BENEDEK: CHAPTER 11
Financial woes catch up with small-market TV-station group
» PAGE 6

FINALLY, ABC GETS SOME GOOD NEWS
After bad press over Nightline, Koppel's show and ABC's 9/11 coverage receive Peabody Award applause
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IN RADIO, HOW BIG IS TOO BIG?
An FCC administrative law judge is poised to decide how radio consolidation should work in smaller markets
» PAGE 30

ROAD TO NAB NEWSROOM OPERATION
The move toward digital is in full swing but filled with challenges, pitfalls and opportunities
» PAGE 32
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**Top of the Week April 1, 2002**

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**PROGRAMMING**

**Blind ambition**

FCC-mandated video descriptions for the blind start this week on some broadcast and cable networks, even though industry trade groups are challenging the rule. Fox, Lifetime and USA will offer descriptors on some shows via secondary audio channels. Among the first might be Lifetime’s *Death in Small Doses* and *Captive*, airing this week. Fox has *Bernie Mac*, *Boston Public*, *Malcolm in the Middle*, *The Simpsons* and *Magic School Bus*. USA has descriptions ready for *Replicant* (April 2), *Waterworld* (April 9) and *Arlington Road* (April 28). Most TV stations and large cable systems must show 50 hours of programming with descriptions per quarter. —B.M.

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**TECHNOLOGY**

You’ve Got (Cool) Mail...

Thomson Multimedia Broadcast Solutions is sending postcards (electronic and paper) touting the company’s hottest introduction at the NAB show next week. Known as the Viper FilmStream camera, it can best be described as a true electronic version of a film camera, bringing film-like qualities like “grain” to the world of pixels. Along with eliminating the need to spend money on film stock, the camera permits color correction and other adjustments (like filters) in post-production.—K.K.

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**HISTORY LESSON**

Senate Minority Leader Trent Lott (R-Miss.) says he’ll still block the nomination of Jonathan Adelstein to the FCC, should the White House ever send the name up to the Senate. But in some FCC cases, it’s an empty threat. Despite noise from Sen. Conrad Burns (R-Mont.), Bill Kennard was eventually confirmed as chairman in 1997. On the other hand, President Clinton nominated then-FCC Common Carrier Bureau Chief Regina Keeney, but the GOP Senate let it expire. In the late 1980s, Senate Commerce Committee Chairman Fritz Hollings (D-S.C.) refused to hold hearings for attorney Susan Wing and FCC staffer Brad Holmes. And then there was FCC Commissioner Stephen Sharp, who managed to get confirmed in the early 1980s but lost his seat when Congress cut the number from seven to five.—P.A.

---

**BUSINESS**

**Full disclosure?**

The Adelphia mystery is solved, in an Enron-esque sort of way. For years, the family of Chairman John Rigas has bought stock in Adelphia, jumping on every common stock or debt issue. That kept new investors from diluting the family’s control. The Rigases’ holding company, Highland, borrowed hundreds of millions of dollars to finance the buying, but the Rigases would never detail how they financed it. The surprise answer is that Adelphia is on the hook for Highland’s borrowings, to the tune of $2.3 billion. That’s news to stockholders, who had thought its debt was only $13.3 billion but are learning it’s really $15.6 billion. Adelphia’s stock dropped 20%. “They need to fully disclose the assets backing the debt,” says Merrill Lynch’s Oren Cohen. “We need to know.” —J.H.

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**EDUCATING DATA**

PBS and Triveni Digital have been working on datacasting experiments, and the relationship is about to get cozier. At NAB, Triveni Digital will be given “preferred provider status” by PBS for products related to educational datacasting. That means PBS stations will likely turn to Triveni as they build DTV stations and offer digital services. Sixty-six stations are already on the air in digital. Included in the deal is Triveni Digital’s ATSC StreamBridge for the ingest and processing of ATSC signals by headends.—K.K.
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First Place
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Of A Major News Event:
“Attack On America”
TOP OF THE WEEK

Benedek couldn't hang on

Parent files Chapter 11; Gray Communications nears $500M deal to buy it

By Steve McClellan and Dan Trigoboff

It has been a wild ride for Benedek Broadcasting. First, just as the economy shows signs of reviving, Benedek's parent company filed for bankruptcy protection after protracted negotiations with bondholders failed to come up with a plan to pay overdue interest payments on more than $154 million in bonds.

And then, last week, word surfaced that the company was close to a deal to sell out to another mid-size broadcaster—believed to be Gray Communications Systems—for a price estimated to be around $500 million.

At press time last Thursday, a deal had not been signed. Although it was expected to close by week's end, sources warned that there was always the possibility of a last-minute collapse in negotiations.

If the deal does go through, it would combine Benedek's 23 medium- and small-market affiliates covering 3% to 4% of U.S. homes with Gray's 13 NBC and CBS affiliates covering roughly 2.5% of the country. (Benedek's largest station is KAKE-TV Wichita, Kan., the nation's No. 65 market.)

Gray Chief Financial Officer Jim Ryan refused to comment, citing company policy. Benedek President Jim Yager couldn't be reached for comment on the sale talks (although, earlier, he discussed the bankruptcy). Neither could Merrill Lynch, the Wall Street firm advising Benedek about possible strategies. The broadcaster's attorney, Paul Goodman, would say only, "We are looking at all of our strategic alternatives."

Although there are some signs that an economic recovery may not be far away, it has not come quickly enough for Stations Holding Inc.—the parent company for Benedek Broadcasting—which filed for protection under Chapter 11 of the U.S. Bankruptcy Code on March 22.

Like most broadcasters, Benedek struggled for much of 2001, with dramatically reduced revenues and profits. According to SEC filings, through the first three quarters of last year, revenue was down about 8%, to $102.6 million, and operating income plunged more than 90%, from roughly $79 million to $5 million, although a good chunk of the previous-year profits had been due to the sale of stations, according to Yager.

Yager stressed that the Chapter 11 filing does not affect the day-to-day operations of the station group. In fact, some stations assured employees that their jobs were safe. "It's business as usual," Yager said last week. "The operating company is not in Chapter 11 so it's not like we need a judge to approve every time we pay a bill."

The filing was triggered by the parent company's failure to pay interest on more than $154 million in bonds issued in 1996. The interest payment was due last November, but, with ad sales so bad, the company couldn't generate the revenue to pay it. Since then, it has been negotiating with bondholders, according to Goodman, an attorney with New York firm Shack, Siegel, Katz, Flaherty and Goodman.

The filing comes just as Benedek sees signs of a recovery. It expects to show a first-quarter cash-flow gain of about 25%, Goodman says.

But, like most broadcasters, Benedek has been under financial pressure for the past 18 months. By mid 2001, declining revenues and profits put the company in technical default on its credit facility.

Benedek is owned principally by Richard Benedek, who is based in New York. Yager oversees daily operations from suburban Chicago. If the sale does go through as expected, sources say, Yager and other top operating managers are expected to stay with the company, at least for the near term. Sources suggest that Benedek would move on after completion of the sale. He did not return a call seeking comment.

Goodman said that Benedek's reorganization process under Chapter 11 could take four to six months and that he believes "all the creditors will get all the money they are owed." Others said that, if the deal with Gray goes through, the reorganization would be expedited.
A glimmer of prosperity ahead

At TVB confab, something unusual: Optimism about the advertising climate

By Steve McClellan

What's this? Optimism about the economy? Signs are still mixed, but people in the TV business are starting to get the sense that a recovery may be near. Just how near is uncertain, but, at a New York confab last week, the consensus was that the ad recession might be history a little before the year is over.

Clearly, business people are groping for answers about the economy in all sectors, a fact that helps explain the overflow attendance at last week's Television Bureau of Advertising Conference. For the first time, TVB held its annual gathering in New York in conjunction with the New York Auto Show, a shrewd pairing because car advertising accounts for one-third of all television ad spending.

This year's attendance reached 717, nearly quadruple the number at last year's TVB conference in Las Vegas during the National Association of Broadcasters conference. Last week's event dovetailed with NBC's annual affiliate meeting. And a handful of station operators held group-wide sales meetings around the event.

But, even if there was a little bullish talk, no one expects the ad biz to roar back to pre-2001 growth levels, at least not this year. Sanford Bernstein media analyst Tom Wolzien expects just 1% overall growth for TV this year, with the networks up perhaps 3%, cable down 2% and local TV stations roughly flat.

Local TV sales remain very tough in many markets. New York station sources say it's a real dogfight, with prices slashed left and right. And buyers continue making deals at the very last minute.

Even the everoptimistic Mel Karmazin, president and chief operating officer of Viacom, speaking at one TVB panel confided that some CBS stations still had some time available in the NCAA Basketball Tournament less than a week before the Final Four championship game.

Wolzien predicts that even 2003 and 2004 will likely be "transition years," showing growth but not a lot of it. "It will take a couple years to get back to normal trend-line growth."

Karmazin didn't offer specific projections for this year or beyond, but he did say that, if Wolzien's numbers are accurate, "I know we are going to grow more than that, which means some one else will grow less."

One definite plus: National spot, which got hammered pretty much all of last year, will show positive growth in the first quarter. Bear Stearns broadcasting analyst Victor Miller estimates growth at 4% to 10%.

As for this year's upfront market, Karmazin suggested that CBS and UPN would refuse to accept price cuts again this year— if the networks have the same confidence in their new schedules that they had last year.

Last year, only CBS's "best" customers got rate cuts, the network has said. "One thing we learned this year is that the money comes in the upfront or in scatter," said Karmazin, noting that CBS is getting "double-digit increases" in the second-quarter scatter market compared with upfront pricing.

As long as he has confidence in the net-
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There will be an informational meeting of the Spectrum Clearing Alliance during the NAB Convention in Las Vegas.

It would be a benefit for any broadcaster in the Channel 59-69 band to attend and learn more about the auction, the actions of the FCC, and the opportunities for broadcasters.

TOP OF THE WEEK

works’ programming lineups, he said, “it would seem silly to do deals” at discounted rates in the upfront.

Irwin Gottlieb, chairman of MindShare Worldwide, the big New York-based media buyer, counter that, by definition, scatter prices should be higher than the upfront. “Otherwise,” he reasoned, “the integrity of the entire process is destroyed. The issue is whether the upfront pricing is too high.”

But commenting on TV advertising generally, he said he is “cautiously optimistic.” There’s typically a lag between an economic recovery and the time it takes for advertisers to resume normal spending levels. But “TV will probably do reasonably well relative to all other media categories” this year.

Attendees also heard from several auto marketing executives last week, including Michael Browner, executive director, media and marketing operations for General Motors, whose message was blunt: Don’t expect GM to pay ad-rate hikes going forward. With ongoing audience fragmenta-

tion, he said, broadcast ratings will continue to erode. “It’s especially critical that cost controls be implemented for both of us. It’s not reasonable or possible for our costs to continue to rise.”

GM wasn’t the only one delivering that message. Said Steve Wilhite, vice president, marketing, Nissan North America, “We can’t pass higher costs on to the consumer.”

Separately, the TVB luncheon (co-sponsored by Broadcasting & Cable) honoring Dennis Swanson, president and general manager, WNBC-TV New York, sold out way in advance of last week’s conference. Swanson received Broadcasting & Cable’s first annual Broadcaster of the Year Award, in recognition of his 40-year career as a local broadcaster and network executive.

“We have an obligation to serve the public,” he said of broadcasters. “Some forget that, but it shouldn’t be forgotten. You must create a bond with the people you’re serving.”

The NBC affiliate meeting, which occurred a day before NBC icon Milton Berle passed away, was apparently devoid of news but full of goodwill. Affiliates did elect a new chairman: Roger Ogden, who runs Gannett’s Denver station and is the former head of NBC’s international operations. “It was largely a celebration” he said of the meeting — both of the network’s accomplishments in February and of the upcoming 75th anniversary events planned for May.
Is the FCC letter in the mail?

