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NewsPro

The Magazine for News Professionals

August 2009 **crain**

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2009 MAGNUM PHOTOGRAPHY



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" This song
of the
WATERS
is audible to
every ear. "

-- Aldo Leopold, *A Sand County Almanac*

This year's tours:

- 1. Ultralight Delivery: Crane Conservation on Our Fractured Landscape**
Wake up with the birds to see one of North America's most endangered species.
- 2. Future Energy Choices**
Join us as we head to Southeastern Wisconsin to talk carbon capture, big coal, solar, Great Lakes wind, and lithium ion batteries.
- 3. Cruising Lake Michigan**
Hop aboard an EPA research vessel as we talk invasive species, bad ballast water, contaminated sediment and Great Lakes fish populations.
- 4. Roiling the Waters**
Some deep thinking in a Deep Tunnel about sewage overflows, and then we surface to look at Great Lakes Water Diversion.
- 5. Wetlands, Wildlife, and Wind**
A visit to one of the largest wetlands to talk about water quality, birds and nearby wind turbines.
- 6. Feeding Cities: Sustainable Agriculture and Environmental Justice**
A visit with a noted urban farmer in Milwaukee to talk of local food, better health and reducing our carbon footprint.
- 7. Canoe the Wisconsin River**
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FROM THE EDITOR

Familiar Name, New Beginning

Welcome to the first issue of *NewsPro*, a publication devoted to the needs and interests of news professionals.

Whatever your capacity in the field of journalism, our goal is to tell you things you need to know — and to help you to further understand the things you already know.

Some of you may already be familiar with *NewsPro*, though in a different form. The title has been around for the better part of two decades — first as a part of the television-industry trade publication *Electronic Media* and, later, as a regular feature of *TelevisionWeek*, as EM came to be known when it was relaunched in 2003.

But the growth of the news business, from the traditional TV stations, radio outlets and newspapers, across a multitude of cable networks and now Web sites, e-newsletters and blogs, has given us the opportunity to spin *NewsPro*

off as its own stand-alone monthly publication serving news professionals in every platform. And we hope you will help us find our way to best serve you.

We not only invite your comments and suggestions, we unashamedly admit that they're essential if we are to effectively do our job.

Apropos of the cover story of this premiere issue, as the world becomes increasingly dependent for news and information on the immediacy of Twitter and other instant technologies, we continue

to believe that there can be a unique bond between a monthly magazine and its readers.

On that note, we sincerely look forward to visiting with you in the months ahead. Our highest possible achievement will be to make that sentiment mutual.

Tom Gilbert
Editor



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NEWS POOLS

As Local Sharing Progresses, New Concerns Emerge

BY HILLARY ATKIN

New. Experimental. Here to Stay?

That would be the tease for the rapidly spreading practice of fiercely competitive television stations joining to pool their resources as a way to reduce costs and expand coverage.

The pooling of broadcast news video, also known as local news sharing (LNS), is a concept that has caught fire in recent months—but not without controversy—and is under way in several dozen markets, including all five of the nation's largest DMAs.

"In these challenging economic times, we began discussions on how to be more efficient," said Sharri Berg, senior VP of news operations for Fox Television Stations, which has 12 of its stations participating with local competitors in news-pooling arrangements. "The result was not only cost efficiency, but this gave us flexibility in directing our own unilateral resources. If we're covering a local news conference, if a station wants to send a reporter, it's their choice. LNS in no way constrains or dictates, but in fact gives stations more options."

Major Groups Involved

Many major station groups are taking part, including stations affiliated with and/or owned by the NBC Television Network, Tribune Broadcasting, Gannett Broadcasting, CBS Broadcasting, Scripps Television Station Group, McGraw-Hill Broadcasting and Sinclair Broadcast Group.

The practice is not without critics, however, who argue that it decreases competition, costs jobs, blurs the individuality of stations and limits the ability to cover stories.

There's no question about the financial benefits, however. "We've got to be smarter businessmen," said Steve Charlier, senior VP of news and operations at Tribune Broadcasting stations. "Our goal was to

operate efficiently and improve content, and be able to grow, to put more bodies in the street, and have more content."

Previous Pooling

The practice of pooling broadcast video is not a new one, and has long gone on in courtrooms, at concerts and sporting events, and in other controlled or restricted situations where multiple cameras might create havoc. It's also

"[News pooling] really has exceeded our expectations in terms of coverage. The LNS shoots 25 to 45 stories a day."

-Kingsley Smith, WXTF-TV

similar to in-house broadcast network feeds, which have existed for decades.

"Production sharing is going to become increasingly common," said Richard Hanley, assistant professor of journalism at Quinnipiac University in Hamden, Conn. "It happened with newspapers, who forged joint operating agreements and shared printing facilities. So this is not unusual for media companies to share production costs, and television news is no different. It's a reality of the moment and the future. As long as there are still separate reporters, I don't think it's a fatal issue to media."

Philadelphia was the first market to begin the LNS venture in January 2009, after an agreement was announced between Fox and NBC Local Media for WCAU-NBC 10 and WTXF-FOX 29 to share video, following a trial run between the two news departments that began the previous summer.

While individually retaining all other aspects of their news-gathering operations,

the stations went to work gathering and distributing general market video coverage through a separate LNS entity staffed with 19 experienced assignment editors, photographers and management. Meanwhile, each station pursued the goal of using its own resources to focus on other specialized reporting.

The arrangement has evolved from pooling video obtained at basic bread-and-butter daily news events like press conferences, speeches and court hearings. "It really has exceeded our expectations in terms of coverage," said Kingsley Smith, VP and news director of WTXF-TV. "We have 6½ hours of news on every day. The LNS shoots 25 to 45 stories a day and plays a big part in helping with coverage we have not been able to get. It is a content provider that picks up a lot of community stuff and good local flavor. It's evolved to where the LNS has enterprised its own stories and pitched them to the stations."

Impact on Station Identity

Yet even as costs have gone down—although no one is yet specifying how much—and story count has gone up (an estimated 20 percent at some stations), media watchdogs have questioned how such arrangements affect coverage and impact the viewing audience's favorable feelings for local stations.

Jill Geisler, faculty member at the Poynter Institute, is concerned about what she called the hazards of pooling, including diluted coverage, missing contacts and stories in the halls of power, the potential proliferation of staged events, the fact that pooling may save money but not jobs—and that non-pool players may escape all these hazards. In a June article for PoynterOnline, she called on news directors to exercise leadership and evaluate these risks to prove that pool coverage can make sense economically and journalistically.

While news-pooling arrangements are fast becoming standard operating procedure, many local news leaders—including ABC O&Os in Los Angeles, New York and Chicago—are choosing not to participate. News executives at some of those stations have said that going it alone makes them stronger and more unique in the marketplace. Behind the scenes they have

been concerned that jumping into the pool would prop up their weakest competitors.

After a six-week trial run in the news pool, Meredith Corp.'s Atlanta station, WGCL-TV, recently took its toes out of the water it had shared with Fox O&O WAGA-TV and Gannett's WXIA-TV, saying the pool limited its ability to cover different stories. Yet Meredith said it remains committed to the concept—its Phoenix station is on board—and Fox executives are circumspect about the pullout.

"With anything new you have to give it time and become comfortable with the concept and expectations," said Berg. "If you believe in the concept it will work. It depends on the market; each market is different. Some LNSes cover more breaking news, some cover a broader output of community events."

Fear of Job Loss

Yet perhaps the biggest concern of all among working broadcast journalists is job loss.

"Each station pays for two individuals, and they get four for free," said a 20-year veteran photographer at one of the three Los Angeles stations participating in LNS, who did not wish to be identified. "It's a terrible idea. Eventually they're going to cry wolf, say they have no money and expand the idea—and more people will be laid off. Are writers next? It has really lousy prospects, in my opinion."

He said he is not only concerned about losing the work, but losing the competitive

"You have to give it time and become comfortable with the concept. If you believe in the concept, it will work. It depends on the market. Each market is different."

- Sharri Berg, Fox Television Stations

edge that his station prides itself upon. "You want coverage, yet you're not willing to pay for it? You want to compete? Hire extra reporters. It's work that belongs to us, and they're basically getting it for nothing," the photographer said.

At Tribune's stations, Charlier said the LNS has not contributed to any cutbacks that have been made, and that some of the stations have added news hours, and hope to add more. "We haven't made a direct layoff as a result of LNS," he said. □

2009 is shaping up to be a very good year.

23 EMMY AWARD NOMINATIONS

27 NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF BLACK JOURNALISTS SALUTE TO EXCELLENCE NOMINATIONS

THE GEORGE FOSTER PEABODY AWARD

THE WALTER CRONKITE AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE IN TELEVISION POLITICAL JOURNALISM

4 EDWARD R. MURROW AWARDS FOR EXCELLENCE IN JOURNALISM

3 SIGMA DELTA CHI AWARDS FOR EXCELLENCE IN JOURNALISM

3 NEW YORK ASSOCIATION OF BLACK JOURNALISTS AWARDS

THE ASIAN-AMERICAN JOURNALISTS AWARD

THE IRE AWARD

3 WRITER'S GUILD AWARDS

4 GRACIE AWARDS

2 GERALD LOEB AWARDS



CBS NEWS
Very Good News

* Awards and Nominations received in 2009

NEWSPRO Q&A

Career Fast Track: Logan Never Took No for an Answer

CBS News' chief foreign affairs correspondent Lara Logan got her journalism start working for local papers in Durban, South Africa, and later spent several years as a free-lancer for numerous TV outlets, doing everything from assignment editing to reporting from Kosovo for CNN.

She caught CBS' attention in Kabul in 2001, when she free-lanced for CBS Radio while also a correspondent for the British morning show "GMTV." CBS made her a contributor to "60 Minutes II" in 2002 and later a staffer.

In 2006, while based in Iraq, she was named CBS' chief foreign correspondent and a "60 Minutes" correspondent. She returned to Washington, D.C., in June 2008, but continues to travel internationally for major stories. She recently discussed her career with *NewsPro* correspondent Elizabeth Jensen.

