"—chiefly to pay for TV time—*60 Minutes* creator and Executive Producer Don Hewitt said it is time to do something about it. In Washington to accept the Radio and Television News Directors Foundation First Amendment Leadership Award, he said the marriage of TV and politics began at WBBM-TV Chicago at the first Nixon-Kennedy debate. "I was there. ... [The politicians] married for love; we married for money."

He suggested, though, that, instead of airtime, candidates be given news time "when they do something newsworthy." He also said that, if campaign finance were called by its real name, "bribery," things would change "faster than you can say McCain-Feingold," referring to the campaign-finance-reform bill.



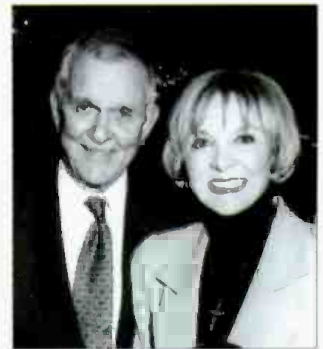
Photo: Wendy Moger-Bross

## A family affair

Lowry Mays, patriarch of Clear Channel Communications, which counts some 1,200 radio stations, accepted the Broadcasters' Foundation 2001 Golden Mike Award on behalf of the Mays family at the Plaza in New York. Since its founding in 1972, Clear Channel has remained a family-run business. Two sons and a daughter are executives. Said Mays: "This is a great honor for the Mays family, but let me remind the kids, I plan on being in the office for a few more years."

## TIPTOEING AROUND

Vivendi Universal Chairman Jean-Paul Messier is angling to increase his 43% stake in USA Networks Inc. Wall Street executives said that Messier approached Liberty Media Chairman John Malone about trading his stake in USA for Vivendi's interest in U.K. DBS service BskyB. Malone said only that British regulators would frown on Liberty's owning both, along with its existing stake in U.K. cable operator Telewest. Messier noted that Diller has blocking right and that "we are not going to play in increasing our position in USA Network against [USA Chairman] Barry Diller, but only with Barry Diller." Vivendi has the right to go to a 51% USA stake in February 2002.



## LAURELS FOR GARLAND

Beverly Garland was presented the Lifetime Achievement Award by Pacific Pioneer Broadcasters' President Tom Hatten, on behalf of the organization, for her 50 years on television, with nearly 700 starring appearances. She was among the first women to star in her own dramatic series as a police-woman in *Decoy* (1957) and is currently featured in the ABC daytime drama *Port Charles* and The WB's *7th Heaven*.

## Life imitating art?

Dick Wolf's "ripped from the headlines" stories sometimes continue after their airing—in this instance, after the demise of the series. A *Deadline* episode dealt with an anti-war radical who was accused of a single violent act to protest the Vietnam war. He escaped, took a new identity and led such an exemplary life for the next several decades that he was pressed to run for public office—at which time he was unmasked. The TV show stopped at that point, without a resolution. This case mirrors that of Howard L. Mechanic (at left). Although the *Deadline* story left the protagonist's fate unresolved, Mechanic was sent to jail.

Now, little noticed in the Clinton pardon brouhaha, a case that was non-controversial and uncontested: Mechanic was pardoned, putting a happy ending on a long-running saga. *Deadline* was dead on.



Photo: Paul O'Neill, East Valley Tribune, Mesa, AZ

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

**Broadcasting**

**Bill Bradley**, VP/director, client services, WBKI(TV) Louisville, Ky., promoted to executive VP/GM.

Promotions at Nexstar Broadcasting Group Inc., Clarks Summit, Pa.: **Shirley Green**, VP, controller, promoted to VP, finance; **Alex Behr**, assistant corporate controller, promoted to corporate controller.

**Jessica Wiener**, account executive, Paramount Domestic Television, promoted to VP, sales, Paramount Advertiser Services.

**Kerri Weitzberg**, director, communications, WBBM-TV Chicago, adds director, community relations, to her duties.

**Johnathan Lawhead**, GM, WXIX-TV Newport, Ky., joins WBNS-TV Columbus, Ohio, as director, sales.

**John Paul**, news director, WCIA(TV), joins WILL-TV Urbana, Ill., as senior producer, production services.

**Robin Shahid**, senior field engineer, Sony Electronics, Boston, joins WLVI-TV Cambridge, Mass., as assistant chief engineer.