Commission starts asking questions of stations lagging on DTV conversion

By Bill McConnell

For at least a dozen or so station groups, the FCC's E-Z waiver for delaying digital television might not be so easy after all. Last week, the FCC asked some owners seeking permission to postpone their May 1 deadline for inaugurating DTV service to explain themselves.

Operators documenting DTV equipment snafus, legal and zoning fights, lack of financing, and natural disasters are permitted up to two six-month extensions. In all, 863 of the country's 1,300 full-power commercial operators have asked for a reprieve, using a simplified request form the FCC created last year. Most are seeking only a couple months' deferment due to equipment and construction-crew shortages.

The FCC letters went to owners of 22 small-market stations already suffering from generally thin margins before the recession compounded their troubles. More inquiries are likely to be issued to others this week.

Most of the licensees were asked to provide detailed information about their precarious finances, the cost of the digital systems they plan to install, affidavits from lenders, and when they predict being able to offer DTV. “Unfortunately, I don’t think we’ll have any trouble convincing the FCC,” said Arthur Goodkind, lawyer for Red River Broadcast Co., which asked to delay the May 1 deadline at four stations: KDLT-TV Sioux Falls, S.D.; KDLV-TV Mitchell, S.D.; KVRR(TV) Fargo, N.D.; and KQDS-TV Duluth, Minn.

International Broadcasting, which “did not expect to be the party constructing digital facilities” must explain why a sale of WTCV-TV and WVOZ-TV Ponce, P.R. to Esperanza Television has not yet been completed.


A bow to tech leaders

Broadcasting & Cable will give its annual Technology Leadership Awards at a reception to be held April 8 during the National Association of Broadcasters show in Las Vegas. This year’s honorees:

- Tim Thorsteinson, recently appointed CEO of the Grass Valley Group business unit of Thomson Broadcast solutions, has helped make GVG an example of how technology companies will be run in the age of digital.
- Dave Mazza, NBC Olympics vice president, engineering, since 1996 has been spearheading the technical side of NBC's coverage of the Olympics in Atlanta, Sydney and Salt Lake City.
- Kelly Alford, Ackerley Media Group vice president of engineering, pioneered the centralcasting movement, pushing the limits of technology to meet the demands of operational costs.
- Bob Zitter, HBO senior vice president, technology operations, has made sure HBO's premium service has a premium technical quality, leading the charge with multiplexing, HDTV and HBO On Demand.

The four Technology Leadership Award winners will be profiled in Broadcasting & Cable’s special NAB midweek issue, which will be published April 10.
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NATIONAL RATINGS CHANGE
01-02 vs. 00-01

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Source: NSS/CAA Ratings, 00-01 Season through May 26, 01-02 Season through March 1, 02.
Peabody: Morale boost for ABC

After Koppel flap, Nightline is lauded, as is network's 9/11 coverage

By Dan Trigoboff

It was ABC's coverage of the Sept. 11 attacks and their immediate aftermath that stood out from among many TV news networks in the eyes of Peabody Award judges. On radio, National Public Radio was the big winner, cited for 9/11 coverage "that enabled audiences to mourn and reflect on those unsettled days."

Although the Peabody's selection of one particular TV network's coverage may have surprised and pleased some while disappointing others, it was no surprise that 9/11 coverage was part of five different awards. CNN won an award for its Beneath the Veil and Unholy War; NBC, for its Third Watch telling emergency workers' stories. And an award was presented to all the broadcast and that cable networks participated in America: A Tribute to Heroes.

The recently embattled ABC News division got another boost when Peabody judges honored Nightline. The program almost lost its spot in the ABC lineup to David Letterman's near-defection from CBS. ABC News President David Westin said the program, which recently passed 22 years on the air, "could receive no finer anniversary present."

Said Peabody Director Horace Newcomb, "The board members were aware of the controversies. The board is always conscious of the larger world of television and concerned with the general. The significance of this award is pretty much what people want to read into it."

The full list of winners can be found at http://www.peabody.uga.edu/news/61th winners.html. Among them:

- Overall excellence, WGBH-TV Boston: 60 Minutes II: Memories of a Massacre, CBS News; Anne Frank, Touchstone Television, ABC; American Masters: F. Scott Fitzgerald: Winter Dreams, WNET-TV New York, PBS; Jazz Profiles, NPR; The

Bernie Mac Show; Regency Television, 20th Century Fox; Little Bill, Nickelodeon; Blue's Clues, Nickelodeon; The Climb: Playing on the Edge, Peter Rosen Productions Inc., KERA-TV Dallas; Exxon-Mobil Masterpiece Theatre: Talking Heads II: Miss Fozzard Finds Her Feet; BBC, PBS; The Life and Times of Hank Greenberg, Cinemax; Conspiracy, HBO; BBC; Visions of Vine Street, WCPO-TV Cincinnati; Band of Brothers, HBO; Wit, HBO; Hell in the Pacific, The Learning Channel; and The First Year, Teachers Documentary Project, PBS.

Mourning Miltie

Legendary television comic Milton Berle, 93, died on March 27. The famed host of NBC's Texaco Star Theater in television's infancy helped popularize the medium itself and inspired millions to buy television sets to watch his show. Here's how he was eulogized by some who knew him:

"NBC's first TV superstar, Milton Berle did more than any other individual to bring television to the nation. In the early years, there were Tuesday nights when virtually every television set in the country was tuned in to see 'Mr. Television.'"

—Bob Wright, NBC Chairman and CEO

"Whatever you see on television, Milton did it first. We used to have a lot of variety shows on television. No one knew what they were doing, no one knew how to do it. He showed them how to do it."

—Buddy Hackett, Los Angeles Times

"From the first days of my career, he was one of my comedic heroes. He was always a great mentor. His style of comedy will never be replaced."

—Don Rickles, from press statement published in the Los Angeles Times

"There was always the sense, while Milton Berle was alive, that television was still a new invention and we were living television history. Now that Milton Berle is gone, one realizes that television is the kind of thing you're going to put in museums and talk about as history. He is that seminal a figure. One critic once said he was the fuse that lit the bomb of television, and I think that was not hyperbole."

—Robert J. Thompson, founder, Center for the Study of Popular Television at Syracuse University, Baltimore Sun

"What a remarkable man, what a remarkable career. Eighty-eight years in show business, a brilliant comedian, an accomplished actor, a lifelong friend. We are among the select few who could call him 'kid.'"

—Bob and Dolores Hope, in a written statement, New York Daily News

"Milton Berle had a great influence on most of the comedians today, including me. He was a true original."

—Johnny Carson, The Sacramento Bee

Compiled by P. Llanor Alleyne
CURIOUSLY ENOUGH, HE'S LANDED IN AN AD ABOUT COPYRIGHT LAW.

The miniature alien you see above is the proud possession of Allee Willis, vintage toy enthusiast. So if you're in the broadcast or cable industry, why should you want to read about an individual like Allee Willis, let alone her tin collectibles? Because Allee is a major supplier of content to your business: she's a songwriter.

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Now, we have no doubt you'd enjoy doing business with someone as creative as Allee. The question is: do you really have the time to do business with 300,000 different Allees?
**CABLEVISION’S TRICKY ‘OFFER’ TO YES**

Cablevision Systems’ fight with the New York Yankees is going extra innings after the team’s new regional sports network rejected the operator’s difficult offer to carry the channel.

The Yankees are slated to open the season this week on the team’s new Yankees Entertainment & Sports network but without Cablevision’s 3 million subscribers in the market. Cablevision, whose MSG Network lost Yankees rights when the team decided to go it alone, has so far refused carry the channel on terms agreed to by other MSOs in the market.

Last week, Cablevision attempted to come off as the nice guy by offering to make YES a pay channel and let the network keep 100% of the subscription revenue. But YES, not Cablevision, would set the retail price.

Cablevision President James Dolan said he wants to give all his customers access to New York Yankees games but doesn’t want to force all his basic-cable customers to pay YES’s high $2-per-month license fee. Dolan called the offer “extraordinary and unprecedented.”

YES CEO Leo Hindery rejected the offer, saying he wanted carriage as a basic channel on terms conventional for virtually all other networks. He said YES wants to be “carried by Cablevision in the same manner agreed to by every other multichannel operator in the market and in the same manner with which the Yankees have been carried throughout the Greater New York area for more than a decade.”

**NEWS FROM ALL OVER**

Just because PBS is tired of having old guys do old shows doesn’t mean that cable nets—such as CNBC and CNN—feel the same way. Both cable news networks are in talks with 69-year-old Louis Rukeyser after Maryland Public Television threw him off the helm of his 32-year-old program, Wall Street Week With Louis Rukeyser. MPT says it decided to can Rukeyser based on viewer input.

MPT plans a new program hosted by Fortune Editorial Director Geoffrey Colvin, 48, and a woman who has yet to be selected. MPT had intended to have Rukeyser stay atop his program until June 30, the date his contract expires. But, after an on-air tirade against MPT’s management on Friday, March 22, MPT pulled the plug prematurely.

Tribune Entertainment Co. said it’s a firm go for its September launch of Beyond With James Van Praagh, its new weekday half-hour strip featuring the famed psychic. It’s cleared in 85 markets (27 of the top 30), representing 75% of the nation’s eyeballs. CBS presents a four-hour miniseries on Van Praagh for its May sweeps...

Viacom won’t have to honor a standing FCC order to sell enough stations to get below the 35% cap on TV-household reach, the agency said, because the fate of the cap was cast in doubt in February when a federal appeals court ordered the FCC to justify the rule or scrap it. The stay will be in effect for 12 months after the FCC issues new rules. Viacom’s household reach stands at 41%....

Discovery Kids will re-edit its popular Walking With Dinosaurs and sequel Walking With Prehistoric Beasts for kids as part of its Saturday-morning programming deal with NBC, which starts Oct. 5. All meet the FCC requirements for children’s educational television. Also part of the package is Croc Files and a kids version of TLC’s Junkyard Dogs....

XM Satellite and Sirius Satellite Radio added another car manufacturer to their lists, with Infiniti and Nissan offering a choice of the two providers in some 2003 models. Infiniti will offer XM and Sirius in the Q45, G35 and I35; Nissan will offer them in Pathfinder and Murano SUVs. Also last week, both radio companies announced similar deals with Volkswagen and Audi....

News Corp.’s Andrew Setos was named president of engineering for the company, giving him authority over all of Fox’s engineering divisions. Previously, he was senior vice president of broadcast operations and engineering for Fox Television and executive vice president of the News Technology Group. Setos joined Fox in 1988....

Fortune columnist Stanley Bing, whom many of us know by his real name (Gil Schwartz) and his day job (CBS executive vice president, communications) would like all of you to buy his latest book Throwing the Elephant: Zen and the Art of Managing Up, a wickedly accurate guide to "managing" your boss (that’s the elephant). Bing’s favorite chapter: “Giving Credit to the Elephant for Work It Did Not Do.”

Tribune Entertainment Co. said it’s a firm go for its September launch of Beyond With James Van Praagh, its new weekday half-hour strip featuring the famed psychic. It’s cleared in 85 markets (27 of the top 30), representing 75% of the nation’s eyeballs. CBS presents a four-hour miniseries on Van Praagh for its May sweeps....
Shapiro's new Family ties

ABC Daytime chief takes over at the network’s new cable channel

By Allison Romano

Just three weeks before she'll have to make its inaugural upfront pitch, Walt Disney Co. named ABC Daytime President Angela Shapiro head of ABC Family. Before schmoozing with media buyers and the press on April 30 in New York, she's going to have to move quickly to set the schedule for the channel ABC bought from Fox.