NewsPro: *You have one of the more unusual resumes in the business. You jumped from print to TV to radio, producing to on-air; mixing staff and free-lance work. In 2001 you were virtually unknown to American viewers and now you have one of the most visible positions at CBS News. For foreign reporters, having the wherewithal to be on-scene often pays big dividends, but what gave you the confidence to forge your own path?*

Lara Logan: I guess I never really considered there was an alternative to 'forging my own path.' I was raised to believe that you had to have a strong sense of self — who you are and what you stand for — and you had to be willing to stand up and be counted.

My mother used to say, 'the world does not owe you a living.' And we were taught

not to expect anything from anyone. In our house, you earned respect and you made your life by working for it. You also had to take responsibility for yourself and your actions.

Those values, and the love that I had at home, propelled me into the world from a very young age. There were no barriers to anything in our home — and I never believed there was anything I couldn't do if I wanted to.



WORLD CLASS South African-born Lara Logan found it a challenge to break into U.S. TV news.

And as a young woman, I was always being told I could never do this or do that — when I knew inside that I easily could. So I never took no for an answer.

And beyond all that is the fact that this was never about a job or a career for me, or 'being on TV.' It was what I believed in — it was who I am. I became a journalist because of what I saw or could not see in

South Africa. Because we all believed something had to be done to make things right in my country, and letting the world know the truth was the way to do that.

NewsPro: *What were the drawbacks of taking a less-than-traditional career route?*

Logan: I don't know what the drawbacks were because I don't know what a traditional route entails. It was hard to overcome being a foreigner and wanting to be on American television. And it was definitely hard to be taken seriously as a very young woman at a time when foreign reporting, especially in war zones, was dominated by men. But the work always won in the end.

NewsPro: *You worked part-time at local papers while in high school and college but you don't have a college journalism degree. There are those who argue that J-school is over-rated. Do you feel you missed out by studying commerce not journalism?*

Logan: I don't believe journalism needs to be studied — because the only qualification you really need is one you are born with: natural curiosity. If you are curious about the world and love poking your nose into other people's business, then you'll do just fine. Everything else you can learn on the job! I chose not to study journalism because I thought knowledge of the world and economics was more valuable to me. I had also been a working journalist for a year by the time I graduated high school so I knew I could do the job.

NewsPro: *Today, you're continuing your work, which takes you to occasionally dangerous places, while raising a son under a year old. Your fearlessness as a war reporter is what many admire, but what kind of challenges does that pose in this new phase of your life?*

Logan: Well, first of all, having a baby makes you cry about everything. It's

ridiculous. So that's a challenge. On my last trip to Baghdad I was fighting back the tears as I sat in an interview, listening to a father describe how his 8-year-old son was murdered by his kidnapers, even after he paid \$30,000 ransom. He showed me photographs of his little body, stiff with rigor mortis. They had taken his jacket and hanged him with it from a hook. It would have taken some time for him to die. And all I could think about was the love and sacrifice that goes into raising a child. And how losing mine would destroy me.

It is a new world, that's for sure. But I still believe as much in what I do and I only hope my son grows to understand that and love me for it — some day! (And

“It was hard to be taken seriously as a very young woman at a time when foreign reporting, especially in war zones, was dominated by men. But the work always won in the end.”

-Lara Logan, CBS News

not hate me for always being gone).

I keep a diary for him now so that if I am not around forever he will know how much I love him and what it's been like trying to be good mom and still do justice to my job, which I take very seriously.

NewsPro: *There's a lot of hand-wringing in the business about the future of foreign reporting, and how much longer networks are going to be able and willing to pick up the considerable expenses. Do you foresee a future for young journalists who aspire to a similar career as yours?*

Logan: It's hard to know where the industry is going and I understand the uncertainty. I am useless at this type of question because I can't imagine that people will not demand credible information and that as a society we would accept the death of reliable reporting. I have to believe this will work itself out to where people still go to the 'trusted brands' and that is what I would target as a young reporter. □

ECONOMIC FALLOUT

Star Anchors Join Journalism's List of Endangered Species

BY ELIZABETH JENSEN

When WTVJ-TV's Kelly Craig was laid off in June after nearly two decades as a reigning Miami anchor she was in good company. Across the country, once sacrosanct stars are finding their names on layoff lists or heading into not-always-voluntary retirement.

In St. Louis, KSDK-TV's lead anchor, Deanne Lane, a 25-year-veteran of the Gannett Broadcasting station, was let go mid-April. That same month, KNBC-TV in Los Angeles said goodbye to highly paid Paul Moyer, who retired after 24 years. At New York's WNBC-TV, sportscaster Len Berman signed off on April 22, after nearly a quarter century there, when he couldn't come to terms on a new contract; his old one paid an estimated \$1 million annually. There are regular whispers that his colleagues Chuck Scarborough and Sue Simmons will retire after their contracts expire.

Falling Stars

So is the era of the star anchor ending? Those peering into their crystal balls make widely divergent predictions.

What all agree on is that roles and pay scales are currently undergoing a radical, sometimes ugly, realignment. All told, about 1,200 employees in local television news lost their jobs in 2008, or 4.3 percent of the ranks, according to the RTNDA/Hofstra University annual survey, conducted by Hofstra professor Bob Papper, chairman of the school's journalism department. He found that nearly 32 percent of stations surveyed planned to eliminate staff positions in 2009.

Cost-cutting "is certainly behind a whole bunch of retirements we're seeing, and in some cases they could stay if they were willing to take a pay cut," Papper said.

The economy—particularly the severe slump in auto advertising, local stations' mainstay—is largely to blame. BIA Advisory Services recently revised its projected 2009 television station revenue estimate to \$16.6 billion, which would be off 17.3 percent from

2008, a level not seen since 1995.

According to Papper, those hit hardest by salary cuts were on-air employees: Reporters were down 13.3 percent; news anchors, 11.5 percent, weather forecasters and sports anchors about 9 percent. Overall, TV news salaries dropped 4.4 percent (8.2 percent when inflation-adjusted), the first decrease he has seen in 15 years of surveys.

Market Position Matters

But the cuts aren't across the board. "The fact is, if you're the frontline anchor at the No. 1 station or a very competitive No. 2, you're fine," albeit likely having had to take a pay cut, he said.

Conversely, he said, "If you're a really highly paid anchor at a distant No. 2 or 3 or 4 station, you're in trouble."

Indeed, there are some notable exceptions. While both WNBC-TV and WCBS-TV in New York have thinned their anchor ranks, top-rated WABC-TV so far hasn't. Ditto ABC affiliate WSB-TV in Atlanta.

Pali Capital analyst Richard Greenfield questioned in a July blog post why ABC hasn't taken cost-cutting steps, noting, "We believe the local TV business is in secular

“If you're a really highly paid anchor at a distant No. 2 or 3 or 4 station, you're in trouble.”

-Bob Papper, Hofstra University

decline. Revenue might bounce when the economy recovers," he wrote, but "we have a hard time believing that local news, weather, traffic and sports at 7 a.m./5 p.m./6 p.m./11 p.m. can sustain viewership levels, and, in turn, advertiser interest over the next several years." The culprit, he sees, is Internet competition and a slew of sports and weather cell phone apps, all "increasing at an accelerating pace."

Papper doesn't buy the theory that the star era is over; it's just "hard to be a high-paid anchor" right now. Unlike newspapers, he noted, TV news operations haven't laid off many more people than the U.S. economy overall, which has shed 3.8 percent of the work force. Standout employees will have options—and the opportunity to jump stations—once the economy rebounds, he predicted. □

ANNIVERSARIES

SPJ Grapples With Loss of Members at Century Mark

BY ELIZABETH JENSEN

When the Society of Professional Journalists was founded as a journalistic fraternity at DePauw University in Greencastle, Ind., in 1909, few could have imagined the upheavals that now roil the profession.

But as it celebrates its 100th anniversary, the nation's oldest journalism organization, founded as Sigma Delta Chi, can credit its survival to its ability so far to keep pace.

Although SPJ, which became a professional organization in 1916, weathered a rough patch a decade ago, the next few years may prove far trickier.

Membership has fallen in the past year as the ranks of American journalists have been decimated by the fallout from economic crisis and technological innovation. The organization also finds itself temporarily without a permanent executive director, after the June death of Terry Harper, its much admired leader since 2002.

Down 1,000 Members

Now based in Indianapolis, SPJ had about 8,500 members as of mid-June, said Joe Skeel, SPJ's co-interim executive director

with Chris Vachon. That's down about 1,000 from a year ago, he said, but the organization planned for a drop and has taken cost-cutting steps such as reducing the number of issues of its *Quill* magazine.

Because of the way that memberships get renewed, SPJ took its biggest membership hit at the end of 2008, and its ranks have remained more or less steady since then, he said, adding that membership in the past five years has varied between 8,500 and 10,000.

Moreover, SPJ has struggled in percentages less than some of the other beat-specific journalism organizations, he said, given its broad-based mission, which includes defense of a free press, fighting for access to public records, promoting ethics and high standards among those who practice journalism and encouraging diversity.

A New Slogan

In April its board approved a new branding slogan, "Fighting for your right to know, one story at a time," to complement the ongoing "Improving and Protecting Journalism."

The tough journalism climate has had an effect but it is "not taking us down," said Dave Aeikens, a reporter at the St. Cloud (Minn.) Times and SPJ's outgoing national president. "Now more than ever is when you need an organization like SPJ to provide some comfort and stabilization and fight on behalf of journalism," he said.

Although SPJ believes it has more

members who work in print than in electronic journalism, it doesn't break down its members by job, instead classifying them by where they are in their career. Its biggest categories are professional members (4,800) followed by students (1,500.)

Among those who choose to identify their work, the fastest-growing category is freelance, "which should not be surprising when you take into account all the journalists who are losing their jobs," Skeel said.

To entice those who are laid off to stick around, SPJ created a special incentive: A six-month dues waiver when it comes time to renew the \$72 annual membership, said Aeikens. There is also a members-only freelancer directory, and Skeel said SPJ is actively looking to add "tools that freelancers need to run their business," possibly including libel insurance.

SPJ's biggest accomplishments in recent years have been an aggressive push to add professional development programs for journalists and its ongoing lobbying for a federal journalism shield law, Aeikens said.