**Cable**

At Adelphia Media Services, all of the following have been promoted from regional sales manager to regional director of sales: **Tom Gombas**, Western region, Ontario, Calif.; **Nancy Harrington**, Southeast region, West Palm Beach, Fla.; **Ken Klein**, Northeast region, Plymouth, Mass.; **Rick Pettyford**, central region, Staunton, Va.; **Nancy Fry**, regional sales manager, Great Lakes region, named director, advertising; all of the following have been promoted from regional operations manager to regional director of operations:

**Steve Castle**, Western division, Ontario, Calif.; **Chris Kerney**, Northeast region, Plymouth, Mass.; **Tammi Koch**, Great Lakes region, Buffalo, N.Y.; **Carlos Pulido**, Southeast region, West Palm Beach, Fla.; **John Artley**, senior information specialist, Electronic Data Systems, Staunton, Va., joins as regional director, operations, central region, Staunton, Va.

**Hermond E. Palmer Jr.**, director, marketing for financial services, Lexis-Nexis,

Philadelphia, joins Comcast Cable, Baltimore, as director, marketing and sales, Baltimore Metro area.

**Programming**

Promotions at The Weather Channel, Atlanta: **Eduardo Ruiz**, president, Weather Channel Latin America, Atlanta, adds president, international business development, to his duties; **Pam Bertino**, VP, affiliate sales/Western division, named VP/GM, Weatherscan Local.

**Michael Rauch**, senior VP, motion pictures, Showtime Networks, Los Angeles, now executive VP, production.

Appointments at Lifetime Television, New York: **Tom Hanft**, VP, KNBC(TV) Los Angeles, joins as senior VP, marketing, advertising and promotion; **Gerry Logue**, president, Grey Entertainment, New York, joins as senior VP/executive creative director.

Promotions at Discovery Networks, Bethesda, Md.: **Kathy Quattrone**, senior

VP, programming and production, Discovery Health, named executive VP/GM; **Christine Miller**, executive VP/CMO, Discovery.com, named executive VP, marketing, Discovery Networks.

**Kenneth N. Hershman**, senior VP, associate general counsel, Showtime Networks, New York, named senior VP, corporate strategy/Showtime Sports and event programming.

**Douglas DePriest**, director, production, Travel Channel, Bethesda, Md., promoted to VP, production and development.

**Robin A. Reinhardt**, director, MTV, New York, now VP, MTV celebrity talent and studio relations.

**Charlotte Brantley**, associate commissioner, Youth and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Washington, joins PBS, Alexandria, Va., as senior director, Ready to Learn Service.

**Katie Brown**, host, *Next Door With Katie Brown*, Lifetime Television, joins



Jessica Wiener



Hermond E. Palmer Jr.



Tom Hanft



Douglas DePriest



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### Super Session

Communications and the Net in the New Economy: Who Will Tie it All Together?  
Keynote Address  
**Dr. Eric Brewer**  
Co-Founder and Chief Scientist, Inktomi



### Super Session

Media on the Net - From Small Streams to a Sea of Revenue  
Keynote Address  
**Lou Dobbs**  
Chairman and CEO  
epaper.com



### Super Session

Interactive Lifestyles - Personalizing the Net  
Keynote Address  
**John Gage**  
Chief Researcher  
Sun Microsystems



### OPEN TO ALL ATTENDEES!

NAB MultiMedia World  
Keynote Address  
**Jeff Mallett**  
President, Yahoo



### Super Session

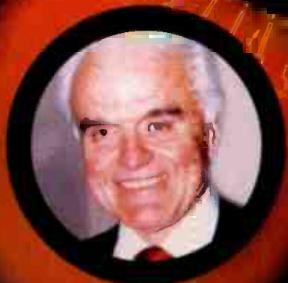
Broadband - The Dawning of a New Era in Communications  
Keynote Address  
**John Sidgmore**  
Vice Chairman  
Worldcom/UUNET