She says balancing the programming mix, from kids shows to repurposed ABC series like Alias, will be her biggest challenge. “When you say ‘family channel,’ the concept is quite broad to address ages and tastes in a family,” said Shapiro, who will continue to oversee ABC Daytime until a successor is found.

She is not responsible for ABC Family’s children’s programming; ABC Cable President Anne Sweeney will oversee that.

Shapiro is credited with turning around ABC’s daytime block. Disney ponied up $5.2 billion last fall to buy the former Fox Family channel from News Corp. and Saban Entertainment as a cable outlet to repurpose new series and older shows, like ABC’s popular but defunct TGIF family block. ABC’s Whose Line Is It Anyway? and America’s Funniest Home Videos arrived on Family in January.

But Shapiro cautioned that not every ABC network series is right for Family. “You have to look at the shows themselves and how they fit into entire schedule.”

ABC's hyped new legal drama The Court could wind up on ABC Family, although Shapiro said there are no plans yet.

There have already been some hard bumps as Disney took Family over. In January, 300 former Fox Family staffers were axed, mostly from administration and back-office positions. The channel is still locked in a carriage battle with EchoStar Communications. The DBS company threatened to pull Family from its Dish Network, and only a restraining order kept Family from going dark. Two recent hearings have been postponed as the two sides try to negotiate out of court.

Shapiro’s appointment last Wednesday came one day after transitional chief Maureen Smith resigned. While Smith’s resignation was expected, ABC Television chief Steve Bornstein’s choice of Shapiro surprised some cable insiders. Experienced cable execs like former Hallmark CEO Margaret Loesch and, in past months, Lifetime Chairwoman Carole Black had been floated as possible candidates, although Lifetime insists that Black, leader of cable’s best-watched network, wasn’t interested.

For her part, Smith, a longtime Fox exec, said she never intended to lead the channel long-term under Disney ownership. “I made a commitment five months ago to stay through the channel’s transition, and my contribution is now complete,” she said in a statement. ■
THE 2002 BASEBALL SEASON OPENS
this week, but it won’t be business as usual when it comes to television. Baseball’s wealthiest (and arguably most successful) team—the New York Yankees—is launching its own cable sports network this season, and other teams may follow.

Most of baseball’s 30 franchises sell their TV rights to the local cable network or, less often, a broadcast station. But the Yankees, Minneapolis and Baltimore think they may be able to make more money retaining the rights and developing their own networks.

“I’m not sure it’s not more about entitlement,” said Leo Hindery, the cable veteran tapped to lead the fight to secure distribution for the Yankees Entertainment & Sports Network (YES). “They get tired of reading someone else’s annual report that says how much money he got off their rights.”

So confident are the Yankees that they can make more with the do-it-yourself approach that they spent $30 million to get out of a deal with MSG Network, a unit of Cablevision’s Rainbow Media Group. MSG had been paying the Yanks about $50 million a year for TV and radio rights.

YES is controlled by YankeeNets, the merger of the Yankees and the National Basketball Association’s New Jersey Nets. YES is ready to reach 5 million homes in the New York market, which would generate at least $120 million in annual subscriber fees and $40 million in ad revenue.

The money looks good, but the network has been having trouble persuading Cablevision to carry it. Without the MSO’s 3 million homes, YES’s subscriber-fee and advertising estimates take big hits (see page 16).

Because the Yankees no longer get hefty rights fees from an independent media outlet, Major League Baseball teams will receive nearly 5% less from selling TV and radio rights this season—$445.2 million, according to Broadcasting & Cable’s exclusive annual baseball-rights survey (see page 20).

The survey also found that the migration of baseball from broadcast to cable TV is continuing. In 2001, on average, teams telecast 50.2 of their games over broadcast TV. In 2002, the average will drop 8.4%, to 46. (The averages include only games broadcast in a team’s principal TV market.)

The regional cable networks led by Fox

Some baseball teams think they can make more money with their own cable networks; games continue to migrate from broadcast to cable

By Kim McAvoy
Sports Net continue to grab local rights. This season, Cleveland Indians games will be on only Fox Sports Net North. The Cincinnati Reds and Montreal Expos also have no over-the-air TV. Last season, WUAB(TV) Cleveland broadcast 75 games.

The Minnesota Twins are poised to start Victory Sports, although a court battle with Fox Sports Net North could put the network on hold. Fox contends that it has the option to extend its rights deal for two years. The Twins say it was up at the end of last season.

As it stands, 105 Twins games will air on Fox Sports Net North. But, if the court rules for the Twins, Victory will be on-air in 60 days, says Kevin Cattoor, Twins COO and Victory Sports president. “The reason we’re doing this is, Fox in essence has a monopoly; every time a rights deal comes up, the team is at their mercy.”

Victory has a deal with ESPN for sports news and the rights to all University of Minnesota product and the Big Ten fare that ESPN produces, says Cattoor.

Victory has not nailed down any permanent cable-carriage agreements, but the network did air 13 University of Minnesota basketball games on Charter Communications systems earlier this year.

In Baltimore, once the Orioles deal with Comcast SportsNet expires after the 2006 season, the team plans to offer its own “24/7 regional sports network,” says John Clai- borne, general manager of Orioles Television. This season, the Orioles are producing and selling 71 broadcast-TV games on WJZ-TV and WNUV(TV) Baltimore as well as 59 on WBDC(TV) Washington.

“In larger markets, the concept of doing it yourself makes sense,” Claiborne says.

Comcast SportsNet doesn’t seem worried about an Orioles move. “With five seasons remaining in our deal, we’re confident we will have a new deal that will extend our relationship,” says Sam Schroeder, executive vice president and general manager of Com- cast SportsNet Mid-Atlantic.

Fox Sports Net declined to comment on teams’ producing their own cable channels.

The Philadelphia Phillies have part

Fox still likes baseball, despite the costs

Although professional hockey and now pro basketball are largely turning into cable sports, Major League Baseball still enjoys ample broadcast coverage on Fox.

After sharing Major League Baseball’s network rights with NBC for four years, Fox paid $2.5 billion in 2000 for an exclusive six-year broadcast con- tract and national cable rights. It airs weekly afternoon games for the last 18 weeks of the season and, having prided the postseason rights away from ESPN, airs baseball’s most prized properties: the World Series and the All-Star game.

Nevertheless, in February, with four years left on the contract, Fox’s corporate parent News Corp. took a $225 million charge on its six-year, $2.3 billion contract. (News Corp. also wrote down another $684 million on Fox’s NFL and NASCAR deals).

Still, Fox is committed to carrying baseball. “You could add up three nights of national cable,” said Fox Sports President Ed Goren, “and the audience would be smaller than we get on a Saturday afternoon.”

Fox had already unloaded its cable package in Walt Disney Co.’s $5.2 billion purchase of the former Fox Family channel. ABC Family inherited regular-season and playoff games that aired on FX and Fox Family.

ABC Family is retaining post- season action but passed 52 regular-season contests to sister net ESPN. They will air Monday nights and Wednesday after- noons, giving ESPN a total 160 MLB telecasts, or five per week. ESPN airs exclusive Wednesday- night doubleheaders.

Although ESPN will produce ABC Family’s postseason coverage, the sports net won’t air any playoff games.

Even with baseball season getting under way this week, Fox won’t air its first national regular-season game until June. No matter, said former CBS Sports President Neal Pilson, because it’s the postseason games that generate big ratings and promotional opportunities: “Baseball loyalties are regional, but the postseason is a national event. That’s where baseball gets its national identity.”

—Allison Romano
### LOCAL TV AND RADIO LINEUP

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<td>6/7</td>
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Dash (-) indicates column does not apply; NA, data not available at press time. Unless noted, teams rights are sold to a broadcast station or cable network, and the 2002 rights fee is shown. If the team retains rights or is involved in a partnership, estimated 2002 revenue is shown instead of the rights fee. Depending on the team, contract status refers to a rights contract, partnership contract or a non-rights-holder contract to carry games. In most cases, broadcast-TV and radio rights holders form regional networks; the column shows the number of stations in the network. Radio stations usually carry all regular-season games.

Dash (-) indicates column does not apply; NA, data not available at press time. Unless noted, teams rights are sold to a broadcast station or cable network, and the 2002 rights fee is shown. If the team retains rights or is involved in a partnership, estimated 2002 revenue is shown instead of the rights fee. Depending on the team, contract status refers to a rights contract, partnership contract or a non-rights-holder contract to carry games. In most cases, broadcast-TV and radio rights holders form regional networks; the column shows the number of stations in the network. Radio stations usually carry all regular-season games.

**Broadcasting & Cable / 4-1-02**
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Team</th>
<th>Flagship</th>
<th># of reg. # of Contract # of 2001 est.</th>
<th>2001 est. Contract # of 2001 est.</th>
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<th>Flagship</th>
<th>Carry status revenue (millions)</th>
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<td>92</td>
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<td>1</td>
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<td>Montreal Expos</td>
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**NATIONAL LEAGUE EAST**

There are no over-the-air games slated for the 2002 season. At press time, KBS was slated to air opening game only.

MSG Networks owns MSG Network and partially owns and operates Fox Sports Net New York. MSG pays $10 million for broadcast-TV rights, sublicenses 50 games to WPBS.

There are no over-the-air games slated for the 2002 season. Fox Sports Net Ohio holds broadcast-TV, cable rights.

**NATIONAL LEAGUE CENTRAL**

Tribune owns team and WGN-AM-TV. WGN-TV buys airtime on WICU-TV. Revenue reflects simultaneous national carriage of superstation WGN.

**NATIONAL LEAGUE WEST**

Fox Sports Net Rocky Mountain holds broadcast-TV, cable rights. Fox buys airtime on KMG(TV)-TV, sells ad inventory.

Team retains six 30-second spots per game on KTVU. KTVU owner, Cox, and KNB(AM) are limited partners in team.

**Broadcasting & Cable/4-1-02 21**
Mohr Sports: The talk of ESPN

By getting away from games, the channel hopes to broaden its audience base

By Allison Romano

With reality shows the flavor of last year, it's late-night variety acts that have programmers buzzing. ABC is reeling from its failed play for David Letterman; Fox attempted to lure Conan O'Brien to its air. CBS, of course, still has Letterman, and NBC counts three shows. On cable, E! and Comedy Central (which already enjoys The Daily Show) are taking second helpings off NBC's plate.

Now ESPN is adding sports variety show Mohr Sports to its growing portfolio of original non-event programming.

Its late-night twist bows Tuesday at 10 p.m. ET hosted by actor/comedian Jay Mohr, who starred on Fox's brief but controversial Action two seasons ago. ESPN execs say he's a perfect choice for them: an experienced performer with a heavy dose of sports on his résumé. Late-night vet Robert Morton, who produced Late Show With David Letterman at both NBC and CBS, is serving as executive producer.

Mohr, well-known for a two-year stint on Saturday Night Live and his supporting role as agent Bob Sugar in Jerry Maguire, was a regular on Fox's popular NFL This Morning and filled in for acerbic Jim Rome on his syndicated radio show from time to time.

Mohr himself bills his weekly show as a cross between SportsCenter and The Chris Rock Show. He plans to open with a sports-themed monologue and, often enough, venture out for man-on-the-street skits. Like a network late-night show, he'll interview celebrity guests—from Tiger Woods to Christopher Walken—and feature musical guests.

So what is a show like that doing on stats-and-scores-heavy ESPN? "The format is very much late-night, but the content will be hardcore sports," answers ESPN Entertainment Senior Coordinating Producer Mike Antinoro.

Original shows like Mohr Sports, ESPN brass hopes, will bring in casual sports fans and more women. They also help fill out the schedule between sports seasons to insulate the network from sharp ratings dips. "We started with events and news, and that's sustained us for 20 years," ESPN President George Bodenheimer said last month. "This is an opportunity to expand what fans look to ESPN for."