At a late June board meeting, SPJ's directors set in motion the search for a new permanent executive director to replace Harper. The hope is to have the position filled by late October or early November, Skeel said, with some progress to be reported at the annual convention in Indianapolis Aug. 27-30. "It's a difficult time but we're moving forward," Aeikens said. "We're going to move with deliberate speed here." □



Joe Skeel

SPJ's Harper Leaves Laughs in His Wake

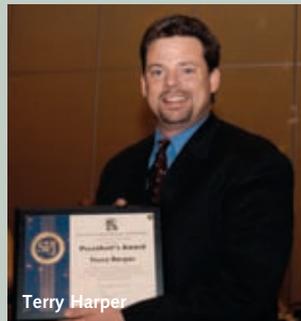
He never worked as a professional journalist, but Terry Harper, the executive director of the Society of Professional Journalists and the Sigma Delta Chi Foundation, knew how to write laugh-out-loud prose that could also bring a reader of his blog to tears.

His many friends and colleagues got a last installment of his humor on June 2, the day he died from a brain tumor, when his wife posthumously posted his farewell

blog entry, written months ahead of time. The entry, which amusingly used every possible cliché for death before concluding, "I have no idea what lies beyond. I do know that if love transcends the boundaries of life and space and time, I have amassed more than enough to carry me safely to my next destination."

"For a guy who wasn't a journalist, he was a terrific writer," said Dave Aeikens, SPJ's national president.

Harper, who was 45, had been SPJ's executive director for seven years, during



Terry Harper

two of which he was also battling the cancer. His survivors include his wife, Lee Ann, and sons Dale and Jace.

A 1986 graduate of Oklahoma State University, Mr. Harper spent 19 years managing nonprofit associations.

After a Viking-style funeral service at an Indiana lake and a "rip-roaring" party that honored Mr. Harper with karaoke and Maker's Mark bourbon, his colleagues are now working on a memorial to be announced at the August convention. □

—Elizabeth Jensen

Newsmakers

Weather Channel Names Kelly President-CEO



Michael J. Kelly

Michael J. Kelly has been named president and CEO of The Weather Channel Cos.

Kelly will be responsible for the strategic direction and operations of TWCC, which encompasses The Weather Channel, The Weather Channel Interactive, www.weather.com, The Weather Channel Mobile, Weather Services International and Enterprise Electronics Corp.

Kelly, who was president of AOL Media Networks from 2004-07, was most recently an adviser to the Veronis Suhler Stevenson private equity fund.

He began his media career in 1980 at The Chicago Tribune. In 1983 he joined Time Inc., where during a 17-year run he rose to publisher of Entertainment Weekly, which he helped found.

Coleen Marren is the new news director for CBS-owned duopoly KDKA-TV and WPCW-TV in Pittsburgh.

Marren joins the stations from Hearst-Argyle's Boston ABC affiliate WCVB-TV, where she had been news director for eight years.

Prior to her stint at WCVB, Marren was a news director in Milwaukee and Hartford, Conn. She also worked at ABC-owned WLS-TV in Chicago.

She replaces John Verrilli, who left KDKA to become news director at the CBS-owned WBZ-TV in Boston.

Christian Farr is joining NBC-owned WMAQ-TV in Chicago as a general assignment reporter and fill-in anchor.

For the past three years, Farr has been a correspondent for "Chicago Tonight" on that city's public broadcasting station, WTTW-TV. Prior to that he was an anchor and reporter for Fox-owned WTXF-TV in Philadelphia.

Farr joins the station Aug. 24.

Chris Carl and Steve Schwaid have joined the board of directors of the Radio-Television News Directors Association.

Carl, who is news director for Delmarva Broadcasting-owned WDEL-AM in Wilmington, Del., will represent the RTNDA members from Region 12. Schwaid, who is news director for Meredith-owned WGCL-TV in Atlanta, will represent members from Region 13.

Tod A. Smith has been promoted to president and general manager of Belo-

owned WVEC-TV in Hampton/Norfolk, Va.

Smith joins WVEC from Belo Corp.-owned stations KMSB-TV and KTTU-TV in Tucson, Ariz., where he was president and general manager since June 2006.

From 1999 to 2005 he was the local sales manager for Belo's WWL-TV in New Orleans.

Louis Gump has been appointed VP of mobile for CNN.

Gump, who is based in Atlanta, was previously VP of mobile for The Weather Channel Interactive. He joined The Weather



Christian Farr

Coleen Marren

Channel in 2001 and held a variety of roles there over the years, including director of business development and director of mobile products and services.

Patti McGettigan has been named news director for LIN TV-owned WISH-TV 8 in Indianapolis. She previously was news director at LIN's WOOD-TV in Grand Rapids, Mich.

McGettigan replaces Kevin Finch, who left WISH in June for a production job. □

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Twitter Makes Serious News

The Outbreak of Unrest in Iran Cements Technology's Place in Journalism

By Daisy Whitney

In the modern news world, the idea that the respected news professionals at ABC's "Nightline" are involved with a program with the unlikely name of "Twittercast" seems perfectly normal. But it would have sounded absurd even just a year ago.

The "Twitter" in Twittercast, of course, is the new Web-based text-broadcast service that played such a pivotal role in getting news out of Iran during the early days of protest following that country's controversial presidential elections. More and more, it is becoming a key technology for TV and print news operations to keep in touch both with their audience and with fast-breaking news.

Emergency Tweets

As technology has evolved from e-mail to cell phone video to 140-character "tweets," news organizations have increasingly incorporated user-generated content into their day-to-day operations. Twitter in particular made major inroads as a news tool in January when a US Airways flight was forced to make an emergency landing in the Hudson River shortly after takeoff from New York's LaGuardia airport.

It was the Iran election protests in mid-to late June, however, that proved the clincher to Twitter's usefulness as a journalistic resource, suddenly taking on "a temporary air of indispensability" for news

outlets scrambling for hard-to-get information, according to Al Tompkins, the Poynter Institute's group leader for broadcasting and online. "It is a useful tool that seems to find legitimate journalism application," he said.

At times, Twitter, text messages and amateur video—most notably one capturing the shooting death of 26-year-old bystander Neda Agha-Soltan—were the only sources of news out of Iran, and Twitter quickly became an important communications channel for people on the ground to get the word out about what was happening with the election and subsequent protests.

ABC News Chief Foreign Correspondent Jim Sciutto and Dubai-based reporter Lara Setrakian relied heavily on Twitter messages originating on the protest front to build their Iran coverage, according to ABC News Senior VP Jeffrey Schneider. In addition, Sciutto tweeted his own reports throughout the day.

World's First 'Twittercast'

ABC is also using the service for "Nightline"—which has teamed up with Twitter on several occasions to cover major events, including President Obama's press conferences—and presents an online broadcast Mondays at noon that incorporates Twitter technology.

The half-hour "Twittercast," as it is being called, is hosted by "Nightline"

anchors and correspondents and allows viewers to discuss the news of the day in real time via Twitter. It's available on ABC.com and at the digital channel ABCNews Now.

ABC said "Nightline" and its anchors and correspondents now have more than 1 million Twitter followers.

As part of its Michael Jackson memorial service coverage in early July, MTV ran live video and Twitter streams on its Web site, and let people comment on what they were watching via a Facebook widget. CNN had a similar partnership with Facebook during the presidential inauguration early this year.

MSNBC.com also provided live video and Twitter streams of the Jackson memorial, running a widget with all tweets that contained Twitter tags for the event or the network, which helped drive traffic to the site. MSNBC.com reported that 7 million unique visitors watched 3 million live streams of the memorial service, logging more than 82 million page views by the end of the day.

Local stations are also tapping into the Twitter-sphere.

ABC-owned KGO-TV in San Francisco uses Twitter to monitor news events, promote stories and interact with viewers.

"We've had tremendous success using Twitter to reach new audiences and to better monitor local and national breaking news events," said Jennifer Mitchell, director of Web operations for the station.





"Twitter is most often the first place people find out about big stories these days."

KGO is also reaching out to viewers through the service. In early July, KGO posted a tweet asking if viewers' iPhones get hot when running certain apps. Viewer feedback was incorporated into the final story, Mitchell said.

During the popular San Francisco Bay to Breakers race in May the station covered the event online, with anchors reading live tweets from runners and spectators, some of whom also called in to do live phone-ins with the anchors.

Print Endeavor

Newspapers are adopting the technology as well. According to Meg Thilmony, a member of the two-member Innovation Team at the News-Gazette in Champaign, Ill., the 157-year-old newspaper originally set out to use Twitter as a way to improve news gathering by facilitating communication between reporters, but it quickly became something much more.

"For 150 years, newspapers have pushed out information to people without any feedback, except letters to the editor," Thilmony said, adding that Twitter now gives readers a voice. "It's important to know what matters to the community," she said.

The 40,000-circulation News-Gazette sends out news alerts as well as tweets linking to its news stories and to other official sources of information, such as the city of Champaign's blog. Thilmony has written an extensive primer for professionals on the use of Twitter at www.notrain-nogain.org, the No Train, No Gain Web site for newspaper journalists.

As far as vetting news tips it receives from the public, Thilmony said, "We have a solid relationship with many of our 1,450 [Twitter] followers," adding that because of the relatively small size of the market, the staff actually knows many of the city's residents. "We only re-tweet people we trust," she said, because information—and misinformation—"can go viral very quickly."

It is a concern echoed by the Poynter Institute's Tompkins. "I do worry that faster distribution of tiny torrents of info do not ensure accuracy or context or authenticity," he said.

"It's important to recognize that Twitter is an evolution, not a revolution," said Tom Rosenstiel, director of the Pew Research Center's Project for Excellence in Journalism. "In Iran, for instance, we have seen similar use of other new technology before," he added, noting that the then-new technology of amateur video cameras and VCRs were used to record and disseminate scenes of political unrest as far back as the country's 1979 revolution.

Authenticity Jeopardized

According to Rosenstiel, a danger Twitter faces is losing its authenticity as it grows larger, and messages intended to sell join messages intended to inform. "Corporatization will change its meaning," he said. "It becomes a marketing device instead of citizen-to-citizen communication. It may already be at that point."

