Tech-Notes

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Our purpose, mission statement, this current edition, archived editions and other relative information is posted on our website. We ve had over 17,825 different visitors since we started the website on July 1st, 2000.

Thanks to our regulars and welcome to the new folks.
This is YOUR forum!

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Reader comments

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Re: **Tech-Notes #100**
From: Hal Protter Sr.VP / Distribution Development, The WB Television Network hal.protter@thewb.com

Anyone claiming that HDTV is being held up by the lack of available programming, needs to look at the TOTAL amount of HDTV programming now available; CBS and ABC have most of their prime time schedule available in HDTV. NBC produces Leno in HDTV and has one prime time series. HBO has the majority of their programming available on HDTV and is being distributed by both DBS services, Dish and DirecTV. C-Band owners have the availability of both the east coast and west cost feeds of this service.

Showtime has some of its programming in HDTV and is currently distributed by Dish. HDNET is 24/7 HDTV and is available by DirecTV. Their schedule includes 80 live major league baseball games this season. JVC is currently selling DVHS recorders that will play prerecorded HDTV movies that are becoming available during the second quarter of 2002.

While more HDTV content is desirable and IS coming current owners have several choices of HDTV programming at almost any time if they make some effort to take advantage of different methods of distribution. People in the industry need to counter the "not enough programming" objection with the TOTAL amount of HDTV available, including from over the air DTV signals of local television stations, DBS, and in some cases cable.

I get HD Magazine and since I have 2 HDTV sets use it a lot. ABC now has as much HDTV as CBS and includes almost all of its movies.

One of my responsibilities at The WB is HDTV. While we are not ready for a formal announcement we hope to have some HDTV this fall and are making preparations to distribute it to our affiliates. We will use 720-P. Since our target audience is 12-34 and skews female finding advertiser support is a little more challenging. It has bothered me that in looking at the amount of programming available in a HDTV format the industry including The NAB have almost totally ignored HBO, Showtime and HDNET. These networks are part of the answer to the criticism that the industry is receiving about the HDTV role out in Washington. These three networks provide a lot of very good HDTV and together with over-the-air stations, provide HDTV set owners (and prospective set owners) with several choices most of the time. Since I have DirecTV, Dish/EchoStar and C-Band and live it St. Louis, where there is a lot of over-the-air DTV, I find I always have several choices of full HDTV every hour of the day. I find the quality of transfers by HBO well above the transfer quality of film material to HDTV by other networks. I already have the JVC DVHS 3000 recorder and three tapes. The quality is as good as or better than other delivery systems and I believe will accelerate HDTV DVD. I read Tech-Notes and find it makes a valuable contribution.

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Subject: **The DTV Build-out -- Looking at the Numbers and a few scary facts**
By Roy Trumbull

(**Note:** *Taken from a power point presentation*)

Two tiers of Broadcasters Source: FCC 01-364 Appendix C

In 1998 there were 1579 Full Power TV stations on the air. Of those, 1208 (76.5%) were considered to be small entities, revenues less than $10 million/year (marginal at best). Subtracting yields 371 stations with revenues greater than $10 million/yr, they are the large entities.

Look at the costs:

UHF Xmitter Power Level	2.5 KW	15 KW	60 KW
Xmtr, Ant, Test, monitor, Microwave	1,024,500	1,752,970	2,472,000
New 1500 Ft Tower	2,300,000	2,300,000	2,300,000
Total Xmit Package	3,324,500	4,052,970	4,772,000
Minimal Studio Package	500,000	750,000	900,000
Total	$3,824,500	$4,802,970	$5,672,000

Original DTV Build-out Deadline for All Commercial Stations May 1, 2002

266 Stations on air as of Mar 15, 2002 68% Located in Top 30 Television Markets 8% Located in Markets Beyond Market 100

The total number of DTV Stations On-Air is less than the 371 large entity Stations. The FCC has relaxed requirement that stations must build-out to full DTV power or lose interference protection.

Not too many banks are interested in loaning millions to a station whose net income is less than $500 thousand.