But viewers may have trouble finding it. After its April 2 debut (the lead-in is a repeat of ESPN's original movie Season on the Brink), Mohr Sports will move to Tuesday at 12:30 a.m. (Monday at 9:30 p.m. on the West Coast.)

Because of commitments to televise sporting events, ESPN will change its slot again June 25 to Tuesdays at 9 p.m. ET. Mohr finishes his 25-episode run in that slot Sept. 24.
USA CRUSHED THE COMPETITION,
WINNING THE NIGHT IN A25-54
AND DELIVERING MORE PRIMETIME
VIEWERS A18-34 THAN
TNT, TBS AND MTV COMBINED.*

*Source: Nielsen Galaxy Explorer 3/17/02. All ad-supported cable networks average audience protections 7-11pm.
Gross impressions for TNT/TBS & MTV combined. Subject to qualifications upon request. ©2002 USA Cable. All rights reserved.
### BroadcastWatch

**MAR. 18-24**

Broadcast network prime time ratings according to Nielsen Media Research

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<th>Monday</th>
<th>Tuesday</th>
<th>Wednesday</th>
<th>Thursday</th>
<th>Friday</th>
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</table>

**KEY:**
- **RATING**: The average number of homes in which a broadcast was viewed.
- **SHARE**: The percentage of TV homes watching a broadcast.
- **TOP TEN SHOWS**: These shows are the top ten in their respective networks and their positions are numbered in red.
- **TV UNIVERSE**: This is the total number of homes in the United States.
- **ONE RATING POINT**: This is the average number of homes in which a broadcast was viewed.
- **YELLOW TENT**: This is the winner of the slot.
- **TOP RATED**: The show with the highest rating in its time slot.
- **RANKING**: The show's position in its time slot.
- **SHARE**: The percentage of homes watching a broadcast.
- **PREMIER**: The show that has the highest rating in its time slot.
- **LENGTH**: The length of the broadcast.
- **SEASON**: The season of the show.
- **GUIDE**: The guide for the show.
- **TV HOMES**: The total number of homes in the United States.
- **HOUSEHOLDS**: The number of households watching the broadcast.
- **VICTIMS**: The number of viewers watching the broadcast.
- **UNIVERSE**: The total number of viewers watching the broadcast.
- **RATING**: The percentage of homes watching the broadcast.
- **SHARE**: The percentage of homes watching the broadcast.
- **RANKING**: The show's position in its time slot.
- **TV HOMES**: The total number of homes watching the broadcast.
- **HOUSEHOLDS**: The number of households watching the broadcast.
- **VICTIMS**: The number of viewers watching the broadcast.
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### TOP 25 SHOWS

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank/Program</th>
<th>HH/AA</th>
<th>HH/GAA</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Wheel of Fortune</td>
<td>9.4</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Jeopardy</td>
<td>8.2</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Friends</td>
<td>7.0</td>
<td>8.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Seinfeld</td>
<td>6.6</td>
<td>7.2</td>
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<tr>
<td>5 Everybody Loves Raymond</td>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>6.8</td>
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<tr>
<td>6 Entertainment Tonight</td>
<td>5.9</td>
<td>6.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>7 Judge Judy</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>8.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 Oprah Winfrey Show</td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>5.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 Seinfeld (wknd)</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>5.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 Live With Regis &amp; Kelly</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 Wheel of Fortune (wknd)</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 King of the Hill</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>3.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 Frasier</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>3.5</td>
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<tr>
<td>14 Entertainment Tonight (wknd)</td>
<td>3.4</td>
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<td>15 Judge Joe Brown</td>
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<td>16 Maury</td>
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<tr>
<td>17 Friends (wknd)</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>3.4</td>
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<tr>
<td>18 Inside Edition</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>3.1</td>
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<tr>
<td>19 Everybody Loves Raymond (wknd)</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>NA</td>
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<tr>
<td>20 Hollywood Squares</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>2.9</td>
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<tr>
<td>21 Divorce Court</td>
<td>2.8</td>
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<td>22 Cops</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>3.7</td>
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<td>23 Access Hollywood</td>
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<td>24 Montel Williams Show</td>
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<tr>
<td>25 Jerry Springer</td>
<td>2.7</td>
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<tr>
<td>26 The X-Files</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>3.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>27 Extra</td>
<td>2.7</td>
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### TOP COURT SHOWS

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<tr>
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<th>HH/GAA</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>8.2</td>
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<td>3.3</td>
<td>4.5</td>
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<tr>
<td>3 Divorce Court</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>3.8</td>
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<tr>
<td>4 Judge Mathis</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>3.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Texas Justice</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>2.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

According to Nielsen Media Research Syndication Service Ranking Report March 11-17, 2002

- HH/AA = Average Audience Rating (households)
- HH/GAA = Gross Aggregate Average

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

NA = not available

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**Rethinking daytime**

John Nogawski, named president of Paramount Domestic Television last week, hopes his Viacom unit can turn some heads in daytime television and turn a profit at the same time.

"We are all trying to find the next format that is going to work," he said in an interview last week. "Talk shows may be going away or are on their last legs. We have to figure out what women at home are wanting to watch."

Of course, Nogawski, who joined Paramount in 1983, has a prediction about what that next trend might be:

It's Paramount's new _Life Moments_, an unusual cinéma vérité-style one-hour daytime show featuring women's first-person accounts of moments and events in their lives that profoundly changed them. The show debuts this fall on, among others, NBC owned stations and stations in the Cox, Scripps-Howard, Hubbard Broadcasting and A.H. Belo chains.

If it works, Nogawski could be sitting pretty because talk shows from Oprah Winfrey to Sally Jessy Raphael to Rosie O'Donnell either are planning their exits or are nearly out the door.

Nogawski thinks part of syndication's problem is that, with cable, daytime "options have become wider" but broadcast television hasn't expanded the same way. "It's as if the only thing to do is throw your hands up in the air and become more and more gratuitous, or get out of the business." _Life Moments_, he hopes, offers a better way to go.

He sees nothing but upside for the show, noting that its seasoned sales staff knows each other well enough that "we all talk in code here," which makes it easier for Paramount to see opportunities and solve problems.

Nogawski had been the president of distribution and was tapped for the larger post by Joel Berman, president of Paramount Worldwide Distribution, who calls Nogawski a "great leader." In his new post, Nogawski will oversee marketing, promotion, research, finance and Paramount's Advertiser Services.

—P.J. Bednarski
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2002 Broadcaster of the Year
Dennis Swanson
President and General Manager
WNBC-TV, New York, NY

TVB & The NY International Auto Show’s
Excellence in Automotive Advertising
“Keep America Rolling” Campaign
General Motors

The Advertising Council’s
2002 Silver Bell Award
WGBO-TV, Chicago, IL

TVB’s Harold E. Simpson
Excellence in Research Award
Adrienne Lotoski
Research Director
WCVB-TV/ABC 5, Boston, MA
Changing Hands

TVs
WOGX-TV Ocala and WOFL-TV Orlando, Fla.
Price: Swap
Buyer: Fox Television Stations Inc. (Mitch Stern, chairman/CEO); No. 1 television group owns 42 stations in 28 markets, including WRBW(TV) Orlando.
Seller: Meredith Corp. (Kevin O'Brien, president)
Facilities: WOGX-TV: ch. 51, 2,750 kW, ant. 919 ft.; WOFL-TV: ch. 35, 5,000 kW, ant. 1,480 ft.
Affiliation: WOGX-TV: Fox; WOFL: Fox
Comment: Fox Television is swapping KPTV-TV Portland, Ore., for Meredith Corp’s WOGX-TV Ocala and WOFL-TV Orlando, Fla.
KPTV-TV Portland, Ore.
Price: Swap
Buyer: Meredith Corp. (Kevin O’Brien, president); No. 16 television group owns 12 stations, including KPDX(TV) Portland
Seller: Fox Television Stations Inc. (Mitch Stern, chairman/CEO)
Facilities: Ch. 12, 316 kW, ant. 1,782 ft.
Affiliation: UPN
Comment: see above item

AMs
KDKO(AM) Littleton (Denver-Boulder), Colo.
Price: $2.7 million
Buyer: Newspaper Radio Corp., (Tim Brown, chairman/CEO); no other broadcast interests
Seller: Peoples Wireless Inc. (Jim Walker, owner)
Facilities: 1510 kHz, 10 kW day, 1 kW night
Format: Urban
Broker: Satterfield & Perry
WAOC(AM) St. Augustine (Jacksonville), Fla.
Price: $284,000
Buyer: Shull Broadcasting Co. Inc. (Douglas D. Shull, president); owns one other station, WFOY(AM) Jacksonville.
Seller: Mondosphere Broadcasting (Clifford Burnstein, co-president)
Facilities: 1420 kHz, 2 kW day, 250 W night
Format: Talk
KFTM(AM) Fort Morgan, Colo.
Price: $175,000
Buyer: KRDZ Broadcasters Inc. (Robert D. Zellmer Jr., president); owns KRDZ(AM) Wray, Colo.
Seller: Hunt Broadcasting Inc. (Janice Hunt, manager)
Facilities: 1400 kHz, 1 kW
Format: Oldies
WSDQ(AM) Dunlap (Chattanooga), Tenn.
Price: $165,000
Buyer: Double R Communications LLC, (Charles Rodgers, member); owns WEPGI(AM) Chattanooga.
Seller: Tilton-Johnson Communications Inc. (Douglas Hawkes, president)
Facilities: 1190 kHz, 5 kW day
Format: Country
WKAM(AM) Goshen, Ind.
Price: $100,000
Buyer: Fulmer Communications LLC (Kent Fulmer, member); no other broadcast interests
Seller: VanHawke-Johnson Communications Inc. (Douglas Hawkes, president)
Facilities: 1460 kHz, 3 kW day, 500 W night
Format: AC/news/sports
WKRO(AM) Cairo, Ill.
Price: $65,000
Buyer: Benjamin Stratemeyer; buying this station from his father, he is also buying KZMA-FM Poplar Bluff, Mo., from his father and WIBV-FM Mount Vernon, Ill., from his brother, Daniel S. Stratemeyer.
Seller: Sun Media Inc. (Eugene Stratemeyer, president)
Facilities: 1490 kHz, 1 kW
Format: Country/talk

—Information provided by BIA Financial Networks’ Media Access Pro, Chantilly, Va. www.bia.com

www.patcomm.com

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six years ago, the FCC abolished its expensive and time-consuming practice of doling out broadcast licenses by holding endless rounds of expensive hearings in front of an agency judge.

Washington media attorneys might have a sense of déjà vu. Last week, the FCC said an administrative law judge will determine whether to allow the country’s largest radio group to add a station in Charlottesville, Va., where it already owns five outlets and captures 31% of local advertising revenue.

No one predicts that designating thorny radio mergers for judicial hearing will compare in sheer numbers with the hundreds of license applications once subjected to review before the process was eliminated. But the cumbersome process is an unwelcome prospect for lawyers representing big station groups aiming to get bigger and smaller group hoping to cash out.

“What the commission is doing is reprehensible,” said George Bosari, a Washington attorney with a large radio-transaction practice.

Raising his ire is a March 20 decision designating Clear Channel’s plan to buy WUMX(FM) from Air Virginia Inc. for a review. The deal is one of hundreds slowed by regulators under a controversial practice aimed at preventing undue concentration.

Clear Channel’s hearing process is expected to provide the first clear example of how the FCC will resolve the toughest deals snagged by the agency’s controversial “flagging” policy established in 1998.

Deals are flagged and subjected to an extra layer of review when they result in one company’s controlling 50% of a market’s ad revenue or two companies’ controlling 70%.