FCC Chairman's Breakfast  
**The Honorable Michael Powell**  
Chairman, FCC



All-Industry Opening Ceremony  
State of the Industry Address  
**Eddie Fritts**  
President and CEO  
National Association of Broadcasters



All-Industry Opening Ceremony  
Keynote Address  
**Jack Valenti**  
President  
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Multimedia and Web professionals will gain valuable insight from Jeff Mallett of Yahoo, at the NAB MultiMedia World Keynote Address - open to all attendees. Also of special interest is the **Digital Video Production Workshop**. Separate registration required. Co-produced by NAB and CMP DV Media Group.

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

HGTV and Food Network, as host, *Home Workshop With Katie Brown*, *The Look* and Food Network specials.

**Scott Barton**, director, national accounts, On Command, Denver, named director, subscriptions, video-on-demand, Starz Encore group, Englewood, Calif.

**Amy Kennedy**, promotion coordinator, The Inspiration Networks, Charlotte, N.C., promoted to affiliate marketing manager.

**Barte Shadlow**, free-lance landscape artist and actor, joins Banyan Productions and HGTV as host, *Renovations*.

**Journalism**

Appointments at CNN: **Bruce Perlmutter**, executive producer, *NewsStand*, CNN, New York, becomes executive producer, *The Point*, *Greta Van Susteren*, CNN; **Gail O'Neill**, film and entertainment contributor, *The Early Show*, CBS, New York, joins CNN, Atlanta, as correspondent, *CNN Travel Now*.

**Forrest Carr**, news director,

KGUN(TV) Tucson, Ariz., becomes WFLA-TV Tampa, Fla., news director.

**Staci Feger-Childers**, news director, WKBW-TV Buffalo, N.Y., joins WMAR-TV Baltimore as news director.

**Holly Green**, senior producer, Centerseat, New York, joins ABC News, New York, as editorial producer, newsmagazines.

**Nicole Livas**, co-anchor/reporter, WJAR(TV) Providence, R.I., joins WVBT(TV) Virginia Beach, Va., as co-anchor.

**Frank Mallicoat**, sports director/sports anchor, WLIV-TV Cambridge, Mass., adds temporary co-anchor to his duties.

**Steve Villanueva**, weekend meteorologist, KCOY-TV Santa Maria, Calif., joins KCPQ(TV) Tacoma, Wash., as weekend meteorologist.

**Mark Ockerbloom**, weekend sports anchor, KOCO-TV, Oklahoma City, joins New England Cable News, Boston, as primary sports anchor.

**Radio**

**George Campbell**, VP, new media, NBG Radio Network,

### Obituaries

**Stan Margulies**, highly esteemed TV producer, died in Los Angeles at 80 on Feb. 27.

The first of his three Emmys was for the miniseries *Roots* in 1977. His second, in 1979, was for *Roots: The Next Generation*. His third, in 1991, was for *Separate But Equal*, in which Sidney Poitier portrayed Supreme Court Justice Thurgood Marshall. *Roots* and *The Thorn Birds*, which he also produced, were two of the most-watched miniseries in television history. Margulies also produced films.

---

**Ralf D. Bode**, famed cinematographer, died in Santa Monica, Calif., Feb. 27, at 59. The cause was lung cancer.

While best-known for the sequences around the Philadelphia Museum of Art for *Rocky* and the frenetic dance scenes in *Saturday Night Fever*, he made serious contributions to television. His work includes *A Streetcar Named Desire*, starring Jessica Lange; *Gypsy*, starring Bette Midler; and *Annie*, for which he was nominated for an Emmy. An award is named for him at the Los Angeles Film School.

His survivors include Christine, his wife; sons Paul and Max; and a brother, Peer.

—Beatrice Williams-Rude

Portland, Ore., named president, NBG Solutions.

**Ben McWhorter**, marketing manager, Arbitron Radio Station Services, Birmingham, Ala., joins WRRS(FM) Birmingham, as general sales manager.