Who s watching?
(Source: FCC CS Docket 01-129 released Jan 4, 2002) 267 million total TVs in use. 46.5 million Receive broadcast only TV. 34.5 million In cable homes aren t connected to cable. 30.3% of all receivers are broadcast only receivers. Nielsen estimates 20.7 million or 29.2% of households are broadcast only Households with income less than $30,000 -- 33% are broadcast only Households with income greater than $75,000 -- 10% are broadcast only

The Vanishing Networks
Prime Time viewing 2000 2001: ABC, CBS, Fox, NBC, Pax, UPN, and WB combined had 57% of all households using television (HUT) is down from 59% the year before

Cable and DBS Households
Concentration of Power -- 88.3 million households use Cable or DBS. The US market penetration of cable + DBS is 86.4%. The 10 largest cable MSOs serve 87% of all cable households

9/11 New York City Nielsen Market #1
Located On the World Trade Center: CBS, NBC, FOX, ABC, UPN, WB, PBS, PAX, and Telemundo. Of the people I talked to in NYC and surrounding cities on 9/11 and in the days that followed, none were aware that the TV stations were off- the-air. The stations had direct feeds from their studios to the cable head- end. None of the people I talked to attempt to view TV stations off-air Remember, this is the #1 TV market

FCC Actions/Inactions
FCC Chairman Kennard waved off development of a robust transmission scheme in favor of concentration on HDTV. Using a

robust receiver, viewers would have received a picture with less resolution under bad reception conditions. Now they get nothing. The FCC refuses to preempt local rulings on tower siting and construction. Local officials and pressure groups prevent construction of FCC granted construction permits. Only broadcasters are required to use 8VSB. There is no FCC mandate to require DTV circuitry in new TV receivers. There is no requirement that Cable and DBS embrace the format. The sunset for NTSC is likely to be the sunset for broadcast television. Even if DTV circuitry were mandatory, installed base of DTV receivers will be too small to support broadcast television.

No ruling has been made on cable must carry for DTV. There is no mechanism in place for those TV stations forced to construct an out of core DTV channel (i.e.: beyond Ch 51) to claim an in core channel (i.e.: Ch 2 Ch 51) at some time in the future. The requirement that stations with two in-core channels decide by Dec 31, 2003 which one they will keep, has been suspended indefinitely. Without an available channel inventory, out of core channel holders are in limbo!

Predictions:

Small entities will be given an indefinite reprieve from conversion to DTV. Rules on the number of stations owned per market will be relaxed. A major consolidation will take place. Central programming will be the small entity norm. Money will flow to power. Cable ad revenue is $10 Billion. Broadcast ad revenue is $40 Billion. Expect the money to change pockets; large entities will be bought by their networks, small groups and independent owners will be history

With respect to must carry, why own an off-air station? It s the cable slot provided by must carry. With 10 MSOs owning nearly everything, political donations will push their agenda. Look for modifications to must carry. You ll see the dumping of: The Home Shopping Channels, the Church of the Open Palm Channels, the weaker independents. Those dumped channels will be worthless. They will have to pay for their cable slots or go out of business

The Irony of It All

After many decades of holding down ownership growth by networks and group owners, the FCC has created 10 gorillas. There is a greater concentration of monopoly power than at any time in the history of mass communications. While Congress proclaims the sanctity of the small broadcasters and free over-the- air television, their channels will become forfeit and sold to the highest bidders. What was once the over-the-air spectrum will go to new monopolies, for new purposes.

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Subject: **Dueling Anniversaries** (an excerpt from the Los Angeles Times)
From: Elaine Dutka

TELEVISION Dueling Anniversary Specials on CBS, NBC

Continuing TV's current nostalgia craze--and apparently hoping to take a little air out of similar festivities on NBC-- CBS has scheduled the two-hour special "CBS ... 50 Years From Television City" for April 27, the first Saturday during the next ratings sweeps. NBC's three-hour 75th anniversary special, which will range from the network's beginnings in radio to the present day, is scheduled for May 5.

The CBS program will be hosted by Carol Burnett, whose special during November drew blockbuster ratings.

Among the other blasts from the past scheduled for sweeps, which begin April 25, NBC has an "L.A. Law" reunion movie, a Bob Hope special, a 10th anniversary special for "The Tonight Show With Jay Leno" and a reunion of cast members from "The Cosby Show."

NBC also will support its programming with a book, "Brought to You in Living Color: 75 Years of Great Moments in Television & Radio from NBC," to be issued in mid-April. ABC, meanwhile, will trot out a "Laverne & Shirley" special and an "American Bandstand" 50th anniversary show.