The policy was established during the tenure of Democrat FCC Chairman William Kennard to stem a tidal wave of radio consolidation launched when Congress removed the national cap on radio ownership and allowed companies to own as many as eight stations in the largest markets. Since 1996, the average number of radio owners in each market has dropped from 13.5 to 10.3. The number nationally has plunged 25%, from 5,100 to 3,800.

Broadcasters have been frustrated by the policy because the targeted mergers otherwise met government ownership limits and the FCC never established policies for resolving the reviews. More than 200 mergers have been flagged for added FCC scrutiny in the past four years. None have been denied, although several were canceled after the parties grew frustrated by delay.

But foes of the consolidation trend say broadcasters have no reason to complain about the scrutiny. In fact, several dozen protesters picketed the FCC last month complaining about what they consider the Powell FCC’s indifference to media-concentration issues.

“It’s almost laughable,” said Media Access Project President Andrew Schwartzman about broadcasters’ complaints over the Charlottesville review. “This is the exception to the rule; the commission will accept almost anything.”

Broadcasters’ complaints are particularly galling, he said, given the level of concentration in local markets. “That they are shocked the FCC is enforcing the law is a sad statement on the current situation.”

As an indication of the importance the commission places on the proceeding, lawyers note that Chief Administrative Law Judge Richard Sipple will hear the case and Broadcast Investigations and Hearings Division Chief Chuck Kelley will make the case against the WUMX deal.

The FCC gave Clear Channel and Air Virginia until Wednesday to decide whether to make their case before the judge or simply cast the merger’s fate to an ongoing FCC case.
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**Nextream**
Nextream, a joint venture of Thomson multimedia and Alcatel, provides end-to-end solutions for broadcasting as well as network applications dedicated to telcos, MSOs, and pay TV operators. This year at NAB, Nextream will focus on several applications, including DSNG and fixed contribution multimedia services over ATM networks and video over xDSL networks.
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rulemaking that would establish permanent rules for radio mergers.

If the companies wait on the rulemaking, the deal would be denied if it doesn’t comply with new concentration limits.

But even if the companies choose not to pursue the case, the commission’s directions cast a light on the route the agency will take on future flagged deals that are difficult to resolve.

Clear Channel and Kelley were ordered to submit economic data indicating whether:

- Radio advertising is a relevant measure of the Charlottesville market.
- Stations in nearby towns should be considered part of the market.
- New stations are likely to be added.
- Standard market-concentration models used by antitrust regulators are the appropriate measure.
- The deal will adversely affect competition.

Last November, FCC commissioners approved sales of 62 radio stations, clearing most of a backlog of flagged deals. The policy nevertheless continues, although the FCC has established an interim policy that considers the likely impact of the proposed merger: specifically, control over radio advertising in an Arbitron market, barriers to new entrants, adverse competitive effects of the proposed merger, and any potential public benefits.

Under the interim policy, the commission two weeks ago approved mergers in Columbus, Ga.; Cheyenne, Wyo.; Trenton, N.J.; and Starkville, Miss.

The Charlottesville deal, however, was too much even for the three Republican commissioners. Post-merger, the market’s top two owners would control a combined 94.2% of the market’s radio ad revenue. “This level of concentration, in the absence of any countervailing considerations or public-interest benefits, is simply too significant for us,” said FCC Chairman Michael Powell.

Broadcasters argue that the hearing process is a crutch to avoid establishing clear rules.

“Why should merger parties suffer because the FCC can’t come to grips with its basic responsibility?” asked Bosari, who last year advised client Anderson Broadcasting to cancel sale of five North Dakota stations to Cumulus when word leaked about an attempt to designate the deal for hearing.

Copeland’s Virginia spring

**FCC takes $8.75M license from Winstar, gives it to competitor**

By Bill McConnell

Financially beleaguered Winstar Broadcasting last week lost its right to build TV ch. 21 in Virginia Beach, Va., because it failed to make good its $8.75 million bid in a 1999 FCC auction.

Instead, the FCC said, next-highest bidder Robert Copeland can buy it for $5.69 million. That figure represents his final bid minus a credit for new entrants to broadcasting.

He believes the figure is far too high, though, contending that Winstar and another bidder were ineligible because they illegally fronted for other broadcasters that would have ultimately operated the stations. He argues that he is entitled to the license for the amount of his initial bid, a mere $800,000.

“He can pay the full amount but doesn’t think he should have to,” said lawyer Lauren Colby. “Two unqualified parties were bidding him up. This will be a matter of considerable contention that may well end up in court.”

The FCC has rejected Colby’s claim that Winstar or the other bidder misrepresented plans for ownership of the licenses.

For its failure to honor its bid, Winstar was assessed a $1.03 million fine. Parent Winstar Communications has declared bankruptcy, and no one could be reached for comment.

Copeland is a Virginia Beach real estate investor and wholesale paper broker. He also was a partial investor in radio stations in Knoxville, Tenn., and Pittsburgh but has sold those interests. To qualify for a new-entrant credit, bidders must have no current attributable interests in broadcast properties.

**FCC CABLE-MODEM RULING GOES TO COURT**

Public-advocacy groups and ISP Earthlink asked the federal appeals court in Washington to strike down an FCC policy allowing cable franchises to keep competing Internet providers off their broadband networks. Separately, Verizon also asked the court to review the decision because it wants the same favorable treatment as cable operators for its high-speed digital subscriber lines. Unlike cable systems, regional phone monopolies face an access mandate for DSL. On March 14, the FCC declared that cable modem service is an “information service,” which places nearly all oversight of the business with the FCC and very little with local regulators. The decision does give the FCC authority to impose access obligations later, but the panel decided to continue a hands-off policy.

**COMSAT LOSES BID FOR FEE EXEMPTION**

Comsat’s legal bid to escape FCC regulatory fees was rejected by federal appeals judges. The FCC removed Comsat’s longstanding exemption after Congress enacted the Open Market Reorganization for the Betterment of International Telecommunications Act in March 2000. The FCC assessed Comsat’s space fee at $1.6 million.

Although the judges did not specify the fee, they did suggest that the $1.6 million assessment bore “no relation” to regulatory costs of Comsat’s role as the U.S. signatory to Intelsat, the international satellite consortium. The judges suggested that the cost of regulating Comsat amounted to $442,000 and noted that the FCC has remained open to re-evaluating it. Broadcast networks contract with Comsat for relay of cross-continent transmissions.
It has taken a while, but the digital newsroom appears to be ready for NAB, and not just as an impressive technology demonstration.

"Last year, we estimated, based on industry reports, that only 3% to 5% of all newsrooms had transitioned from analog to digital," says Roland Boucher, director of marketing, Digital News Production, Thomson Broadcast Solutions. "Since then, we've seen the standardization of major-market leaders, such as NBC and ABC, on digital news-production systems, certainly a bellwether for what the mid- to large-market operations are going to do over the next couple years.

"Nowhere is the need for cost and workflow efficiencies more evident than in small-market environments."

Adds Steve Jacobs, Sony senior vice president of broadcast and professional systems, "The promise has been fulfilled. Technology manufacturers have brought mature products to market that actually help broadcasters connect the dots in newsrooms."

Those dots would include ingest stations to get material brought in from the field digitized onto servers. Journalists and editors outfitted with a number of editing and graphics tools access that footage on their desktop computers. They also have access to the newsroom and asset-management systems.

Those desktop systems could offer access to low-resolution "proxy" copies of the clips on the server, allowing the reporter to more closely tie images to the script, or it could allow access to high-resolution clips so the package can be put together on the desktop.

Connecting the dots has been a challenge. In fact, discussions with broadcast-
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Comes courtesy of NAB, booth 13700.
ers and cable news network engineers suggest that making a newsroom work easily is really hard work.

That's because one goal of a truly integrated digital newsroom system is to make it easier for newsroom personnel to operate complex tools without having to be schooled for months on how to use them. That puts the burden on engineering and IT to make the complex simple.

"Newsrooms will get more complex to design and build and simpler to operate," predicts BBC Technologies CEO Philip Langsdale. "Stories will be handled more quickly and more dynamically. And content will be held in one core format and distributed using simple re-formatters to a wide variety of receiving equipment: TVs, PDAs, Internet and mobile devices."

Associated Press Director of Technology Development Mike Palmer says customers are also asking for the ability to create more content without expanding staff. "They want to repurpose their existing content to multiple output channels. This is an important issue, as they wish to use content originated for network TV, for example, on their cable station, Web site and radio broadcasts, too. They want to create efficiencies from within."

BBC Technologies will head to NAB with its Broadcast Network Control System. "It's a control system which can be used to control all elements of a media-production and -distribution system, whether for TV, cable or satellite broadcast," says Langsdale. The PC-based touch-screen system integrates all items under a consistent user interface running on Microsoft Windows.

More advanced digital newsrooms require a number of desktop clients to be capable of accessing material on the server.

"Typically, requirements call for for 30 to 50 desktop clients for browsing and low-resolution editing on the journalist's desktop in applications such as our NewsBrowse system," says Thomson's Boucher. "That system lets journalists browse, assemble, and save shots, clips and complete sequences all from their desktops."

AP's Palmer observes, "The journalist workstation should no longer be thought of as a dumb terminal. Through AP ENPS, the journalist workstation is able to provide a range of tools, from text editing to video editing, appropriate for the skill set of the person sitting in front of it. The same workstation can be used at one time of a day for a person working exclusively on text editing and later in the day by someone who wants to produce a show and cut video teases."

Boucher says systems like the NewsBrowse capture incoming video, audio and data for both high- and low-resolution needs. "Asset management allows tracking, movement and selection of the media," he says. "Links to third-party asset-management systems are also offered to provide additional functions, such as automatic scene detection and voice to text."

**ONE-STOP SHOPPING**

The digital newsroom has become an ideal for manufacturers and broadcasters alike. For broadcasters, the advantages are the ability to get story on-air faster and to repackage it more easily as well. In essence, better product leads to better viewership and better ad revenues.

It's the same for the manufacturing side: Better products make for better revenues. BBC Technologies obviously sees some money to be made. For larger companies—like Thomson Multimedia, Sony, Grass Valley Group, Pinnacle or Avid—the business opportunity is larger still. This is particularly true for a company, such as Avid, that offers nonlinear editing systems, a newsroom system and video servers, providing a quasi-one-stop-shopping experience for stations.

"A large part of our effort has gone into making the system easy to install, manage and maintain," says Avid Broadcast Director Dave Schleifer. "The backend management is minimal because the workflow of using the systems moves media from outside the facility, through the production process, and, ultimately, to air, the Web and archive. The systems don't require regular maintenance of any kind."

But it's the challenge of building and maintaining a digital newsroom that is the largest leap.

Schleifer says Avid has tackled the prob-
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Hitachi discovers DVD

Hitachi is introducing the industry's first dockable DVD-RAM recorder for ENG cameras. The recorder will weigh less than 3 pounds and will be able to be docked to any ENG camera. List price is approximately $3,000; availability is expected to be sometime during the third quarter.

The recorder back can record up to 60 minutes of MPEG-2 video onto a DVD-RAM cartridge.

"The market for DVD-RAM recording is now huge, but growth will be gradual," says Jack Breitenbucher, vice president of Hitachi Denshi America's Broadcast and Professional division. "Eventually, aging equipment will be replaced with new, tapeless recording technology, and that transition will take place over the next few years."

The unit also comes with software for editing the video on a laptop PC.

"DVD recording units are very reliable because of their lack of moving parts," says Breitenbucher. "They can perform within all types of conditions without the maintenance worries that a traditional VTR would have."

According to Breitenbucher, the introduction of blue-laser DVD recording technology means the quality will only get better, because blue-laser technology allows for recording at HDTV-quality levels.