**Jim Donohue**, national sales manager, Entercom, Sacramento, Calif., named director, national sales.

—Compiled by P. Llanor Alleyne  
(212) 337-7141  
palleyne@cabners.com



Scott Barton



Amy Kennedy



Staci Feger-Childers



Nicole Livas



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

# Technology takes time

*Experience teaches Beck that patience with interactive TV will pay off*

**T**he development of new media seems to be driven by a faster-is-better mentality, but Caroline Beck, CEO of Mixed Signals Technology, makes clear that technology can go only so fast. More important, she believes, is that a little patience may not be a bad thing.

"The speed with which the financial markets responded was faster than any technology could develop over that same period of time," says Beck.

"Look at what happened to valuations of companies in the public market in the past three to four years," she adds. "They had wild growth that could never be sustained by any technology path because it can't go that fast."

Beck, who, as an account executive at Chiat/Day, was involved with Apple's launch of the Macintosh in 1984, believes in market-development time lines that seem to be realistic, as opposed to investors' demands on new companies.

"I joined Mixed Signals because I felt it was important to see this interactive television technology through to completion," she explains. "Any technology paradigm takes about 15 years to come to fruition. And if I consider that this started in 1990, it's about another five years before this really hits."

Beck's patient approach may seem a bit outdated. It also might be a buzz killer for the execs, venture capitalists and analysts who only a year ago were proclaiming that those who didn't move fast should get out of the way because money was going to be made.

"Launching the Macintosh was a very heady and exciting experience," she recalls. "We

were breaking new ground, and we really believed that we were a part of a significant change to how people would do things on a daily basis and that we were going to change the world. And frankly, I think that was true.

"I wanted to work in technologies that were going to make people's lives better," she adds, "and I wanted to do it on a mass scale. I believed that going through the category of entertainment was going to do that."

In 1991, Beck went to Starsight Telecast, where she worked on an interactive program guide that was later purchased by Gemstar and became part of the company's core patent portfolio.

She also was able to reach



**Caroline Beck**  
CEO, Mixed Signals

**B. Detroit, Mich.; B.A., art history, University of Michigan, 1977; account executive, Chiat/Day, 1984-86; Microsoft, 1986-89; independent consultant, 1989-91; senior vice president, marketing, Starsight Telecast, 1991-94; executive vice president and COO, Sony Pictures Entertainment's Game Show Network, 1995-98; COO, Intertainer, 1998-2000; current position since February; single.**

the consumer through a device nearly every household today holds dear: the remote control.

"That was the first time that interactivity and television were said in the same breath," she explains.

The interactive programming guide led to another important realization: "For the most part, I don't think consumers want to know there is a PC inside their TV or any com-

putational functions. They just want to pick up the remote and make it work."

Beck then went to Paris for a year, contemplating early retirement, but realized that, if she left the industry before interactive television happened, it would be like leaving the table in the middle of dinner.

So she returned to the U.S. and joined Sony's Game Show Network as COO. "It was the first and only network in the U.S. that had any amount of interactive programming," she notes. "It was crude interactive programming in that the only way for a return path was through a telephone. But it was the first place you could do that."

She left the Game Show Network to join Intertainer, a company looking to leverage broadband capacity for the delivery of on-demand entertainment. At the Game Show Network, she learned the value of interactivity for game shows, and, with Mixed Signals providing the interactive elements to programs such as *Jeopardy* and *Wheel of Fortune*, her next move, to Mixed Signals, was a natural one.

"I think we're fully two-thirds of the way there," she says about developing interactive television into a truly viable business. "All of the partners and companies Mixed Signals has done work with have proved that the technology works, and now focus turns to how to make money on it."

—Ken Kerschbaumer

# Classifieds

## Television

### EXECUTIVE CAREERS



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### PUBLIC NOTICE



## PBS

Meetings of the Public Broadcasting Service Board of Directors and its committees will take place at the PBS Offices, 1320 Braddock Place, Alexandria, Virginia on March 28-29, 2001. Schedule and tentative agenda for each meeting follows:

**Membership Committee, 1:30 p.m., March 28,** common carriage, program differentiation plan, station membership issues, sublicensing, Annual Meeting and other business.