Is Twitter in the newsroom to stay?

"The concept of pushing information into the stream is, but years from now will we remember we used to call it 'Twitter'? I don't know," Rosenstiel concluded, adding, "Blogs used to be called 'me-zines.'" □

ON THE GROUND
Citizen journalists reported much of the Iran protests.



Bridging the Job Gap

With Its ‘Reinvention Convention,’ NABJ Is Seeking to Help Members Forge a Path to Future Employment

By Allison J. Waldman

In these difficult economic times, as newspapers continue to shutter, TV advertising sales lag and newsrooms demand more from ever-smaller staffs, this year’s National Association of Black Journalists’ convention and career fair could prove one of the most important to date to its members.

Addressing the Problem

According to Barbara Ciara, president of the 33-year-old NABJ, the mandate for this year’s conference, dubbed “The Reinvention Convention” and being held Aug. 5-9 in Tampa, Fla., is to be of more service than ever to the rank and file.

“Obviously, the economy is having a major impact on our members,” Ciara said. “We are offering them an opportunity to actually upgrade their résumés through attending the NABJ convention.”

The education and training sessions offered at the event include workshops—some 90-minutes, some half-days and some daylong—and panel discussions on topics including making transitions to public relations, communications, free-lancing and starting your own business.

The goal, Ciara said, is for members to go back to their workplaces able to say they developed a new skill. “We expect that all attendees to this year’s convention will leave with some digital journalism experience under their belt,” she said.

Self-starters and freelancers will also be served by NABJ events. “This year, we have a variety of sessions that focus on entrepreneurship, leadership and business skills in the field of communications,” Ciara said.

“Broadcast journalists, especially, are seeing a new day as the talent pool expands and requires them to know all things broadcast, all things online and expand their skill set,” Ciara said. “NABJ is reaching out to give them the new multimedia skills that will allow them to retain their current job or be more competitive in the marketplace.”

The NABJ—the largest organization of journalists of color in the nation, with more than 4,100 members—provides training,



career development and support to black journalists worldwide. It was recently awarded a \$150,000 grant by the New York-based Ford Foundation, which will go to directly aid its unemployed members, Ciara said.

"Thanks to [the grant] we have even been able to offer professional scholarships to members who have recently been laid off so they might attend the convention and take part in this training," she said.

Whether looking for work—or fearful they soon might be—journalists attending NABJ also stand to benefit from the gathering's career fair.

The fair, at which dozens of companies set up booths in the exhibit hall to meet association members, "has always been one

of the highlights and has attracted members for decades," Ciara said. "Top companies in broadcast, communications, digital media and print come out year after year because they realize that NABJ conventions attract the best and the brightest, and the career training offered at the convention is always ahead of the curve."

Networking Opportunity

There's something for more seasoned journalists as well, Ciara added. "Mid-career professionals know that our convention draws politicians, athletes, artists and entertainers, authors and entrepreneurs, and it is a widely known networking opportunity."

Member health is also a concern of the organization, which is devoting a special section of the convention floor to Healthy NABJ, offering morning exercise programs and discussions about healthy living habits.

NABJ Honorees

In addition to education and training sessions, leading black journalists will be honored at the convention, with a particular emphasis on the sports beat.

Michael Wilbon, longtime Washington Post sports columnist and co-host of ESPN's "Pardon the Interruption," will receive the NABJ's Lifetime Achievement Award this year.

"Michael is the epitome of the crossover journalist in a time when the industry is

evolving rapidly and journalists have to have a broad range of skills," Ciara said. "He is one of far too few black columnists in the United States. [He] connects with sports fans and players like none other while capturing the enduring, challenging and inspiring moments of the game."

Whiteside Recognized

Another sports journalism figure who will be recognized is Larry Whiteside, pioneering sports writer for the Boston Globe, who will be posthumously inducted into the NABJ Hall of Fame during the Tampa conference.

"Larry was the first black baseball beat writer, and he broke new ground by following the sport internationally," Ciara said.

In addition, the NABJ Legacy Award will go to the Sports Journalism Institute, founded by Leon Carter, sports editor at the New York Daily News, and ESPN news editor Sandy Rosenbush, a former editor for Sports Illustrated and The New York Times. SJI is a program for minority college students interested in sports journalism careers and works in conjunction with the Poynter Institute to provide a training week, followed by paid eight-week internships at newspapers around the country. It has trained more than 250 student journalists, Ciara said.

Michele Norris of National Public Radio's "All Things Considered" is receiving the NABJ Journalist of the Year Award. "She is being recognized for her outstanding investigative work throughout the year, but especially during the run-up to the election," Ciara said. "Michele pitched and carried out a discussion series on race in York, Pa., that struck a chord with many Americans, demonstrating that strong investigative journalism will never go out of style."

Cynthia Gordy, 27, the first White House correspondent for Essence magazine, will be honored with the NABJ's Emerging Journalist Award, illustrative of the "high importance of political coverage in the Age of Obama," Ciara said. "She is already making a name for herself in digital and print media." □

NABJ 2009

What: The National Association of Black Journalists 2009 Annual Convention and Career Fair

Where: Tampa (Fla.) Convention Center

When: Aug. 5-9

Details: nabj.org

Economy's Cuts Felt Deeply by Minorities

Black and Other Journalists of Color Particularly Impacted by Loss of Jobs

By Allison J. Waldman

The main objective of the 2009 National Association of Black Journalists conference, being held this month in Tampa, Fla., is to help members reinvent themselves professionally, either by expanding their skills to encompass new forms of media or guiding them onto other career paths.

Particularly Vulnerable

Widespread unemployment, little or no job security and the need to evolve to keep up with a rapidly transforming profession are challenges currently faced by all journalists. But some observers contend that journalists of color have been more vulnerable than others in this troubled economic environment.

According to Hub Brown, chair of the communications department and professor of broadcast journalism at the S.I. Newhouse School of Public Communications in Syracuse, N.Y., journalists of color make up a much smaller share of newsroom populations than they do of the population of the country as a whole.

"The organization Unity: Journalists of Color has noted the decline in employment among minorities in journalism, and according to them and others, that decline is steeper than it is for non-minorities in the business," he said, adding, "The economic downturn is rolling back progress already made, and will in the short term result in newsrooms that look less like the country than they do now."

Corroborating Unity's assertion is a report released early this year by the American Society of News Editors that

found that 13.5 percent of black newspaper journalists lost their jobs in 2008.

"The ASNE 2008 newsroom census confirmed what many in journalism already knew to be true on an anecdotal level: Journalists of color are leaving the

industry in disproportionate numbers, whether because of layoffs, buyouts or resignations," said Angie Chuang, assistant professor at the American University School of Communication in Washington, D.C.

"There was an overall 11.3 percent decrease in newsroom employment, but for black journalists that was 13.5 percent, and for Asians that was 13.4 percent. The percentage of minorities in supervisory positions went down as well, from 11.4 to 11.2 percent, which seemed significant given that recruitment and retention efforts for managers of color had been growing that number in past years," she said.

"It may be a first-hired, last-fired layoff policy—or that younger journalists may feel more free to start

"The economic downturn will in the short term result in newsrooms that look less like the country than they do now."

-Hub Brown S.I. Newhouse School

second careers," said Chuang. "But since many buyouts target older journalists,



Deborah Potter



Angie Chuang



Hub Brown

there may be a counterbalancing effect.

According to Deborah Potter, a veteran journalism trainer, reporter and writer, who has been executive director of NewsLab, a nonprofit journalism resource in Washington, D.C., since 1998, it's members of the upper echelon, whatever their color, who have taken the brunt of the economic crisis in journalism, not necessarily most recently hired—the latter category one that often includes minority journalists, many of whom are among a news organization's younger staffers.

"Certainly the high-profile departures we've seen wouldn't necessarily indicate that people who came in last are going out first," Potter said.

"I don't want to sound like a Pollyanna, because I know it's tough out there economically—it's especially tough if you're someone whose job is in jeopardy—but in the long term, if newsrooms survive, they may well be hiring younger, less expensive people to do some of the work," she said.

Potter said that's particularly the case at TV stations. "People who have been there a long time are getting axed, not necessarily last-hired, first-fired," Potter said. "A lot of stations have decided to shed

their largest salaries in order to save money, and those typically go to longtime, on-air people."

Possible Opportunities

Hiring younger, less experienced—and less expensive—talent may well be the trend for the foreseeable future. And with that, Potter believes, could come more opportunities for journalists of color.

"It's entirely possible that there are opportunities out there. In fact there were some data that I think came out recently from the newspaper industry talking about journalism students being able to get jobs in their field—journalism—which, frankly, was a surprise since everything we've read is that newsrooms are shrinking," Potter said. "A former colleague of mine talks about a forest fire burning through the newsroom and getting rid of a lot of old, dead wood. Any time that happens, young sprouts spring up."

Those new faces, fortunately, will continue to reflect the diversity in American media. And just because there are now virtual newsrooms where reporters don't interact, does not mean

that diversity doesn't matter, Potter noted.

"Diversity doesn't just have to do with the face behind the camera or somewhere in the newsroom. It has to do with the kinds of stories that you're going to report," Potter said.

"By the way, diversity is a pretty big umbrella. It encompasses not just racial and gender and sexual orientation, but income and background and all kinds of things," she added. "The more diverse your newsroom, no matter where people are physically located, the better the

"Diversity doesn't just have to do with the face ... in the newsroom. It has to do with the kinds of stories that you're going to report." -Deborah Potter NewsLab

reporting. I don't think [online journalism] in any way downgrades the need for diversity." □

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A New Perspective on D.C.

Roland Martin Brings Diversity to TV One's 'Washington Watch'

By Allison J. Waldman

Roland S. Martin speaks eloquently and in bold statements. When he says that he has a fresh perspective for the 21st century, he means it.

In addition to currently running for the post as secretary of the National Association of Black Journalists, the multifaceted journalist is also preparing to host a new Sunday morning public affairs program for TV One called "Washington Watch."