Otherwise at NAB, Hitachi will show its second-generation SK-3100P and SK-3300P multi-standard cameras, as well as HD portable cameras.

The SK-3100P has a 2.2 million-pixel IT (Interline Transfer) CCD and can provide simultaneous 1080i HDTV and 480i output, with 1080i/720p HDTV and 480i output optional. The SK-3300P has an FIT (Frame Interline Transfer) CCD and otherwise offers the same specs. Both cameras are equipped with new 12-bit A/D converters. —K.K.

Road to NAB 3 Special Report

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Sony's Steve Jacobs says, "Anytime equipment talks with other manufacturers' hardware, there is a benefit to customers."

Sundance's Fred Schultz: "MOS [standard] opened newsroom computers to communicating with key media devices."

lem in two ways. "First, we've made sure that we can deliver a complete solution, problem-free, and complete with the ability to stand behind it. Second, we've provided a deep set of partnerships and integration points where third-party products can fit into our system so that we can integrate yesterday's technology with the nonlinear workflow."

One of those areas of integration is with automation systems. Sundance's NewsLink system is designed to integrate newsroom computers, servers, editing systems and graphics devices.

"Interoperability is a central reason customers need our participation," says Sundance President Fred Schultz. "Corporate culture and market forces conspire to keep manufacturers of servers and editors tightly focused on refining their core product, resulting in scant support for interfacing."

He points out that Associated Press, which makes the ENPS newsroom systems, resolutely avoids the entanglement that adding machine control to its ENPS newsroom system would bring.

"There also seems to be little customer enthusiasm for Avid's BCS machine control of iNEWS. These market realities are major structural reasons that something like NewsLink is an essential key-stone for successful digital news build-outs."

Beyond automation, there are mountains of other products designed to help improve newsroom operations. Sony will exhibit NewsBlast, an automated system that will allow reporters to file stories or microwave frame-accurate video directly into the newsroom server.

Jacobs says Sony will also demonstrate drag-and-drop exchange with Pathfire, the IP-based satellite distribution service, and will announce new interoperability between NewsBase and ParkerVision's PVT TV technology.

If there is a common thread among the many players in the newsroom market, it is the desire for standardization. One standard they're committed to is MOS (for Media Object Server).

When machines talk

"MOS is the industry-accepted language for a variety of hardware for a host of production systems," says Jacobs. "Sony and the Associated Press were early pioneers in MOS. Anytime equipment talks with other manufacturers' hardware, there is a benefit to customers.

Standards from MPEG to DV to MXF are examples that advanced technology is more and more acceptable for broadcasters, he says, adding that "IP-addressable equipment is another way users can share data as Sony will demonstrate with its e-VTR."

But it is MOS that seems to grow on every newsroom-related product.

"MOS is the accepted standard for interfacing newsroom systems to production equipment," says Palmer. "It handles a wide range of equipment, from sequencing still stores for air to desktop editing. And it's flexible because it was created through a collaborative effort of many different manufacturers of various types of equipment; it wasn't written specifically for one type of media and then adapted to another."

Pinnacle Systems Vortex Product Manager Danny Peters maintains that no manufacturer's product can afford to be isolated in the new newsroom environment. "The
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systems’ architecture must use standard protocols, such as MOS, to communicate with other newsrooms and production systems."

He adds that accessing and transferring metadata related to content is essential. “Getting the open protocols and databases of all the different manufacturers’ equipment communicating effectively to understand each other’s metadata is the key for the success of the digital newsroom.”

Sundance’s Schultz says that MOS enables event lists resulting from story sequencing on an network-control-system rundown to be passed to the respective media devices. “MOS opened newsroom computers to communicating with key media devices. Server/editor manufacturers have successfully packaged the right functionality for news editing on stable integrated editors using shared storage. But, as solid and as richly featured as both of those systems are, until now, a gap of functionality and control has kept them from working as the monolithic supertool our customers want.”

Schultz adds that he has seen some confusion as broadcasters wrestle with MOS. For example, only a few people involved with digital newsrooms grasp the difference between identifying content for a device and specifying when and how that content is to be cued and played.

In addition, there’s a split between AP and Avid over how machine control fits into MOS: AP holds that MOS is not the proper mechanism for machine control; Avid says it is.

“It is not trivial tracking what each does

Avid closes the tech gap

Avid’s broadcast division will head to the NAB show displaying a more integrated system that ties the iNews newsroom system closer to the NewsCutter nonlinear editing system.

“You put our two systems together, and you get new features that allow the user to work faster and smarter,” says Dave Schleifer, director of Avid’s broadcast division. “People have been struggling with the idea of just hooking these systems together, but we’ve solved that, and we’re onto the next level of making them efficient.”

Schleifer says that increasingly he’s hearing from newsroom operations that want to extend editing capabilities beyond the edit suite. “We’re getting people coming to us who want to see media at 30, 40 or 50 places,” he says.

One of the changes in the interoperability between iNews and NewsCutter XP systems is that there will be improved management between the two products.

“As a user is going through a script and watching video, they can drop the clips they’re interested in into the script [timeline],” he says. “That’s something a journalist can do at their desktop: They can see the video, hear the audio and pick the clips they want. And when the editor opens up the script, they can drop the clips into the timeline and start editing.”

Schleifer says users will also be able to post scripts directly to the Web.

“The system takes the text, cleans it up, and lets the user fill in information according to their template,” he explains, “including what video wants or hyperlinks.”

Another improvement to NewsCutter version 3.0 will be the ability to edit material acquired on 50-Mb/s DV formats. "We’re putting in DV50 support on the laptop and on the desktop version of XP," says Schleifer, adding, "There are still issues of transcoding handling that, but, if you’re on our Avid Unity system or the network and have access to DV50 material, you can view it and edit it."

Pricing on NewsCutter XP 3.0 is $9,000 for the mobile version, $15,000 for the turnkey system and $35,000 for the XP Effect version. —K.K.
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ParkerVision will introduce the PTV News CR4000, the company's first system to provide live production automation for larger-market television and cable stations.

One of the key features allowing it to be suitable for live demands is a set of 48 late-breaking-news keys that can be assigned to bring up graphics and transitions at the push of a button. Richard Sisisky, president and CEO, says those types of features make it easier for a single operator to have more control over the on-air programming.

The rack-mounted system has a list price starting at $459,995, which really places it in the larger-station market, functionally and economically. Sisisky says the demands of the larger broadcasters weren't easily met with the other products in ParkerVision's PTV News digital system product line.

"This is really for the large, top-20-market affiliate station," he says. "It's designed for the station that needs different layers of graphics, effects and audio features." For example, the system can perform back-to-back transitions with up to five upstream key layers to improve the look of the broadcast. The CR4000 has a two-mix/effects architecture with 10 keys and 24 SDI direct video inputs. A 32x20 matrix offering 16 video and 16 keys creates a total of 56 video and key inputs. There are also 32 RS232/422 control ports for various devices, including robotic camera systems, VTRs, video servers, character generators and still stores, among others.

On the audio side, 48 analog or AES/EBU digital audio inputs are available. The system also features 32 GPI inputs and 64 GPI outputs and RAID III backup. A 10/100 network hub handles communications and integration among the CR4000, the SCRIPTViewer automated teleprompting system and third-party news automation systems.

A smaller version of the same system is also available. The PTV News 24Plus, Sisisky says, is designed for mid-market stations, having only six keys, 22 SDI inputs and a 24x12 matrix. Stations can perform back-to-back transitions with up to three upstream key layers.

Another new ParkerVision product is the XSwitch router, designed to provide system control and redundancy between two PTV News systems. Dual systems are often used for live applications, and the XSwitch allows for the operator to switch over to the back system in the event of failure with the push of a button. It can also be used to consolidate routing requirements. Pricing for the modular, rack-mounted system starts at $13,995.

-K.K.

and the control each produces/requires," Schultz says. "Introducing MOS Protocol with its mythic but poorly understood powers makes confusion even more likely."

Schleifer, however, argues the MOS issues are more complicated than they need to be. "Each method of integration has a purpose," he explains. "While we support both MOS and direct machine control, we have found that the machine-control options are more powerful, faster and integrated through our ControlAIR user interface, while MOS gives us a basic level of compatibility with a wide range of vendors who support the protocol, with very little effort on our part."

He says Avid's MOS model is to download information to third parties or imbed their information in Avid's database as a method of coordinating events in disparate systems.

"In this type of implementation, for example, the rundown will be reflected in the partner's system, and it will play back each event under its own control to go to air," he explains. "Because the Avid iNEWS system includes direct links to our ControlAIR system, we can go much farther. We can actually aggregate control of multiple devices and present a consolidated user interface to the user, making it easier to coordinate the on-air presentation of the show."

He adds that, unless prior experience has primed a broadcaster to critically examine MOS for its ability to do both tasks, many seem to assume it probably does the second (machine control) because it clearly does the first (piping IDs).

"Broadcasters who have seriously tried to spec a digital newsroom have come to see the need to provide both functions," he says. "There are still a lot of bright and motivated broadcasters, however, who need to have this difference brought into sharper focus."

Nonlinear editing in the newsroom is also evolving as the manufacturers continue
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You can now build facilities where change can be as small as allowing a producer to preview a story before it goes on-air or as great as turning every seat into the equivalent of a three-machine edit suite,” says Schleifer. “The people who deliver quality material using those tools will be today’s journalists and editors, and our tools will help them do it better.”

One factor in the use of nonlinear editing systems has been developments on the acquisition-format side, like Panasonic’s DVCPro and Sony’s work around DV formats.

“Nonlinear editing has improved the process by allowing multiple versions to be cut easily for different newscasts, and we think the DVCPro 4X transfer speeds the process,” says Panasonic Vice President, Technical Liaison, Phil Livingston. “Systems like the Panasonic DNA system link nonlinear editors to servers, and playout from servers linked to a rundown system is operationally a vast improvement over multiple VTRs.”

But that doesn’t mean VTRs are the next industry paperweight.

“We have to say that current VTRs are incredibly cost-effective and multiple VTRs are incredibly flexible and reliable, so they’re not gone by any means,” Livingston adds. “The number of DV compression-based NLE and server products for news speak to our efforts to partner as well as to

Galileo gets HD

AccuWeather’s Galileo system will debut HDTV output and integration with AccuWeather’s Ultra LocalCast at NAB.

The HD version of Galileo will output in 1080i and can be routed directly to a station’s HD encoder or other HD processing system. It also can support SD and HD simultaneously and, because of its PC architecture, can handle evolving HD broadcast standards. The HD output is available at no capital cost for stations subscribing to AccuWeather’s service.

By integrating Ultra LocalCast, stations will be able to provide “super-local” animations of forecast variations across a DMA. According to AccuWeather President Dr. Joel N. Myers, the system takes into account topographical features, such as hills, bodies of water, and even structures, allowing it to deliver more-accurate temperature forecasts.

Two new Internet services will also be made available. AccuWeather.com Alert and AccuWeather.com Desktop are offered free to stations and are designed to give TV–Web-site visitors weather forecasts, as well as severe weather alerts, on their desktops or via email. The two products also offer co-branding so that stations can sell their own advertising or receive a portion of ad revenues taken in by AccuWeather.

—K.K.
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Chyron’s Duet is twice as nice

Chyron is going to NAB with two new versions of its Duet platform: the LEX and the PCI+.

Duet LEX is designed as a compact (4 rack-unit) and less expensive addition to the lineup. Chyron says it includes the company’s Lyric software for graphics composition and can also perform 2-D and 3-D animation creation and playout.

The Windows 2000 PCI-based architecture supports Chyron’s CAL API for custom data-driven applications, and it also has a digital keyer with bypass and analog monitoring output for each channel. Options include dual-channel live-video squeezeback and optional MPEG full-motion video playout with key and audio. Price is $19,995 for a single-channel version, $24,995 for dual-channel version.