**Programming Policy Committee, 2:00 p.m., March 28,** programming assessment and evaluation, programming and communications plans and other business.

**Finance, Budget & Audit Committee, in executive session, 3:45 p.m., March 28,** financial report, programming assessment, budget matters, internal auditor's report and other business.

**Board of Directors, 9:00 a.m., March 29,** General Counsel's report; reports from management and board committees on DBS, cable, programming policy, finance, education, and membership; and other business.

**Nominating Committee, in executive session, 12:15 p.m., March 29,** board composition, candidates for nomination and other business.

**Compensation Committee, in executive session, 1:45 p.m., March 29,** executive compensation and other business.

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

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## Television

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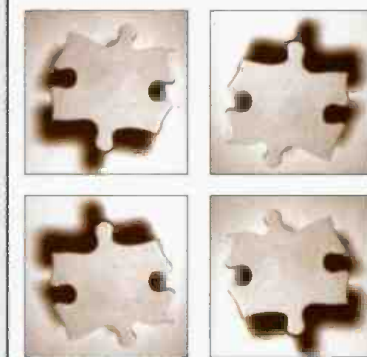
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## OPEN MIKE

## BLOWN FUSE

EDITOR: Kudos to Harry Jessell for lamenting the decline of clear limits between factual and fictitious programming and programming channels ("Fusing Fact and Fiction," March 5). Whatever happened to "standards"?

Unfortunately, no matter how noble the original concept of the History Channel and Discovery Channel may have been—and I hope they take our singling them out as a compliment to their overall excellence—it seems that all such noble aspirations eventually succumb to the temptation to seek the lower, if not lowest, common denomi-

nator, a.k.a. the mass audience. On television, and cable, art almost always runs second to business. The bottom line is that, apart from the bottom line, nothing is sacred!

—Roy R. Russo,  
Managing Partner, Cohn  
and Marks, Washington D.C.

## VIVA, NTSC

EDITOR: ("Hit the showers," Jessell's column, Feb. 19) The recent flawed 8-VSB/COFDM test has left ATSC and AMS<sup>™</sup> with tarnish on their halos. Their only way out is for more and better testing. Hey, guys, almost no home TVs have pre-amps.

I must admit that there is one very big reason to stay with 8-VSB: It will assure that NTSC remains the dominant home delivery system of programming for another 47 years.

—Walt Bundy, Mount Laurel, N.J.

## FREBERG'S SOLUTION

EDITOR: I enjoyed P.J. Bednarski's tongue-in-cheek column "Telling it like it might be" (Feb. 12), which is based on what the world would be like if television signed off for one day a week.

To set the record straight, Stan Freberg, the comic genius who years ago provided the copy for Chun King commercials, offered a solution to the same problem addressed by Mr. Bednarski with *The Freberg Part-time Television Plan: A Startling, but Perfectly Reasonable, Proposal for the De-escalation of Television in a Free Society, Mass Media-wise*.

His proposal? Limit television to three days a week: Monday, Wednesday and Friday. On Tuesday, the television screen would say "READ"; on Thursday: "TALK"; on Saturday: "UNSUPERVISED ACTIVITY"; and on Sunday: nothing.

—Erwin G. Krasnow,

Esq., Verner Lipfert

Bernhard McPherson & Hand, Washington



## DEATH ROW, LIVE

EDITOR: ("Out of Sight", Feb. 5) It has been almost 40 years since the federal government has executed a person. In those 40 years, many things have changed with regards to communications technology, community values and expectations of viewers.

We all witnessed the horror of the act that Timothy McVeigh inflicted on the people of Oklahoma City and the nation. His actions constitute the most deadly act of terrorism ever in our country. We will never forget the images and the emotions from that day. For these crimes, Mr. McVeigh is scheduled to be put to death on May 16, 2001.

This letter is one that speaks to a point I believe needs to be addressed: television coverage of the execution. My personal belief is, watching someone die is not an event I would want to view. However, I believe the time is now for all those impacted by this deplorable event to decide for themselves.