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Subject: **29 MPEG-4 Vendors Successfully Test Interoperable Products**
From: Martin Jacklin Martin.Jacklin@m4if.org

The MPEG-4 Industry Forum (M4IF) today announced that 29 MPEG-4 vendors have successfully carried out three rounds of interoperability tests of products based on the MPEG-4 standard. The world's largest MPEG-4 interoperability program continues to grow as it enters its fourth round, which indicates a strong foundation for MPEG-4 proliferation and deployment.

Participants in the interoperability program include: Amphion, Apple Computer, Avipix, Cirrus Logic, Comverse, Diamondback Vision, DivX Networks, Emblaze System, Ecole Nationale Supérieure des Télécommunications, Envivio, Fraunhofer IIS-A, Hantro, IBM, iVast, Luxxon, MTREC, NeoMagic, OnTimetek, Philips, PacketVideo, Reakosys, Samsung, Serome Technology, Sorenson Media, Thomson Multimedia, VideoSpheres, WebCast Technologies. All participants are committed to building seamlessly interoperable MPEG-4 products and to creating a sound industry-wide basis for adoption of MPEG-4, the cross- domain, open content representation standard.

The tests, which started early in 2001, follow MPEG-4's most popular profiles. They have included raw video bitstreams, raw audio bitstreams, MP4 files with video and audio, and MPEG-4 Systems bitstreams. The profiles include Simple, Simple Scalable and Advanced Simple Visual Profiles, and High Quality Audio Profile.

"A 'profile' is a subset of the MPEG-4 standard that provides interoperability between products from different vendors, so that they do not have to implement the entire tool set on, e.g., a mobile device", said Jae- Seob Shin of Samsung, Korea, leader of the Interop work in M4IF. "Profiles allow MPEG-4 implementations to be exactly as complex as they need to be for a certain application. They are the key to an interoperable MPEG-4 ecosystem with products from many different vendors. MPEG-2 has shown the concept to work well."

The next step in interoperability testing is live streaming according to the specification of the Internet Streaming Media Alliance (www.isma.tv). Also, M4IF is working on a self-certification program, which will allow vendors to test compliance of their products. Compliant products will be granted the right to carry the recently finalized M4IF logo, which will signify to users that products are interoperable.

Interoperable MPEG-4 solutions will be demonstrated at NAB 2002, from 6-11 April. M4IF will be in the Sands location, booth S6934. See www.m4if.org/exhibitions/NAB.php for a list of MPEG-4 exhibits at NAB, and www.m4if.org/public/interop/ for information about M4IF's interoperability program.

About MPEG-4
MPEG-4 is the interactive coding standard for all digital multimedia platforms. Developed by ISO/IEC's "Moving Picture Experts Group" that also designed MPEG-2 (the digital television standard) and MPEG-1 including MP3. Being object-based and extending beyond video and audio, MPEG-4 supports rich, interactive, standards-based multimedia from low bandwidths to transparent quality. More information: http://mpeg.telecomitalialab.com

About M4IF
M4IF consists of more than 100 companies from diverse industries evenly distributed across North America, Europe and Asia, addressing all MPEG-4 adoption issues that go beyond the charter of ISO/IEC MPEG. Activities of the forum include an interoperability program, certification, several working groups, access to ISO/MPEG committee members, and the 3rd annual Workshop and Exhibition on MPEG-4 from 25-27 June in San Jose, US. More information: http://www.m4if.org

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Subject: **F.C.C. Rules on Ownership Under Review**
From: Seth Schiesel

The consolidation of television station ownership that has swept through big cities in recent years may soon extend to many smaller cities and towns.

A federal court in Washington ordered the Federal Communications Commission yesterday to reconsider its rule that, in practice, prevents a single company from owning more than one television station in a small or medium-size market. Over the last year, the same court has struck down or asked the F.C.C. to reconsider a series of media ownership rules, leaving the door open for the current chairman, Michael K. Powell, to lead the commission in scaling back regulations put in place under his predecessors.

Mr. Powell, a Republican commissioner who was made the agency's chairman last year by President Bush, has often spoken out against rules that curbed consolidation in the media and telecommunications industries, at times calling them outdated and potentially inefficient. Few regulatory experts expect the station ownership rule to survive in its current form.