The Duet PCI+ is designed for user-configured graphic environments and incorporates the Chyron 32-bit PCI digital graphics card. Lyric software with Infinit-family compatibility, and real-time 2-D/3-D animation capabilities. Chyron’s CAL API for custom data-driven applications is also supplied as standard. Pricing for the Duet PCI+ is less than $20,000.

A new product for the news environment is NewsCrawl, which allows any Duet SD, LEX or PCI user to insert as many as two lower-third automated news crawls into program video through Chyron’s CAL API. It can display information from any text file, Web page, networked file server, AP news feed, serial port or keyboard entry, and each crawl has user-defined graphics, color, font, crawl rate and animated logos. Pricing for the software is $3,995.

Chyron has two new products for its Aprisa line as well. The Aprisa four-channel 200SX option allows for playback of stills, text rolls, text crawls and animated flipbooks over a clip with audio and key. The SX feature comes standard on an Aprisa 300 and is an option for an Aprisa 200. The 200SX is priced at approximately $50,000. A new Aprisa video clip server is also available for approximately $25,000.

And version 3.0 Aprisa software will be demonstrated. New features include central database service for database processing and media-traffic management for local caching; local Aprisa engine with core processing for video, audio and communications on each Aprisa; and Aprisa Client, a user interface accessible anywhere on the network.

Aprisa also has an MOS ActiveX option, which permits browsing, importing, exporting and clip editing from inside a journalist’s desktop newsroom application, such as Avid iNEWS and AP ENPS. Aprisa MOS ActiveX Option, which includes the MOS Automation Interface, is priced about $2,000 per seat.

—K.K.

the success of DVCPRO and its core technology.”

Schulz envisions that, as editing technology gets easier to use, stories that can be effectively told by cuts editing will be assigned to journalists, with only material requiring technical finepassing to craft/staff editors. “With journalists providing rough cuts, editors will principally polish, with diminishing involvement in story shape and structure.”

Peters sees a trend is editing packages that journalists are comfortable with. “The news editors’ skills are required for the refinement of those packages. It has been the practice that the professional news editors have been using their skills to help train their colleagues in the art of editing pictures and sound. It has also been the practice that, in deadline situations, when a feed or the tape comes into the station and has to be turned around within minutes, that job remains the duty of the traditional news editor rather than the journalist or producer.”

There is a caveat with the new newsroom workflow: Just because you can doesn’t mean you should.

“Just because journalists have the capability to do cuts-only editing does not mean they have the skills,” says Palmer. “Great tools are best used by people with great talent. Training is a key component in the installation of integrated systems that can often be overlooked. You need to give people the tools and the skills required to do a good job; a considerable amount of skill is required to edit a good package.”

On the graphics side, VertigoXmedia President and CEO David Wilkins says that, in the past, his company would sell a few licenses of its newsroom template-edit-
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ing software for a limited number of users, each with a specific responsibility in the production process. That has changed.

"Now our customers are asking to have the same software installed on all their newsroom workstations, giving everyone the ability to work on any component of a story," he says. "With the latest versions of our products, this means that journalists anywhere on the network can create broadcast-ready graphics and put them into the production rundown directly from their desktop."

While this makes work easier for journalists, it makes work more difficult for those involved with managing the system. "The issue of permissions for different levels of users becomes important, as well as the issue of where various media and story assets live and how they get moved to the final output device in time for the broadcast," Wilkins says. "Our view at Verigo is that the only solution is a central content server built on an industry standard, such as MOS, and that the process of creating the actual content should be independent of the type of device that will be used to send it to air."

The use of NLE and server-based content introduces another challenge: keeping track of who is working on what. Pinnacle's Vortex system has a metadata controller, dubbed MDC. According to Peters,

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Fujinon's new A13x6.3E wide-angle lens is suitable for field use.

Fujinon goes wide

Fujinon is introducing a wide-angle lens that has a focal length of 6.3 mm and magnification of 13x. The lens is suitable for field use and is available with or without extender. The version with extender is the A13x6.3E; without, the A13x6.3.

Designed for 1/2-inch cameras, it offers a focal length at telephoto end at 164mm with extender and 82mm without. Fujinon will also introduce the S13X4.5E and S13X4.5 lenses for 1/2-inch cameras. Pricing on the lenses was not available at press time.

The company will also show the XA87x9.3ESM and XA87x13.2 ESM field HD lenses. The two lenses have 87x magnification, and both have focal lengths up to 2,300 mm. A standalone image stabilizer, the OS-Tech optical stabilizer, will also be available at NAB. It can increase focal length by 1.25 times while also cutting vibration.

—K.K.
it keeps track of all the data related to material that comes into the Vortex system. It tracks all of the edits within Vortex, all the playout of stories, and tracks the metadata generated within the system and with third-party systems.

"With Vortex collaborative workflow, journalists, producers and directors all have simultaneous access to that captured material to use in their work space, whether on the desktop or in the edit suite or master control," says Peters. "All of these people have ubiquitous access to material on-site and remotely. This collaborative workflow allows the news station to get stories to air quicker and more efficiently and at the same time enables them to reduce operational costs."

One Vortex product to be introduced at NAB, Vortex LN is "designed to give the edge to local stations that want to upgrade newsroom from tape-based systems and increase their operational efficiency and creative capabilities," says Peters. "It shares the same IP infrastructure as Vortex Network News and allows local stations to share media resources with affiliate stations across a wide-area network."

**MISCONCEPTIONS ABOUT DIGITAL**
Thomson's Boucher adds that there are still some misconceptions of the digital newsroom. "One is that the digital news production systems are expensive. Digital news production systems let news professionals work faster, better and more cost-effectively than VTR-based systems."

He also says that one of the hurdles of digital newsrooms, the need to dub before editing can begin, has been cleared. "In fact, with the Grass Valley Group system, editing takes place at the same time the media is being recorded, so it is not necessary to dub the tape first."

Livingston notes a common misconception that digital solves all problems. "One needs to work at designing a system to keep the quality consistent, especially for material retrieved from archives. And there are fundamental issues like network speeds, file sizes, rights and permissions, and the storage/archiving approach that need to be examined."

So what's the next advance in the digital newsroom? It may be the optical drive-based camera. It's already garnering buzz; Hitachi will offer a DVD-RAM recording-based camera back (see box, page 34), and other introductions are on the horizon.

"We understand the intense interest in an optical-drive camera," says Livingston, "and some users have even decided to wait until it arrives to 'go digital,' at least as far as acquisition is concerned."

He adds that the desire stems from having a nonlinear original so one could both skip the digitizing transfer process and get only the selected portions.

He sees three problems that manufacturers need to overcome: "The sustained writing transfer rate of optical recording media is not as fast as tape; the current storage capacity is smaller than tape; and the robustness, or shock resistance, of the drive during recording is not as easy to address as it is during reading."

But the topic is no doubt gaining interest—and expectations of the next-generation digital newsroom are already rising.
Emmis shares hub

Orlando facility handles master control for four stations

By Ken Kerschbaumer

It's share and share alike at Emmis Communications. The company recently put the finishing touches on a new centralcasting hub at WKCF(TV) Orlando, Fla., which will send broadcast streams via DS3 cable to four Emmis stations: WKCF, WVUE(TV) New Orleans, WALA-TV Mobile, Ala., and WFTX(TV) Fort Myers, Fla.

Florical automation and Grass Valley Group Profile servers and two MAN systems are the backbone of the facility. Tandberg's TSM system manager helps get files ready for transfer. Emmis Director of Operations Joe Addalia says the company has gone through the learning curve and, with the addition of WALA-TW two weeks ago, is handling master control for the three Fox affiliates and one WB.

One aspect of the facility may represent a trend in broadcast-station rebuilds. WALA recently moved into a new facility, and "I would have to guess that it may be the first ground-up television station without a master control," Addalia says. "There is a dedicated space for it because you never know what will happen down the road, but their master control is a bunch of equipment supplied for centralcasting, meaning encoders and decoders."

There is a backup server that can be controlled from the hub or locally and a basic 16x1 switcher, but there is no master-control room with satellite equipment.

"We do maintain network downlinks," he says, "but they're strictly backup."

The capital cost saving comes in around $1 million, with even more saving because there is no design and prep.

Florical's AirBoss device servers are located at the regional stations to control the Grass Valley servers, two VTRs and a router. The system moves the files between the hub and spokes, and Florical's Time Zone software allows a hub in the EST zone to control two stations in Central.

Three people work at the hub at all times, making sure things go smoothly. Addalia notes that one of the myths of automation is that it allows a reduction in staff. It doesn't, he says, adding that it does allow the workload to be shifted to as much as a day prior to broadcast. "It really doesn't reduce the man-hours. It allows you to do more and have a better on-air look with more accuracy."

Redundancy is always an issue with centralcasting, and Addalia tackles it from two fronts: the server side and the transport side.
“Our goal is to have two copies of everything separated onto two MAN systems,” he says. “We’ll have the Florical system be responsible for making the two copies, and the MAN will make it available for air. And that allows us to have the level of redundancy we require.”

The other redundancy concern is the reliance on DS3.

“Emmis was very concerned about system redundancy so they had a fairly good DS3 cable infrastructure between their hub and spokes,” says Florical Chief Technology Officer Mark Bishop. “So what we set up offers four to six hours of protection that is sent down the spokes in case one of those cables goes down and they have a problem with one of the links.”

According to Addalia, the DS3 reliability has been fairly good, and there haven’t been any DS3 failures. “Also, the bandwidth of the DS3 allows us to put anything down the bandwidth and manage it ourselves, and that’s a big plus. Other lower-bandwidth or on-demand systems don’t have the flexibility there.”

Despite the praise for DS3, he does have one more wish for connectivity: Make it cheaper. “We do hope and expect that there will be some relief on the local loop charges. We really feel they’re out of order.”

Those charges are the doing of BellSouth and Sprint. “They really sock it to us,” says Addalia in seeming disbelief. The cost of the local loop connections to the four stations, a distance of about seven miles, is equal to that paid for the long-haul 1,000 miles of connectivity between Orlando and the local markets. ■

Now the games count

Rookie YES Network leaves spring training behind

By Ken Kerschbaumer

They’ve spent the past few weeks getting ready for the season and even had a couple of minor spring-training setbacks, but now it’s time to play games that count. This afternoon, the YES Network takes to the air (or, in this case, cable) with its first official major league contest: the New York Yankees against the Baltimore Orioles.

Many on the YES staff have been through similar network startups. But Vice President of Programming Mark Rosenweig, who was involved with the launch of CNBC, notes that this launch was different because there was no NBC to fall back on. “This whole effort started in October, and we created our own infrastructure,” he says. “So to come as far as we’ve come is exciting.”

The core of the programming for the next few months will be the Yankee games. Production will be handled by Gang Creek Productions, with the YES Network shooting games with 12 cameras.

“What we tried to do was create a blank canvas and then figure out what is the best quality we can deliver for a regional sports network,” says Rosenweig.

An interesting aspect of the programming is TV coverage of Mike Francesa and Chris “Mad Dog” Russo’s afternoon radio talk show, which is heard on WFAN(AM) New York and originates at WFAN’s Astoria, Queens, studio. It not only will be similar in style to coverage of Don Imus’s morning talk show on MSNBC but will use the same studio and cameras.

The YES Network contacted MSNBC about tapping into the latter’s Telemetrics camera-control system so that YES could control the program from its Stamford, Conn., location. The result is that YES pays MSNBC a monthly fee to cover the use of cameras and lighting but purchased its own Telemetrics control systems to be located in Stamford.

Says Rosenweig, “A switch is thrown after the Imus show so that we have control of the cameras in the afternoons.”

