

had accounted for two-thirds of the company's revenue, now will be superseded by broadcast revenue. "Our largest segment," broadcasting, will account for 48% of Tribune's cash flow, Grenesko says.

With the announcement of the deal last Monday, Renaissance stock hit a 52-week high of 34 1/8. It closed last

Wednesday at 34. Tribune stock, meanwhile, rose to 73 5/8 last Monday from the previous Friday's closing of 72 5/8. It closed last Wednesday at 73 7/8.

Renaissance is largely owned by Warburg, Pincus, Capital Co. LP. "We have a firm commitment" that Warburg Pincus will sell, Madigan says. Renaissance Chairman Michael

Finkelstein says he will strike out on his own rather than go to work for Tribune (see box at left).

Of Renaissance management, FitzSimons says, "Their margins are good. It's been a very well run group." However, Tribune expects to shave \$3 million-\$4 million a year in corporate overhead, Grenesko says. ■

Renaissance buy should boost Tribune Entertainment

Programing division gains six new customers with company's acquisition of stations

By Cynthia Littleton

Tribune Entertainment may gain the most from its parent company's move to become the largest TV station group in the country.

Tribune Broadcasting's programing unit already had an ambitious development slate for 1997 before it added six new in-house customers last week. Tribune's purchase of Renaissance Communications provides a shot in the arm for the entertainment division, capping a transition that began when former president Rick Jacobson departed for Fox's Twentieth Television last year.

"We have been much more aggressive in terms of our development slate," says Dick Askin, the former head of Samuel Goldwyn Television, who succeeded Jacobson late last year. "We have programing for a variety of day-parts in various stages of development."

Corporate synergy helped at least one of those projects get off the ground. Tribune Entertainment is developing a weekly action hour based on Tribune Co.'s long-running comic strip *Terry and the Pirates*. Tribune Media, moreover, handles all print advertising for the entertainment wing, whose existing slate includes two series Askin brought from Goldwyn: *Flipper* and *Gladiators 2000*. Tribune also is launching a dating game show, *Bzzz!*, this fall.

At the same time, the stations make Tribune Entertainment an attractive partner for first-run co-ventures. Tribune is teaming with All American Television for the spring launch of two game show revivals, *Match Game* and *Tattletales*. Tribune is expected to begin selling the

block in August.

Tribune also may team again with King World Productions on a new first-run project. The two companies joined forces last January when King World took over station sales for *The Geraldo Rivera Show*, prompting speculation that Tribune was getting out of the distribution business.

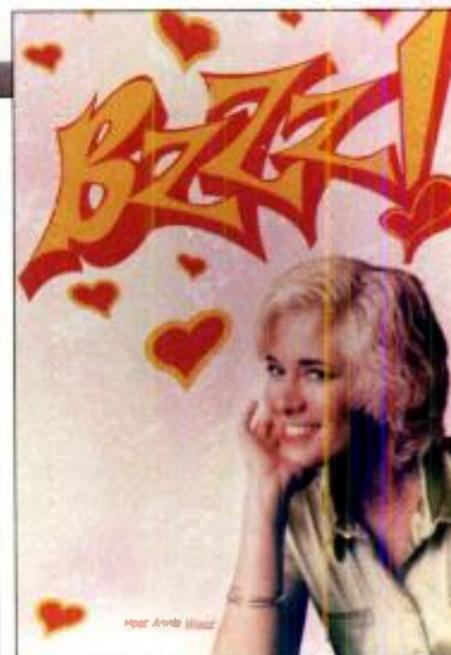
But with or without partners, Askin's goal is to bring three or four new shows to next year's NATPE convention, including a daytime strip companion to the game shows. The needs of Tribune's stations drive the development slate, but programing decisions are still made by general managers on a market-by-market basis.

"Tribune has seen the highs and lows of having its own syndication operation," Askin says. "My job is to give them as many top-tier projects and development deals to choose from as possible."

That process has been helped by the entertainment unit's recent move from Tribune's home base in Chicago to the KTLA(TV) lot in Hollywood. Insiders say it marks a significant strategy shift for Tribune. High-level micromanagement has been blamed by some for Tribune



Tribune's TV programing unit, headed by Dick Askin (above), is rapidly developing programing. In its portfolio: 'Bzzz!', a dating game show to debut this fall.



Entertainment's spotty performance during the past few years.

"With the creative community based [in Los Angeles], it makes sense to have Tribune Entertainment's headquarters there," says Dennis FitzSimons, executive vice president of Tribune Broadcasting. "We're not going to try to run everything from Chicago." ■