"To a very significant extent, the rules are going to go away," said Blair Levin, a former chief of staff at the commission who is now a regulatory analyst in Washington for Legg Mason, the investment bank. "The F.C.C. clearly will end up liberalizing the rule. The only question is how far and how many markets it affects."

Media experts said that the ruling could allow additional acquisition of local television stations by media giants including the News Corporation and Viacom, as well as by smaller station-owning companies like the Sinclair Broadcast Group, which filed the lawsuit that led to yesterday's decision.

The F.C.C. rule allows a company to own two television stations in a local broadcast market only if there are at least seven other companies owning stations in that market. In practice that has limited two-station ownership to a few dozen of the largest metropolitan areas.Yesterday's ruling was the latest in a recent series of legal and regulatory moves that have weakened regulations limiting the size of media companies. In February, the United States Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit, which issued yesterday's decision, threw out rules that had prevented one company from owning both a television station and a cable television system in the same market. As part of the February ruling, the court also ordered the F.C.C. to reconsider its rule that prevents one company from owning a collection of stations that reach more than 35 percent of the nation's homes with televisions.

Last year, the same court essentially invalidated the commission's rules limiting the number of cable television systems that one company may own.

Even as the court has sent many rules back to the F.C.C. for reconsideration, the commission has not appeared especially eager to preserve them. Even without court action, the commission is now considering whether to relax its rules that often prevent one company from owning a newspaper and a television station in the same market.

"The big picture is that the court believes that media restrictions are generally an abridgment of free speech and are arbitrary and capricious," said Scott Cleland, chief executive of the Precursor Group, a research company in Washington.

David Fiske, an F.C.C. spokesman, would say yesterday only, "We're studying the decision and how to proceed."

The rule will be kept in place pending the commission's review. Until 1999, a company could not own more than a single television station in any given market. That year, the F.C.C. established a new rule allowing a company to own two stations in a market - a so-called duopoly - as long as there were at least seven other station-owning companies in that market. The provision came to be known as the "eight voices" rule.

In practice, the rule allowed duopolies only in markets with at least nine full-power television stations. Such markets include New York, which has at least 15 stations and is where the News Corporation has established a duopoly by owning WNYW, Channel 5, and WWOR, Channel 9.

F.C.C. officials estimated yesterday that approximately 70 duopolies had been approved in about 40 markets since 1999.

In yesterday's ruling, the court ruled that the F.C.C. had not adequately explained why newspapers, the Internet, cable channels and other media were not counted among the eight local "voices" that would allow for a television duopoly.

If those other types of media outlets were included among the eight voices, duopolies would be allowed in many more markets, potentially including Baltimore; Charleston, S.C.; Columbus, Ohio; Dayton, Ohio; and Syracuse, according to communications experts.

Yesterday's decision was written by Judge Judith W. Rogers and was joined by Senior Judge Stephen F. Williams. Judge David B. Sentelle joined much of the decision but dissented in part, writing that he would have invalidated the rule altogether rather than send it back to the F.C.C. for reconsideration.

The ruling drew criticism from consumer advocates.

"We're very concerned about it because this opens the door to one broadcast company owning multiple local stations and possibly owning the dominant newspaper and the cable company, given the entire series of court rulings overturning ownership limits," said Gene Kimmelman, director of the Washington office of Consumers Union.

In a statement, David Smith, the president of Sinclair, the television company that challenged the eight voices rule, expressed the sentiment of many other media executives.

"The court's decision validates what we have been saying all along," he said, "that the rules governing television ownership are outdated, without basis, and anticompetitive in today's media environment."

Jessica Reif Cohen, a media analyst for Merrill Lynch, said the ruling helped companies that have already been acquiring duopolies.

"Obviously, it's a positive for each of the companies in the industry who are keenly interested in gaining more duopolies," she said, mentioning the News Corporation, owner of the Fox network, and Viacom, which owns CBS, as well as Univision, the Spanish-language broadcaster.

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Subject: **Hollywood Studios Form Digital Cinema**
By Bob Tourtellotte Venture Reuters News Service

In what could prove to be a milestone for digital moviemaking, Hollywood's seven major film studios on Tuesday said they will form a venture to set open technology standards for Digital Cinema.

The venture's name and management will be announced in coming weeks, but a spokeswoman said the effort will be funded with equal contributions by each of the studios: Disney, 20th Century Fox, Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, Paramount Pictures, Sony Pictures Entertainment, Universal Studios and Warner Bros.