According to Martin, there is a sound and important reason for launching a new Sunday political talk show—diversity. "Every Friday we read the listings of who are booked for the Sunday shows and it is essentially television apartheid," he said. "It is pathetic and atrocious when you watch and see virtually no people of color speaking of the issues of the day. Not just elected officials, but policy makers."

Martin, who is also a CNN commentator as well as a radio analyst on "The Tom Joyner Morning Show," is

already diligently at work on the show. "We're devising the format, but I will be the host and there will be a panel of journalists and analysts," he said.

April Ryan, White House correspondent for the American Urban Radio Networks, and Robert Traynham, Philadelphia Tribune columnist and Comcast host, will be regular panel members.

A New Landscape

TV One CEO and President Johnathan Rodgers says the Sunday news program landscape will shift dramatically when "Washington Watch" debuts on the network Sept. 27 at 11 a.m.

"This show exists on TV One, which is primarily an entertainment network, as a way to keep our viewers in touch with what's going on in Washington with events that really have a daily effect on their lives, but in addition to that, it will both chronicle and celebrate and critically observe the presidency of Barack Obama," Rodgers said.

More than 90 percent of TV One's audience is African-American adults. "Washington Watch" will be targeted to that audience with "all the sort of nuance and flavor that that involves," Rodgers added.

"In the same way that we were able [to] at the Democratic National Convention in Denver and on election night in Chicago, our overlay is to bring that news from an African-American perspective," he said.

Martin's role on "Washington Watch" is a direct result of his work on the 2008 presidential election. "The African-American community really appreciated what he did as a CNN correspondent throughout the campaign," Rodgers said. "They felt that they could count on him for not only intelligence but courage, because he wouldn't let other pundits get away with just making up stuff. So he is a hero in our community. He's contemporary, he's knowledgeable, he's experienced and he's broad-based." As for the show's guests, "We want to bring on people who are involved in issues. There will be members of the



TWO TO WATCH
TV One CEO Johnathan Rodgers, left, and Roland Martin at the Trumpet Awards in January.

Congressional Black Caucus, other members of Congress—the House and the Senate—as well as administration officials,” Martin said.

Audience Interactivity

In addition to voices from inside the beltway, “Washington Watch” is going to include the involvement of real people outside D.C. “We’re going to have interactivity. We’re going to take various video comments and reports from our audience, utilizing email, utilizing Skype,” Martin said. “We want to hear from regular people. I don’t believe in talking down to the rest of the country.”

The show will be broadcast from Washington, D.C., but Martin is determined to interview people who have not been regulars on the other Sunday morning political shows and draw viewers over to TV One.

“I just don’t believe that people should only look to ‘Meet the Press,’ ‘Face the Nation’ and ‘This Week’ and the show on Fox to know what people are saying and thinking all around this country,” Martin said. “There are any number of people who travel to Washington every week who testify before Congress, who meet with lawmakers, who are lobbying for various issues, people who are coming from different parts of the country. We’ll be able to have those people on our show.”

There will also be familiar African American celebrities on the program. “Many African-American entertainers and athletes

“[Roland Martin] is a hero in our community. He’s contemporary, he’s knowledgeable, he’s experienced and he’s broad-based.”

-Johnathan Rodgers, TV One

are very involved in public policy,” Martin said. “Actress Gabrielle Union has talked openly about being raped, and has testified before Congress when it came to funding for inner city rape crisis centers. You had former NBA player Alonzo Mourning talking about the need for additional funding to target youth anti-violence efforts. These folks have a voice. I just don’t believe the only people who care about public policy are Angelina Jolie and Brad Pitt and George Clooney. Look at what Don Cheadle is [continued on page 21]

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Chancellor, University of Illinois at Chicago
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Wilbon Sporting a New Honor

NABJ's Busy Lifetime Achievement Honoree Pauses to Reflect

Michael Wilbon, longtime Washington Post sports columnist and co-host of ESPN's popular daily sports talk show "Pardon the Interruption," will be honored with the National Association of Black Journalists Lifetime Achievement Award on Aug. 8 at the organization's annual convention in Tampa, Fla.

Wilbon recently spoke with NewsPro correspondent Allison J. Waldman about the upcoming NABJ gathering, his prestigious honor and the current climate for a reporter and TV personality in the ever-changing, economically strained broadcast and media environment.

NewsPro: What's your reaction to receiving the NABJ Lifetime Achievement Award?

Michael Wilbon: Damn, I'm old! Seriously, I'm very pleased and humbled by it. I'm not normally introspective or reflective, but [something like] this makes you think about things, and I'm very grateful to NABJ that they think I'm worthy of this award. It never crossed my mind that I would receive it, particularly since I'm only 50 years old.

NewsPro: I was surprised to read that you are one of only 20 African-American sports columnists working now.

Wilbon: I remember when I was one of only three! I became a columnist in 1990, and I know that number had swelled at one point, but then a lot of people have gotten out. The numbers are down, but I think even at the

height, it wasn't more than 30. In terms of black columnists, we've always been underrepresented. As the people who set the agenda and are discussion leaders, those numbers have never been what they should have been.

NewsPro: Did the fact that ESPN hired so many black journalists, like you and John Saunders and Stuart Scott and Stephen A. Smith, change the atmosphere and have a positive impact?

Wilbon: Yes, yes. David Aldredge was another one. Newspapers opted for diversity reluctantly. They didn't take seriously the responsibility. I was fortunate to work for an editor at the Washington Post who always hired an incredibly diverse staff long before other people were doing it. ESPN, for whatever reason, had David doing basketball and Ralph Wiley on Page Two of the dot-com and me. It was really good to see on the TV side. Newspapers were slow to recognize that point of view. And remember, at that time, there were hundreds of daily newspapers.

NewsPro: Do you think that blogging and the Internet might be opening doors for black journalists because is it color-blind?

Wilbon: I don't know much about it because I'm not big on blogging. Whatever you call a blog, it's really a column. But I don't want to read the ranting of somebody that I know doesn't have access to people to talk to them and do reporting.

NewsPro: But what about the many journalists who are now required to blog in addition to reporting in the newspaper or publication?

Wilbon: I don't consider those blogs. I know they're entitled blogs, but I don't consider what the Orlando Sentinel beat writer is doing online to be blogging. I read good writing by good reporters who are doing whatever you want to call it whether it's online or in print. There are some things that are labeled blogs that are just damn good reporting. I get them and I read them.

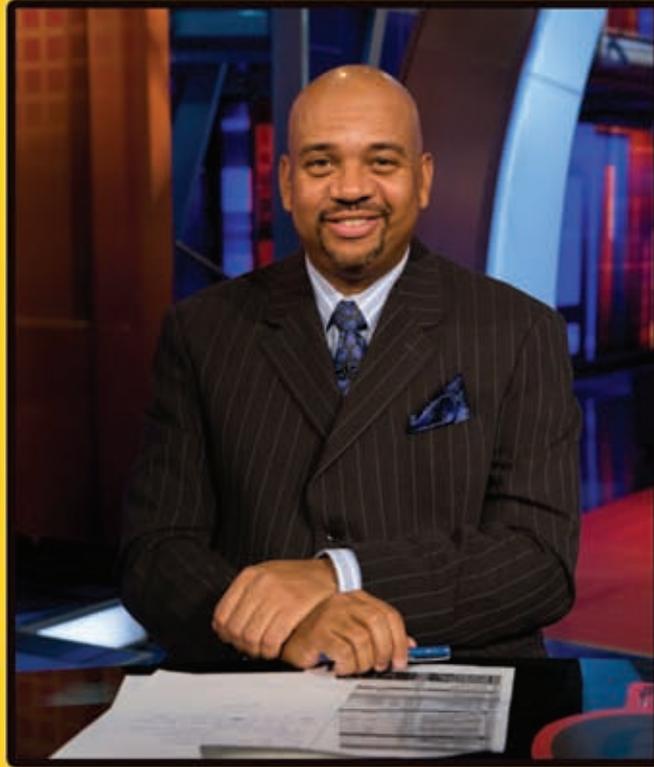
NewsPro: On 'Pardon the Interruption' you and Tony Kornheiser have cultivated this Siskel & Ebert rapport. Are you surprised that this has worked?

Wilbon: I was. We both were shocked. We knew that we knew content. I'm not going to be falsely modest about that. We're good at what we do because we know how to present our case because we've had to present it in print. We had a good idea of how to do that. Of course, it didn't mean people would care.

NewsPro: You seem to still have a passion for sports, am I right?

Wilbon: I love the games. Reality TV tries to re-create the drama of sports, but sports is the only thing that has it. It's the human drama of athletic competition. You can't vote on the outcome. It's real. All that other stuff is phony.