Other programs will be shot in Manhattan’s National Video Center, where YES also has four editing suites: three Avid Symphony suites and one Avid Xpress suite. ■
Storage no longer skin deep

InPhase holographic system can store 100 GB of content per $50 write-once disk

By Ken Kerschbaumer

Holographic technology is heading to the broadcast industry next year, and, if InPhase Technologies, the company behind the development, is to believed, it's going to go a long way toward changing the way video is archived and stored.

Dubbed Tapestry, the system uses holography to improve storage capacity and transfer speeds by recording throughout the storage disk, not just on the surface (as is done on other optical media). InPhase says $50 write-once disks will be able to record 100 GB of video, or 7.4 hours of HD material and 44 hours of standard-definition material. The drive (which has not been priced yet) will be able to transfer content at 20 MB/s.

“That’s the design goal, 100 GB, and there’s no compression,” says Vice President of Marketing Liz Murphy. “If data is compressed going in, it stays compressed, but we aren’t adding any.”

Companies have been working in the area of holographic storage for years, Murphy says, but have never been able to develop a robust media that can be recorded to and read from. She says this Tapestry is it.

InPhase is a Lucent Technologies offshoot that, Murphy says, is commercializing work that has been done at Bell Labs, which has developed “two-chemistry media.”

According to Murphy, single-chemistry-based developments in holographic recording haven’t held up well because they aren’t environmentally stable. “When you try to optimize for photo-reflectivity, you destroy the environmentally stable attributes,” she explains. “But two-chemistry is very robust, and it has good manufacturing quality.”

The media resembles a 5½-inch mag-neto-optical disk, but that is only on the outside. In the initial design, InPhase chose to use a round disk with an enclosure. But the size of the disk could change greatly since the enclosure is not really needed.

“If you wanted to distribute content on credit-card-size media, you could do that, or on a bare disk that looks more like a DVD,” Murphy adds. Capacity on the credit-card media would be around 20 GB.

The media within the enclosure is clear storage capacity makes it suitable for nearline and offline storage needs.

“I’ve talked to all the major networks and the studios, and they’ve all been interested in it. And it has a lot of archival potential,” says Murphy. “Local stations think they could use it as an on-air log device.”

Tapestry also has random access and an anticipated shelf-life of 30 years. “That would really open the door in terms of how people access historical data,” she says.

One caveat: The system won’t be available until late 2003 or early 2004. Murphy says the company plans to speak with asset-management companies like Kasenna and Virage, as well as Sony, “given Sony’s position in the marketplace.”

The rollout gives some time to work out OEM deals. “We’ll sign up a couple of big vendors who have brand recognition in the marketplace.”

Murphy says work is already under way on the next generation, which is expected to have greater capacity and flexibility. “We’ve already been in some early testing of re-writability, and the results were very positive. So we’re very optimistic that we’ll be able to have rewritable media as well.”

The system can be used for more than just video storage, but InPhase is starting with video that gets optimum performance out of the system. “Because you’re writing a stack of data at a time,” Murphy says, “the more data you can send it, the better off you’ll be in terms of performance.”

InPhase will be at NAB this year but won’t be on the show floor. The company will have a demonstration suite at the Venetian, where it will demonstrate reading a 30-second video clip off a 1-inch-square piece of media.
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Television

Ralph Todde, executive VP, Sunbelt Communications Co., Las Vegas, named president/COO.

Frank Biancuzzo, president, marketing and promotion, Hearst-Argyle Television, New York, named president/GM, WISN-TV Milwaukee.

Frank Batavick, associate producer, Maryland Public Television, Owings Mills, Md., named coordinating producer, Zoom MPT.

Cable TV


Kelly A. Jara, production manager, Comcast, Baltimore, named regional manager, Maryland/Delaware region.

Programming


Jim Greiner, senior VP, operations, business development and new ventures, A&E Television Networks, promoted to executive VP, new enterprises.

Joseph Tafuri, VP, DirecTV sports advertiser sales, Columbia TriStar Television Advertiser Sales, promoted to senior VP.

Susan Panisch, director, program development and new media, Outdoor Life Networks, Stamford, Conn., promoted to VP, programming.

Elizabeth Hillman, director, communications and publicity, Hallmark Channel, Los Angeles, promoted to executive director.


Journalism

Randal Stanley, news director, WGRZ-TV Buffalo, N.Y., joins WKYC-TV Cleveland in the same capacity.


Appointments KPNX(TV) Mesa, Ariz.: Tom Zener, sports anchor, WFXT(TV) Boston, joins as sports anchor/reporter; Nicole McGregor, anchor/reporter, Orange County News Channel, Anaheim, Calif., joins as general assignment reporter; Mekahlo Medina, general assignment reporter, KOB-TV Albuquerque, N.M., joins in the same capacity; Judy Alley, weekend anchor/reporter, WAGT(TV) Augusta, Ga., joins as weekend morning anchor/reporter; Victoria Schreiner, producer, promoted to senior executive producer.

Lisa Colagrossi, anchor/reporter, WKMG-TV Orlando, Fla., joins WABC-TV New York, as reporter/fill-in anchor.

Alicia Calaway, former Survivor II contestant, joins WNYW(TV) New York, as health and fitness reporter.

Frank Cipolla, freelance reporter, WWOR-TV, Secaucus, N.J., named full-time general assignment reporter.

Satellite

Antonio B. Barreto, senior VP/GM, ESPN International, Coral Gables, Fla., named senior VP, programming and marketing, DirecTV Latin America, Fort Lauderdale, Fla.

Andy Ras-Work, president/CEO, Semantix Inc., Washington, joins

WorldSpace Corp., Washington, as COO.

Advertising/Marketing/PR

Stephen C. Rockabrand, senior VP, programming, new-business development and distribution, TVN Entertainment, Burbank, Calif., joins The Premiere Marketing & Distribution Group, Los Angeles, as executive VP, television and ancillary distribution.

Appointments at Nielsen Media Research, New York: Robert Luff, VP/chief technology officer, NBC Broadcast and Network Operations, New York, joins as executive VP/chief technology officer; Jack Oken, president, MMT Sales, New York, joins as manager, local services.
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The NAMIC Vision Awards recognize and honor cable programmers that produce quality, original programming about people and communities of color. The awards also honor individuals and/or companies whose outstanding efforts support diversity in the telecommunications and entertainment arenas.
Harry Friedman knows a thing or two about game shows, having worked on more than 30. As executive producer of both Wheel of Fortune and Jeopardy, he has helped those shows stay atop the ratings with innovations that keep viewers tuning in.

Moving to Hollywood at age 24, “all I knew is I wanted to be in television,” says the Nebraska native. “I didn’t set out to be in game shows, I don’t think anybody did back then. But I wanted to be in television.”

His first gig, though, was as a salesman at Oliver’s, a men’s clothing store in the San Fernando Valley. On the side, he repaired TVs and wrote jokes for a friend’s nightclub act. He got his show biz break when a friend recommended him to the producers of Hollywood Squares in 1971. Offered a question-writing position on the show, Friedman jumped at the chance: “I think I gave the folks at Oliver’s an hour’s notice.”

For 10 years, he worked as a producer/writer on Hollywood Squares. “It was the best training ground,” he recalls. “It was great fun. The low points were so few I can hardly remember them, and the high points are so numerous I can’t begin to recount them.”

He also began writing comedy routines for some of the regular celebrities on Squares, including Doc Severenson and John Davidson. The show was canceled in 1981, and Friedman began producing anything he could get his hands on.

He did game-show pilots and small projects for private businesses, including a script for an association of funeral directors. “I don’t think they appreciated or got my humor.”

After five years of freelancing, Friedman landed on the set of The New Hollywood Squares and worked as a writer/producer until the show was pulled off the air again.

In 1990, he found himself freelancing again. “Game shows had fallen out of favor. I was proud of the work I had done, and I’ve always been proud to have been associated with game shows, but that’s just not what the marketplace wanted.”

He produced prime time specials, including American Yearbook for CBS, late-night series Personals, and Caesar’s Challenge out of hotel/casino Caesar’s Palace in Las Vegas.

He took a writer/producer post on syndicated talk show Mike & Maty in 1993. Then, he says, he heard about the possibility of joining the producer ranks at Wheel of Fortune and jumped at the opportunity. “Wheel was in its 13th season, and I think the studio [Columbia TriStar] felt it was time to maybe bring in some fresh ideas. So, when I came to the show, I wanted to increase the energy level, give it a more contemporary feel.”

The first thing he did was change the letters that Vanna White turned. For the first 13 seasons, they were plastic, and, between puzzles, the show was forced to stop tapping while new letters were put in. “The change allowed us to tape the shows in real time,” Friedman says. “Once we did, I saw the energy levels in Pat [Sajak], Vanna and the audience come up.”

Two years later, he added producing chores at Jeopardy and soon made some changes there. “The long-held belief was you don’t dare take the show outside the studio; too many things can happen. So, in November 1997, we took the show on the road to Washington, D.C., and it was a big hit.”

Wheel is in its 19th season; Jeopardy celebrates its 4,000th episode this month with a special Radio City Music Hall Million Dollar Masters Tournament. How long can the shows continue?

“As long as we don’t change the core of the games, they can go on for a long time,” he says. “There are a lot of things we can do to change the show, but I would never do anything to change the game.”

—Joe Schlosser
Classifieds

Television

SALES CAREERS

ACCOUNT EXECUTIVE
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WASHINGTON D.C.

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PRODUCER/CAREERS

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Broadcasting & Cable/4-1-02 57
Sales and service

From the beginning, we thought TVB had a great idea: a convention of TV-station executives in New York in the same building as the New York Auto Show. Here was an opportunity for broadcasters to meet old friends, compare notes and rub hubcaps with their principal advertisers. After all, they’re in the same business: sales and service.

Well, we were right. It was a great idea. Last Tuesday, some 500 broadcasters (and 200 ad execs and vendors) met at the Javits Center for the TVB Marketing Conference as the cars were rolled into the exhibition halls. It will probably stand as the year’s largest gathering of TV-station managers, with NATPE having lost its way and the NAB convention becoming more and more a techie affair. (The NAB seems to have given up all pretense of running a broadcasters’ convention. It now bills the gathering as “The World’s Largest Electronic Media Show,” whatever that means.) The TVB conference worked because TVB President Chris Rohrs made sure everybody had plenty of reasons to be there, though that all auto money should have been enough. He persuaded seven station groups and the NBC affiliate board to meet in connection with the conference and he put together a first-rate program.

The conference gave a psychological lift to the broadcasters who attended. Although nobody promised a swift end to the advertising drought, all agreed that business is getting better, that the rebound has begun. More important, the conference got broadcasters together in numbers large enough to remind them that they are still a force to be reckoned with.

The higher cost of ignorance

A month ago (Feb. 25), we ran a story pointing out that about $1.4 billion in TV ad revenue was in jeopardy. Concerned that the advertising of prescription drugs is contributing to soaring health-care costs, we reported, Washington policymakers are second-guessing their 1997 decision to permit such ads. Sentiment to ban or restrict them is building, we said.

That’s the bad news. The good news is that the NAB is working closely with the American Association of Advertising Agencies to protect the ad category. Speaking at the TVB conference last week, NAB top lobbyist Jim May outlined the situation and put the broadcasters present on full alert, noting that some of the anti-advertising impetus was coming from large corporations, which pick up a big share of the nation’s health-care bill.

There is a legitimate debate here. But, until we have some definitive evidence that prescription-drug advertising does more harm than good, we would rather err on the side of putting more information in the hands of the public than less. That means letting the spots roll.

NAB’s win/loss record on key issues is as least as good as any Final Four team’s. But, as May acknowledged, it’s the kind of organization that wins only if broadcasters get out there and work their senators and congressmen. Make some appointments.
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