Digital Cinema experts outside the studios called the effort a positive move in the still undeveloped arena for Digital Cinema, which can offer consumers better quality movies and reduce operating costs for studios and theaters.

"We must have a global standard for digital filmmaking that is as useful as 35mm film," said Charles S. Swartz, executive director and chief executive of the Entertainment Technology Center (ETC) at the University of Southern California.

"The only way to do that is to jumpstart the marketplace and have the industry agree on open standards," Swartz said. The ETC was established to analyze the impact of digital technology on the entertainment industry.

Executives from large companies like Eastman Kodak Co. and Texas Instruments Inc. to small digital production houses like Los Angeles-based The Orphanage said the move should allay the fears of movie makers and theater owners worried that they might spend hundreds of thousands of dollars to buy digital equipment only to find it obsolete in just a few months.

"It's definitely a large step forward for digital systems," said Bob Mayson, general manager at Kodak Digital Cinema.

Early last month, Kodak showed its first entry into the Digital Cinema marketplace at the theater exhibition industry's ShoWest convention in Las Vegas.

But many large companies including Boeing Co., Texas Instruments, Qualcomm Inc. have been pushing competing digital distribution systems, projection technologies and business models for as long as five years, in some cases.

COMMON STANDARDS NEEDED

Independent filmmakers working on shoe-string budgets, too, have been moving forward making movies with inexpensive digital cameras and other equipment. Yet, when it comes to distributing the films to movie theaters, the indies must use expensive processes to convert their digital movies to film.

"The sooner we get standards the studios accept, the sooner it's going to make it a reality to help us make digital pictures or help people who make the pictures," said Scott Stewart, co-founder of The Orphanage.

For the most part, all their efforts have been hampered because companies that make anything from expensive movie cameras to color mastering equipment have been making products that, in some cases, use incompatible technologies.

The same problem existed with the adoption of digital sound technology, and movie theater owners had to install two or three different systems to handle digital sound. One Digital Cinema system can cost a theater $150,000 per screen.

Standards wars, too, are bogging down the adoption of new high-definition (digital) television in the United States.

By banding together, the studios hope to steer product manufacturers toward an open set of standards, thereby making it less expensive for industry players to adopt Digital Cinema. After early wrangling, the studios came together on competing DVD standards, and DVD has proven to be a huge moneymaker.

"The good news is that all the major seven have joined, which means you wouldn't have a couple of other studios releasing on a competing standard," said Brooke Williams, manager of marketing and field demonstrations for Texas Instrument's DLP Cinema.

Disney is a unit of The Walt Disney Co., Fox is a unit of News Corp. Ltd. Paramount is part of Viacom Inc., Sony Pictures is a unit of Sony Corp., Universal is part of Vivendi Universal, Warner Bros. is owned by AOL Time Warner Inc., and Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Inc. is its own entity.

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Subject: **Is Disney having second thoughts about ABC?**

According to an interesting story recently in the Los Angeles Time by staff writers Sallie Hofmeister, Brian Lowry and Richard Verrier, there is no happy ever after for ABC in the Disney Saga. Accoridnt to the story, the acquisition of the network seemed like a perfect match. But now, with ratings down, there's little to celebrate. For the whole story, go to: http://www.latimes.com/business/custom/cotown/la-000023177mar31.story?coll=la% 2Dheadlines%2Dbusiness%2Denter

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Subject: **Increasingly, TV s A Mess Of Messages** The Number of Promos and Commercials Keeps Growing in Prime Time From: TV Guide by J. Max Robins

If you think you're seeing less entertainment and more commercials and promos on TV, you're right. A study from the major media-buying firm MindShare affirms what viewers already suspect: An unprecedented amount of airtime is being surrendered to commercials, promos and public-service announcements.

Dubbed "Clutter Watch 2001," the MindShare survey found that almost 14.5 minutes of every primetime hour on network TV were taken up with nonprogramming material. While last year saw the amount of commercial time stay relatively flat, what continues to drive clutter upward is a big increase in promos.

ABC and NBC were the worst offenders, averaging about 15 minutes each. CBS had slightly more than 14 minutes of nonprogramming per hour, Fox just slightly less. The figures for all the broadcast networks, save Fox, represent an increase from 2000.