[continued on page 21]



Congratulations Michael Wilbon

NABJ

Lifetime Achievement Award

Thanks for all that you do for us

ESPN

2009 NABJ Convention and Career Fair Schedule

Wednesday, Aug. 5

- 7 a.m.-7 p.m.** Registration
- 8 a.m.-5 p.m.** Exhibit Hall Set-up
- 9 a.m.-3 p.m.** Chapter Day Chapter Leadership Programming
- 9 a.m.-5 p.m.** NABJ Learning Labs
- 6 p.m.-8 p.m.** Welcome Reception

Thursday, Aug. 6

- 6:30 a.m.-7:30 a.m.** NABJ Morning Workout
- 7 a.m.-5 p.m.** Registration
- 7:30 a.m.-9 a.m.** Professional Development Breakfast I
- 8 a.m.-5 p.m.** Career Fair & Exhibition
- 8 a.m.-5 p.m.** Cyber Cafe
- 8 a.m.-8 p.m.** Moneta J. Sleet Jr. Photo and Page Design Competition

9 a.m.-11 a.m. Opening Ceremony & Newsmaker Plenary

9 a.m.-5 p.m. Authors Showcase & Bookstore

11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. Associate Members Meeting

11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. Regional Caucus

11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. Student Members Meeting

1 p.m.-2:30 p.m. Workshop Session A

3 p.m.-4:30 p.m. Workshop Session B

4:30 p.m.-5:30 p.m. Candidates Forum

6:30 p.m.-8 p.m. Media Receptions

8 p.m.-10 p.m. NABJ Presents

10 p.m.-12 a.m. President's Reception (invitation only)

11 p.m.-4 a.m. Sports Task Force JAM

Friday, Aug. 7

- 6:30 a.m.-7:30 a.m.** NABJ Morning Workout
- 7 a.m.-5 p.m.** Registration

7:30 a.m.-9 a.m. Professional Development Breakfast II

8 a.m.-9 a.m. NABJ Business Meeting

8 a.m.-6 p.m. Cyber Cafe

9 a.m.-10:30 a.m. Plenary Session

9 a.m.-12 p.m. NABJ Short Course

9 a.m.-5 p.m. Career Fair & Exhibition

9 a.m.-5 p.m. NABJ Authors Showcase & Bookstore

11 a.m.-1 p.m. Hall of Fame Banquet & Inductions (ticketed event)

1 p.m.-4 p.m. NABJ Short Course

1:30 p.m.-3 p.m. Workshop Session C

3:30 p.m.-5 p.m. Workshop Session D

5:30 p.m.-7 p.m. Sam Lacy Pioneer Awards Ceremony

6:30 p.m.-8 p.m. Media Receptions

6:30 p.m.-8 p.m. VTF Awards Ceremony

9 p.m.-11 p.m. NABJ Film Festival

10:30 p.m.-2 a.m. Tampa Chapter Party

Saturday, Aug. 8

7:30 a.m.-9:30 a.m. 5K Walk/Run

8 a.m.-11 a.m. Registration

8 a.m.-12 p.m. Cyber Cafe

8 a.m.-3 p.m. NABJ Family Day (3-on-3 basketball, Golf, etc pending)

9 a.m.-12 p.m. Career Fair & Exhibition

12 p.m.-2 p.m. Visual Task Force Photo Auction

1 p.m.-3 p.m. Sports Task Force Plenary

3 p.m.-4 p.m. NABJ Task Force Meetings

7 p.m.-9:30 p.m. Salute to Excellence Awards Gala (ticketed event)

11 p.m.-2 a.m. San Diego 2010 Kickoff

Sunday, Aug. 9

8 a.m.-1:30 p.m. Tampa Vendors Showcase

9 a.m.-12 p.m. NABJ Sunday Brunch (ticketed event)

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Michael Wilbon (BSJ80)



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AAJA Shares Goal

By Dinah Eng

The Asian American Journalists Association, one of NABJ's partners in the Unity: Journalists of Color strategic alliance, will also be exploring ways to reinvent the business of journalism and helping members make new career choices at its national convention, scheduled for Aug. 12-15 in Boston.

Program committee co-chairs Paul Cheung, deputy multimedia presentation editor for The Miami Herald, and Frank Witsil, copy editor for the Detroit Free Press, have designed for the gathering more than 30 sessions on multimedia skills, dealing with industry changes, work-life balance and financial planning.

"A lot of it is future-oriented," Cheung says. "In terms of management, we have a workshop on how to manage big stories and deploy coverage across departments, as well as a session on how to run an innovative newsroom with fewer resources."

Convention highlights include a plenary session on the risks of reporting abroad, remarks by U.S. Commerce Secretary Gary Locke at the opening reception, and a keynote address by John Yang, NBC News White House correspondent, at the Gala Scholarship and Awards Banquet.

George Kiriya, AAJA vice president for broadcast and a news reporter for KNTV-TV, the NBC affiliate in the San Francisco Bay area, says industry changes have blurred the lines between different media platforms, so this year's convention, like that of the NABJ, will focus on skill sets everyone needs.

An estimated 500 attendees—an all-time low—are expected at the gathering. Past attendance figures ranged from 900 to 1,200. □

TV One [continued from page 16]

doing. We want to provide an avenue to have their voices broadcast to the rest of the country.”

Energy and Passion

Being an African-American broadcaster in the era of President Obama suits Martin's energetic style and passion. “I can't tell you how many places I've gone to around the country where I've talked to people who shine shoes, work in convenience stores, bicycle messengers, lawyers and doctors and nurses and teachers, you name it ... people who were just captivated by Obama's election,” Martin said.

“Now the question is ‘what's next?’ I think we need to be able to answer that ‘what's next.’ What is the black agenda moving forward? How do we hold this Congress and this administration accountable to the issues that we care about,” Martin said. “That's really what this show is going to speak to. ... I hope we're able to galvanize people and move them to action. It's one thing to sit and talk, but I believe we have to challenge people. People can't just sit back and watch things happen.” □

Wilbon [continued from page 18]

NewsPro: *What are you looking forward to at the NABJ conference this year?*

Wilbon: In the first 15 years that I attended the NABJ conference I would try to go to all the stuff. Now, it's more of a social thing for me. I'm not looking for a job. When you're young, you go to impress editors or producers who might look at your work, and you are trying to set up the next thing. Now I go to see my friends and have a good time.

NewsPro: *Do you think the convention will be affected by the tough economic times for journalists, in general?*

Wilbon: That's a very real possibility. I may not see as many people as I usually do. [Conversely,] more people may now be coming to look for a job. The convention may be packed because people need work. They need to set up employment even if they are currently employed because we don't know how long what we're doing will last. The NABJ could be more important now than ever.

NewsPro: *You've been involved in the NABJ*



mentoring program; what kind of advice do you give your mentees?

Wilbon: I always talk about storytelling in whatever form it might take. Reporting has to be about the art of storytelling because it really can't be about the specific medium. I don't know how to shoot my own video for a story. I'm not going to learn how to do that, but today's reporters have to. They have to be trained and educated and their education is very different from ours. So I tell them, you have to do whatever's necessary to facilitate the art of storytelling to your audience, for your generation, for your readers and the times we're in, and that's changing. The craft of storytelling is not going to go away even if newspapers seem to be going away. □

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— Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

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REFLECTIONS ON

CRONKITE

Behind the Icon Was an Old-School Charmer Who Was Known to Party

News that Walter Cronkite's health was failing, and that his death seemed impertinently imminent, spread through the nation's newsrooms many weeks before the venerable and venerated newsman actually died. When he did, many tributes had already been written and stored for future use. He would have understood. That's the way "the business" works.

When "Meet the Press" anchor Tim Russert died, the ceremonial mourning seemed to go on for weeks—it really got to be a bit much—though there certainly can't have been many obits and appreciations written in advance. Even now the anniversaries of Russert's passing are noted with studied solemnity by such surviving colleagues as Brian Williams of NBC News. You'd think Russert was the equal of Edward R. Murrow. He wasn't.

Russert's career in broadcast journalism was a mere peep compared to Cronkite's long run. But Russert died at the age of 58, and Cronkite at 92. Cruel as it sounds, people expect you to die when you get to be 92. Russert's death, meanwhile, reminded a generation of baby boomers that they were mortal—a thought that apparently hadn't occurred to some of them, at least not so vividly—and they reeled in sorrow and panic.

For those of Cronkite's generation, however, the ultimate reality had been faced before, and they'd come to terms with it. They were the grown-ups.

One of the sad things about Cronkite's passing was immutable: So many of his colleagues and contemporaries had preceded him in death that few were left to give him a proper memorial or to speak of him as a personal friend—something of a party boy, in fact, as well as a charmer, and a gentleman of what used to be called "the



old school." It seems now like the old school closed down long before Cronkite left. The great graduates of that school, the men who invented broadcast journalism and TV news, have largely departed.

Establishing Traditions

Not enough attention was paid to them while they lived, so it's hardly a shock that too little was paid when they died—Murrow and Friendly, Brinkley and Huntley (and the man who made them stars, the brilliant and irascible Reuven Frank), Roone Arledge (relatively young for the group), Eric Sevareid, Bill Small and Dick Salant and other past presidents of CBS News, and the leaders of the other network news divisions as well. These were the people who built a new kind of journalism and who established most of the traditions that came with it—traditions that now may seem as quaint as the "Declaration of Principles" that Charles Foster Kane wrote for the front page of his first newspaper in "Citizen Kane."

They are legion now, and legend. They came home from World War II and helped build the better, nobler part of what Eric Barnouw christened "the image empire." Walter Cronkite played proudly on that team.

He brought honor to it and helped keep it honest, or as honest as humanly possible.

It's a famous story: how David Brinkley, covering a political convention, recoiled in disgust when delegates rushed up and asked him for his autograph. He didn't want to be a star, he wanted to be a journalist. Cronkite was less appalled by the fatherly or grandfatherly or avuncular role he was called upon to play. He just sort of grew into it, and before he knew it, someone had hung that "most trusted man in America" motto around his neck. It did seem to fit; he looked and sounded trustworthy, and his sing-song delivery had the soothing effect of a dinnertime lullaby. The world could be splitting asunder but Walter Cronkite's mere presence made it clear that things would be all right.

Loosening Up

Cronkite's devotion to journalism didn't make him a fuddy-duddy. He crossed over the line into the entertainment world more than once—the celebrated guest appearance on "Mary Tyler Moore," the annual gig as host of "The Kennedy Center Honors" and a memorable edition of his short-lived series "Universe" in which he donned top hat and



tails and tap-danced to illustrate some point about gravity.

It was gravitas, not gravity, that he brought to the evening news—no matter how many little show-biz gigs he performed—and his very reliability helped ritualize it into something integral to our national life, something that seemed indispensable but which time, in its cruelty, subsequently dispensed with. Dan Rather was a first-class reporter and anchor, but he never became quite the icon (oh inescapable word) that Cronkite did. And now that icons are a dime a dozen, and now that the term is applied to everything from a wedding dress to an Oreo cookie, there probably won't be any more real icons, nationally unifying icons, anyway, except for those elected to national office.

Here's to Walter

Cronkite also belonged to a generation that liked to tipple. They didn't smoke pot; they drank 25-year-old Scotch, or older. There are many stories about Cronkite's fondness and capacity for recreational imbibing. One sort of involves me; a New York party was being planned for my first book, a collection of columns and reviews that turned out to be an ignominious flop. But everybody at the publishing house was thrilled when Walter Cronkite himself RSVP'd "yes" to the book party.