We cover horrific crimes, atrocities of all types, accidents and other matters involving the death of citizens. The Supreme Court of the United States has ruled that executions are not cruel and unusual punishments. They represent the final legal step in a court-ordered process. Our citizens have access to the process along the entire path, save this one.

The media deserves the ability to make the decision on whether to carry such an event. Again, the mere thought might be repugnant to many, myself included. But the right of a free people to make a decision on whether to view an event, especially one such as this, should be one they are allowed.

—Mike Smith, director, news and production,  
WCTV(tv) Thomasville, Ga.

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# Editorials

COMMITTED TO THE FIRST AMENDMENT

## Washington, we have a problem

The big buzz in Washington last week was the sound of 600-plus network affiliates hitting the panic button. NASA (not the space agency, but the National Affiliated Stations Alliance), representing affiliates of the Big Three networks and some from Fox, who have seen their compensation wither and their leverage in affiliation renegotiations shrink, asked the FCC last week to intervene to fix a network/affiliate relationship that it says is broken.

"The networks have recently acquired so much power," said NASA, "that they have disrupted the historic network-affiliate equilibrium, violated the [Communications] Act and contravened commission rules and policies."

The petition to the FCC pulled out all the stops: Voter News Service foul-ups, debate coverage versus baseball, repurposing of programming, cracking down on pre-emptions, threats to yank affiliations. They even included a letter from Jerry Lewis and the Muscular Dystrophy Association suggesting that more powerful networks would run roughshod over Jerry's Kids.

What, no accusations of dog-kicking?

Clearly, some affiliates feel their hands are tied and their backs are against the wall, and some perhaps feel that they are blindfolded and on their last cigarette. They may have a point.

The networks have certainly been playing hardball in affiliation negotiations. Whether that hardball has come down within or outside the lines is a call the FCC is apparently empowered to make. In that sense, the stations are within their rights to ask the FCC for a ruling. But be careful what you wish for. Inviting the FCC to rethink its deregulation of the industry is like inviting the fox into the chicken coop.

You usually don't get to choose the victims. Such a call for reregulation or stricter enforcement could snowball. The networks might choose to move their programming to cable, as some have threatened, and give local stations more localism and independence than they were bargaining for.

NASA says that it is trying to preserve localism and local control and that the alternative is to become common carriers of the network signal. Rather than asking for more regulation of the industry, however, they should be working for less in the area of newspaper/broadcast cross-ownership.

That would help many station groups to bulk up in those local markets that they are so eager to serve.

While we would like to believe that localism is the driving force behind broadcasters' desire to have everything their way, from the digital conversion to must-carry to you-name-it, it is just possible that NASA's laundry list of injustices is a stalking horse.

The real effort may be to paint the networks as mega-merged monoliths and thus prevent a Republican-controlled Washington from lifting the cap on station ownership. The timing of the petition—not long after the courts threw out the cable caps and called into question the broadcast ownership limits—may be more than coincidence. That timing could also have to do with the installation of a new FCC chairman disinclined to keep such caps on the books after they have outlived their usefulness.

It will take a while to sort out just what happened last week, but it's hard not to see it as a declaration of war. Maybe Fox and NBC shouldn't have canceled those affiliate meetings after all.

## BROADCASTING CABLE

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Harry A. Jessell/EDITOR IN CHIEF/212-337-6964

P.J. Bednarski/EDITOR/212-337-6965

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TV Networks, Cable and the Digital Future

MODERATOR

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Gerald Levin- CEO, AOL Time Warner
Stephen Case- Chairman of the Board, AOL Time Warner
Interviewed by: Sir David Frost

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Michael Powell- Chairman, Federal Communications Commission

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PANEL DISCUSSION

The Internet One Year After the Crash

MODERATOR

Tom Brokaw- Anchor and Managing Editor, NBC Nightly News

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Barry Schuler- Chairman and CEO, America Online, Inc.
Jeff Taylor- CEO, TMP Worldwide (Parent Company of Monster.com)

INTERVIEW

Mel Talks to Wall Street

Mel Karmazin - President and COO, Viacom Inc.

PANEL DISCUSSION

Programming the Media: The Old and New

MODERATOR

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