"Clutter is one of the most serious problems facing the industry," says Debbie Solomon, senior partner and group research director of MindShare. "We understand [the networks] have to make money, but if they keep this up, they will so alienate viewers that there won't be any audience left for them to sell to us."

Such shows as ABC's Who Wants to Be a Millionaire and The Drew Carey Show, CBS's Survivor and 60 Minutes, and NBC's Frasier and Weakest Link are some of the biggest clutter victims, each one averaging more than 16 minutes per hour.

Network series, especially hits, have become increasingly chockablock with commercials and promos, but the situation is even more evident outside of prime time. "We've found it to be even worse during the day," Solomon says. "There you're talking about 20 minutes out of every hour is clutter."

The clutter problem is hardly new; it has been getting worse for almost two decades. In 1982, the National Association of Broadcasters did away with a nonbinding code that suggested networks should limit the commercial and promotional load to 9.5 minutes an hour during prime-time and children's programming. That opened the commercial floodgates.

"Ever since, there's been pressure to increase [the amount of commercial time]," says Jon Nesvig, Fox president of sales. "There's pressure coming from advertisers who want to buy spots at competitive rates, and that's coupled with increased pressure for more revenues, while more competition [from cable] has driven ratings [for the broadcast networks] down. Someone in the advertising business once said, 'Clutter is the price we pay for cheap advertising.'"

>From Madison Avenue to Hollywood, ad executives, producers and writers have decried the clutter onslaught for years. Their collective cry is that clutter undermines program quality as well as the advertisers' messages. "Everybody complains, but nobody has said we're at the point where we're killing the golden goose," says Nesvig. "The temptation is still there to sneak in that extra promo."

The research on clutter doesn't tell the whole story. What's not included in the data are the ubiquitous promotional crawls that run onscreen during shows and the promotional messages that sneak into closing credits.

There's also been steady growth in the rapid-fire 15-second commercial. In 1983, 15-second spots were rare. Now they represent almost a third of the commercial load on network TV. The impact? An increase not only in minutes devoted to commercials but also in the total number of commercials stuffed into an hour of programming.

Other factors work to further clutter programming, such as the writing of recent network dramas in five acts instead of the traditional four. This is being done to add an additional commercial break so networks can sell spots to more advertisers in a product category in any given hour. Toyota, for example, doesn't want its spots in the same break with an ad from Nissan or Chevy.

"You're faced with so many different elements that break up the dramatic flow, it makes involving the viewer increasingly difficult," say Marshall Herskovitz, executive producer of ABC's Once and Again. "The audience isn't stupid. They know what's going on, and they spend less time watching."

When the clutter question is raised, network executives reflexively say the problem is much worse with basic cable networks. According to MindShare's data, that's not quite true. Clutter in prime time on the four major cable networks studied Lifetime, TNT, ESPN and USA may indicate an average of over two minutes more in commercials than on an hour of broadcast TV. Still, the overall clutter on these cable networks (13.5 minutes) averages a minute less than broadcast, because the cable channels run fewer promos. "Clutter is the most sensitive of sensitive subjects," says a senior executive at a major advertising agency. "The networks say, 'Our programming costs are going up and our ratings are going down we have no other choice.' And we're in it with them, because we don't have the guts to say we'll pay more if there are fewer spots.

"Ultimately, though, the big loser is the audience."

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Subject: **EchoStar appeals local TV ruling**
From: Reuters

Satellite television provider EchoStar Communications said Tuesday that it has appealed to the U.S. Supreme Court to be able to broadcast all local TV channels in all markets nationwide, a move that would rewrite TV broadcast laws.

If successful, Littleton, Colo.-based Echostar would boost its competitive position with local cable TV providers because EchoStar could offer local news from New York City, for instance, to subscribers in Denver.

In September, the 11th Circuit Court of Appeals upheld current federal law that confines the broadcast of local channels primarily to local regions.

EchoStar, which is pursuing a merger with DirecTV, a unit of Hughes Electronics, said it has hired noted Harvard professor Laurence Tribe to advance its appeal.

If the DirecTV merger goes through, EchoStar has said it would offer all the local channels from 210 markets nationally, including Alaska and Hawaii. Through its DISH Network service, EchoStar currently offers local channels in 36 markets.

EchoStar is the No. 2 U.S. satellite TV provider, and DirecTV is the No. 1 provider.