And the instant he did, the liquid menu was upgraded from beer and wine to the hard stuff, because you didn't serve Pinot Noir to Walter Cronkite.

Another time, either earlier or later, Cronkite was involved in some kind of CBS press event on an island off San Francisco. During the boat ride back, the party hosts did the unthinkable; they ran out of booze. Walter Cronkite knew what to do; he simply ambled down to the engine room, played his celebrity card, and bargained some of the sailor boys into giving up a few bottles of liquor. The party wasn't over until Cronkite said it was.

The party's over now. □

Tom Shales is a Pulitzer Prize-winning critic and columnist for the Washington Post.



CBS PHOTO ARCHIVE

Success Story



VIDEO ASSIST
NY1 News promoted stories on its Web site with an award-winning campaign.

NY1 Wins by Adding News Stories Online

BY DAISY WHITNEY

If recent news events have taught us anything, it's that viewers absolutely expect stories to run on-air and on the Web at the same time.

That's why when NY1 News gave its Web site a much-needed makeover late last year, the 24-hour Time Warner Cable-owned channel stuffed the site with lots of videos and launched some serious promotion.

Making Online Count

The news network's Web face-lift and subsequent promotional campaign, which won a number of design and marketing awards at June's Promax|BDA conference, can serve as a useful template for other news outlets upping the video ante online.

Now, 90 percent to 95 percent of the stories NY1 telecasts run online, an increase of 30 percent. That includes news updates, weather and video reports from around the city's five boroughs.

Touting that big bump was a key objective in last fall's NY1 promotional campaign for the relaunched site. In a bid to win new viewers and inform existing ones, NY1 ran cross-channel spots highlighting the additional online videos on the Time Warner system in New York.

"NY1 was in desperate need of a Web site upgrade," said Patricia Obermeier, VP of creative services for NY1 News and the Time

Warner Cable-owned regional news channels. "Once it was completed, we wanted to attract new users and entice a return of anyone who may have tried our old site and gone away, since our old site was very outdated and had limited video content."

That's where New York-based design, animation and strategy shop CA Square came in. It created a promo for the new site that won two Gold Promax awards, one for on-air promotion for a Web site and one for design, as well as a bronze BDA for art direction and design for a topical promo.

"We wanted to make it look and feel current, and we wanted people who have not sampled it to go to it and have them be pleasantly surprised," said Obermeier, who declined to discuss the budget for the promotion.

The key? To not make the promo look like a Web site. At first blush, that may

"We wanted people who have not sampled it to go to it and have them be pleasantly surprised." - Patricia Obermeier, NY1 News

seem a counterintuitive strategy to promote a Web site relaunch. But showing the site is a tired approach, Obermeier said.

"We explained to CA Square that we didn't want something where people say,

'Oh yeah, it looks like the Web site,'" she said. The goal was to capture the essence of the new site's functionality, ease of use and generous amount of video.

"We wanted a spot that people would watch again and again, finding cool and interesting things every time they viewed it," she explained. "We met our objective by creating a fast-moving spot with a color scheme that matched our on-air and online look. Hard-hitting music drove our message home."

Most Stories Streamed

In the spot, animated tabs containing video clips fly by, looking like stylized files rather than Web site screen shots. The voiceover emphasizes that NY1.com now contains streaming video for nearly all stories every day. "We needed to show we had a lot more video," Obermeier said.

The spots, which started in November, were effective. Beforehand, the site was averaging about 2.3 million visitors per month. Early this year that number had reached 3.1 million. In the months following the campaign, the site saw as much as a 34 percent increase in page views at times. Obermeier said.

Time Warner is rolling out revamped Web sites for its regional news channels in Syracuse, Rochester, Albany and Buffalo, N.Y., and in Austin, Texas, using the NY1 makeover as a guide. □

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Online

In Pursuit of the Perfect Web Site

BY HILLARY ATKIN

For television and radio stations and newspapers across the country, adjunct Web sites are an essential tool in reaching their target audiences and extending their brands across cyberspace.

Creating the most relevant site can be a challenge, however, and maintaining its effectiveness is a never-ending process.

Whereas many broadcast sites were once used mainly for promotion of on-air content, today's industry standard incorporates mobile applications and social media, and the promotion is on-air for the Web site.

So is there a road map for the creation and maintenance of a successful site?

According to Ron Stitt, vice president of digital media for the 27-member Fox Television Stations group, "You need a plan to produce content of interest to the audience, then you need an infrastructure and a way to build in community and interactive tools. Then the goal is to figure out how to coordinate that with what you're doing on air."

Localization a Primary Factor

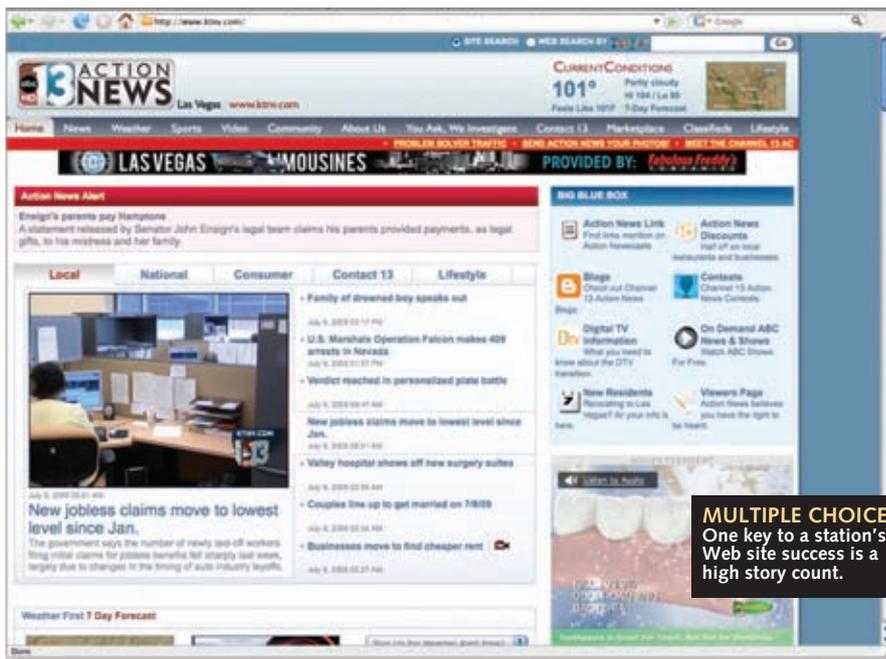
For the Fox stations group, another key factor is localization, while elements like budgeting, core platform and key supplier decisions, broad strategy and sharing of best practices are coordinated centrally. "One of the things that defines our approach is really looking hard at each local marketplace and defining audience niches that are underserved," Stitt said.

The approach from a corporate standpoint is to encourage local stations to come up with their own ideas, which have resulted in additional digital properties like MyFoxHurricane.com, a resource for all things hurricane-related, including satellite views, storm tracks, storm-related links and live chats. Plus a group of free dating sites that began in Phoenix has spread to six other markets.

My Dating Place, launched by KSAZ-TV



NEWS STREAMS
WorldNow provides video streaming for the New York Daily News site.



MULTIPLE CHOICE
One key to a station's Web site success is a high story count.

in May 2007, currently has nearly 30,000 profiles, as does Good Date LA, launched in January 2009 as part of MyFoxLA.com, the Web site of KTTV-TV in Los Angeles.

Several key vendors have emerged in the marketplace for radio and television stations and newspapers that want to farm out creation of new media elements, management and even ad sales. The granddaddy of them all is Internet Broadcasting Systems, known as IB, which was formed in 1996 at WCCO-TV in Minneapolis. WorldNow, founded 10 years ago, also offers turnkey solutions as well as individualized platform, design and consulting services.

"Our overriding philosophy is to make

sure stations have a successful online presence—and be able to generate revenue," said Jill Hooper, vice president of marketing for IB, which has about 70 broadcast sites as clients.

Internet Broadcasting Systems also functions as a content network for its clients. "We have an actual content management system to enable Web sites to be dynamic, and a team of journalists and editors that push out national content that they can publish," said Hooper. For coverage of the death of Michael Jackson, she said, "We created a special section, with video clips, slideshows, original content and material pulled in from AP and CNN. We've gotten such great [user]

feedback. It allowed them to focus on local-level news.”

WorldNow provides various technologies to its clients based upon their needs. “We like to customize our relationships,” said Craig Smith, the New York-based company’s executive vice president of distribution and ad sales. “For example, with the New York Daily News, our relationship is just video-streaming tools. For WTHR-TV in Indianapolis, we work with site hosting, video, national sales relationships and national content.

The majority of traffic is during the business day, with peak hours in the morning, at lunchtime, and at the end of the workday. Research suggests that the sense of personal connectedness that people feel to news anchors in their markets often makes station Web sites more popular than those of newspapers and radio stations.

“A lot of folks build Web sites and publish content, but very few are taking the time to go to individual stations and

analyze market position and key franchises in a local newscast, like weather and health,” Smith said. “When you go online, do they translate? We’re finding the stations taking time to analyze and document and site-plan with a style guide

“Too many are going after shiny objects on the Web. If the content's not good, nothing else matters.” -Craig Smith, World Now

really are driving great success. Good strategy can influence great design.”

Smith believes the greatest contributing factor to success is the number of stories that are published monthly. But for the average station taking its content online, the story count is fairly low. “The competition is newspapers that produce a lot of content,” he said. “The average station does less than 400 stories a month, measured against traffic and page views. They should start aiming for 900 to 1,000 stories a month. Too many are going after

shiny objects on the Web. If the content’s not good nothing else matters.”

“It all comes down to the user experience,” Hooper said. “If you’re producing a positive user experience in a good way, the pieces all come together.”

As stations become multiplatform media companies, how do they translate brand advantage? “The idea of competing with newspapers, and breaking news faster, and being more trustworthy—even with a much smaller staff—that’s really a compelling thing,” said Arul Sundaram, VP of business strategy for IB. “You have an advantage. How do you leverage it and continue to establish that connection, whether on-air, online or over the phone? How do you maintain it? I don’t think anyone’s necessarily cracked it.” □

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Technology

Letting the Public Tell the Story



BY DAISY WHITNEY

It's nice when someone else can help you do your job, especially if they'll work for free.

Audience submissions are coming into their own as a resource for news networks, local stations and newspapers, which are increasingly incorporating layman-generated video and feedback into their offerings.

Parker Polidor, co-founder of Cell Journalist, a software platform designed to be integrated into news outlets' Web sites that enables the public to submit images and video from mobile phones, said his 2-year-old business has experienced startling growth just since the beginning of the year.

Clients Tripled

"We started with WKRN in Nashville two years ago and we had 20 clients by the beginning of 2009. We now have 65," Polidor said, noting that the breakdown of broadcast to print clients is roughly 70 percent to 30 percent.

"TV is more about breaking news, while for newspapers, it's more about community-based events, like festivals and high school sports," he said in explaining the disparity, adding that TV stations can also instantly drive traffic to their sites by promoting viewer submissions on air.

Cell Journalist counts among its TV clients Scripps Television Station Group, Media General Broadcast Group, Raycom Media and Young Broadcasting.

Among cable networks, CNN has been among the most aggressive in mining user contributions through its iReport.com service that lets viewers upload videos of news events, which can then be used on the network or on CNN.com.

The significance of that service first came to light during 2007 with the Virginia Tech shootings and the Minneapolis bridge collapse, as some of the first video footage for both stories came from local citizens on the scene.

"The Virginia Tech event was sort of a wake-up call internally to the power of the platform, and that continued with the bridge collapse," said Lila King, senior producer at CNN.com, who oversees iReport.

iReport launched in 2006 as a vehicle for users to upload breaking news they witnessed. Now the site iReport.com immediately posts anything users upload, but those same pieces must be vetted before their make it on air or online.

'Invaluable' Tool

During the Iran coverage, CNN leaned heavily on iReport for footage from the ground. "It's allowed CNN to tell the story and tell the rest of the world what is happening. It's become an invaluable news-gathering tool," King said.

CNN said Web users clicked through on iReports from Iran stories at double the average rate. "What we have seen in Iran provided a new model for breaking news,"

King said. "The reason iReport worked is that it invites people in the middle to share what they are seeing."

News organizations nevertheless must be cautious about user-generated video. When CNN vets iReports submissions, producers correspond with the person who submitted the footage, check whether the material may have been doctored, and cross-check with resources on the ground.

During the Iran election coverage, CNN had received 5,879 user submissions by June 19, only 220 of which were ultimately approved for use on air, CNN said.

News operations are also increasingly sharing viewer feedback on their on-air content. For instance, Fox-owned WJBK-TV in Detroit uses its MyFoxDetroit.com message board to give the public a chance to sound off on stories. Sometimes such feedback is mentioned during a WJBK newscast, with anchors reading commentary and requesting additional viewer response.

Along these same lines, WJBK streams its morning show online alongside a chat room, letting the local community interact with each other and sometimes with the anchors during the on-air/online simulcast. □

Cheap Fix

Here's an inexpensive solution for news operations that like using user-generated video but are sometimes stopped short by the poor quality of the visuals.

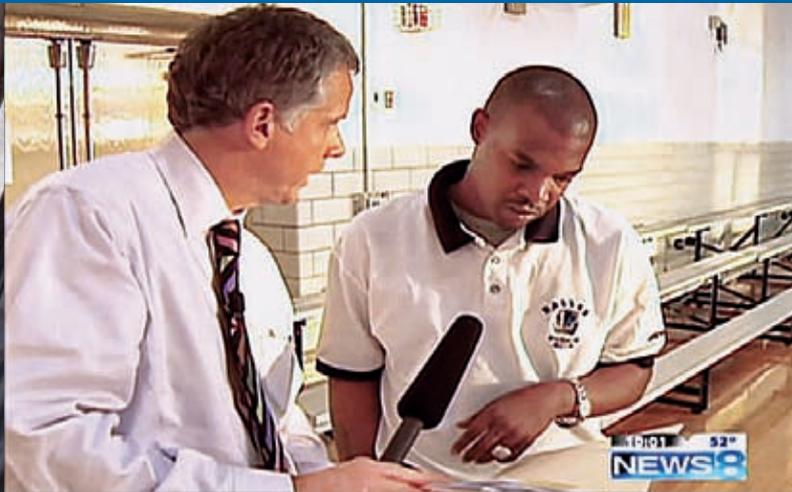
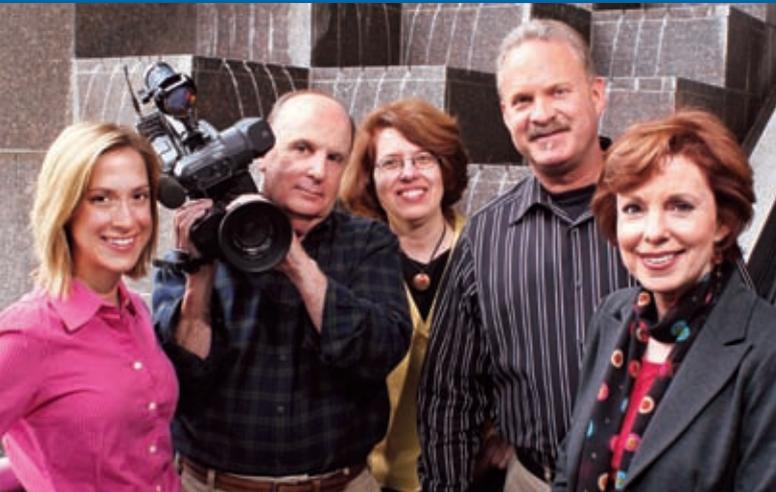
MotionDSP's vReveal, a Windows application for PCs, can help reduce the blur, shakes, noise and darkness found in low-resolution videos sent to news organizations from mobile phones and digital cameras.

Based on a more sophisticated—and costly—forensic application used by law enforcement, vReveal essentially analyzes the color and position of pixels in frames adjacent to ones with the poor images and then adds information found in those nearby frames to make the improvements.

—Tom Gilbert



The Alfred I. duPont-Columbia University Awards



HONORING THE BEST IN BROADCAST NEWS
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Sign Off

By Tom Petner

Preparing for Life With Leno

Comedy is big news for the fall season, particularly in September, when NBC goes from dark and bloody to light and funny—dropping Leno into the 10 p.m. slot traditionally reserved for scripted drama.

It's a move, however, that is no laughing matter for NBC affiliates, possibly altering the viewing landscape forever.

Many local NBC managers are hoping for—but not banking on—a big Leno lead-in.

But others say they're concerned Leno will hurt their late newscasts. The worst-case scenario: Viewers watch Jay's monologue, check out the guests, and then it's sayonara. It's off to bed, or a quick switch to a Fox station for a news/weather fix.

Meanwhile, managers at rival CBS stations are champing at the bit. They can't wait for the new season of "CSI." Talk to CBS affiliate news directors and you hear one word repeated often: opportunity. It's the same with folks at ABC and Fox stations; they're highly anticipating the halo effect of new programming.

Getting local news directors on the phone or reaching them by e-mail is pretty easy. Getting one to go on the record is another story. So I took an informal survey of news directors, GMs and other interested parties—some of whom requested anonymity—to get their opinion of the impact Leno will have on late local newscasts. Here's a sampling of what they had to say:

TV and Web marketing consultant Graeme Newell from 602 Communications:

By their very nature, these type of late-night talk shows are designed for casual surfing ... that means I watch the top of the show and then I'm gone. My recommendation [to our NBC station clients] is the promo team create an in-show promo that masterfully teases tomorrow night's show. We also need to do more in-story marketing on the big stories that will continue from day to day.

Jim Willi, senior VP at local media strategy company AR&D:

They waited to introduce Leno only a week before the other networks launch their season. It would have helped Leno and stations if there was more time to develop Leno's audience against reruns.

No matter the Leno number, even the best lead-in won't guarantee NBC stations numbers for their newscasts. Fox learned the hard way with 'Idol' that it wasn't easy to carry viewers into their newscasts.

If [NBC stations] try to alter their newscasts to an entertainment material—softer materials—at 11 p.m. ... I think that's suicidal.

Dennis Kendall, director of broadcast news for Quincy

Newspapers (owner of NBC and Fox stations):

[Our NBC stations will] be taking advantage of every topical opportunity Leno will be providing and treating them effectively as a news-in-progress update to ensure they're fresh. Further, we'll beef up topical promotion in the prior hour in an effort to make an impression on those who'll surf away. [We are not planning to shift our 11 p.m. coverage strategy] at this point. NBC's research about audience flow from Leno seems sound, but until the public is viewing the actual show we won't really know. We'll call that one in progress.

One of our Fox stations does an hour [of news] in that time period. We've already looked at their format to make certain we are in solid content each time Leno goes to break—the time surfing will most likely occur.

Lyle Schulze, GM of KMIR-TV, the NBC affiliate in Palm Springs, Calif.

KMIR has a consistent record of over-indexing on NBC programming; this should bode well for Jay here ... Leno and the "Tonight Show" is an institutional brand. The insertion of Leno at 10 p.m. ultimately gives us a promotional leg up for our 11 p.m. show.

A (Central Time Zone) CBS station news director:

I honestly think this is an opportunity. There's no real interest—judging from the research—in a 9 p.m. [Central] variety show. I don't think Leno will help or hurt us. I think it will most likely benefit Fox ... the audience will sample the first few minutes of Leno and then go to Fox for a recap and off to bed.

An East Coast ABC station news director:

We will assume Leno will be a pattern disruption for viewers ... we need to do more direct teasing to stories in our 11 p.m., particularly prior to 10 p.m. We see it as a potential opportunity for our 11 p.m., as our best thinking (or maybe it's wishful thinking) is that Leno at 10 p.m. may have the same viewer retention challenge as his show at 11:35 p.m. did.

If Leno shows any inability to carry his audience through the hour, we would have to take a look at moving our 10 p.m. [duopoly newscast] down to 10:30 p.m. □

Tom Petner is an award-winning journalist and media executive. He can be reached at tpetner@gmail.com.



Some NBC managers are concerned Leno will hurt their late newscasts.

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