In a statement announcing the appeal, EchoStar said television viewers should be able to choose the local TV channels they want to watch, just as they may choose subscriptions to various newspapers from around the country.

"Today, consumers living outside of New York are permitted to subscribe to their local newspaper as well a The New York Times, The Washington Post or other newspapers across the country, yet those same consumers are denied access to New York television news," the company said.

The litigation stems from a suit filed in 1998 by the major broadcast networks against EchoStar, alleging the satellite company had violated federal law by making local channels available to a wider group of customers than regulations allow.

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Subject: **NAB Watch - 2002 Forecasts**

From: Des Chaskelson, SCRI International , des_chas@scri.com

Emory Cohen, president/CEO, Laser Pacific Media Corp., Hollywood says: The postproduction industry is beginning to settle down. HD is now a way of life. HD is the enabling technology for digital cinema, and unless we had raised the bar to the HD level, we would never have been able to see the kind of images that we are now seeing in digital cinema. We work pretty closely with manufacturers on so much of these new technologies that we always have a pretty good idea what you   re going to see. What you   re looking for at NAB is one of those young upstarts hidden away in the corner. We   re always looking in the corners or in the backrooms. We are going to be looking at a better version of 3:2 extraction. We have this monster in the U.S. that   s called 60 interlace. How do you get from 60I to 24P? That   s one of the greatest challenges. We have some boxes that do a great job of it, but a lot of work still needs to be done.

Want a good look into what is happening in the industry? SCRI has a new HDTV Overview Report available for $495 | $295 to SCRI's Insider Report Subscribers (http://www.scri.com/newscov.html). Find out what is really going on.

For more information and table of contents, contact des_chas@scri.com

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Parting Shots

By Larry Bloomfield

It   s off to NAB2002, but first   .About this edition   .. Hal Potter sent us that e-mail right after Tech-Notes 100 came out Monday. He   s a really sharp guy and all of us at Tech-Notes appreciate his kind remarks. The facts in Roy Trumbull   s article above serves to confirm what I   ve been saying here in Parting Shorts for sometime now, only more graphically put.

As a nostalgia buff, I insisted we fun the piece on the anniversary programs. It will be fun to see who said who did what. Unfortunately little will be attributed to those fine dedicated engineers who make it all happen. I believe there should be at least a half-hour special on the great technical achievements, but then who listens to me? Besides, we all know that television was invented and developed in New York and no one else had anything to do with it. (Snicker - snicker) Perhaps that will stir the pot. We have a whole section in the Tech-Notes website for history. Got anything to add? We ll post it, especially if you have some pictures to go with it.

MPEG-4 bears watching. I believe it may become the standard for interactivity on television. It will be interesting to see how it emerges. The ownership story bears out what we ve been saying and what Trumbull said. No one is doing any of the viewers any favors. Big Brother is probably around the next corner.

I guess if a subsidiary doesn t grind out the dollars exactly the way the mouse factory says they should, in stead of Mickey, the three blind mice syndrome becomes more the rule than the happy-go-luck Tug-Boat Willie. Remember what happened to their tails, ABC.

Go for it Dish and Echo-Star. We ve said any number of times: If you can go to a news stand and buy a newspaper from anywhere in the world, much less anywhere here in the US, all with copyrighted stories, why can t we seen news and other local programs from any city we are willing to pay for on satellite?

And finally, the Tech-Notes Road Show, A Taste of NAB, is slowly coming together. We ll be meeting with our Sponsors: Acrodyne Industries Inc, Pixel Instruments, Dorrough Electronics, Clark Wire & Cable, Sundance Digital, Kathrein Inc., Scala Division and Panasonic Broadcast & Professional Video for latest in what they have to offer and get up to speed so we can present it to those who attend our road show. We ll be looking at NAB for only one or two more. We have turned down two companies who we cannot, in clear conscience recommend our fellow engineers buy their products.

We re also still looking for Local Partners who care enough to work with us in the local venues and help find a place and invite the folks in their area to see a Taste of NAB. For details, go to the Tech-Notes website: www.Tech- Notes.TV. Just below the Tech-Notes animated logo, it says to click here for the Tech-Notes Road Show   A Taste of NAB and the rest is academic. We   ve gotten some really great responses from the local SBE Chapters, but can   t say the same for the SMPTE Sections. It   s amazing where you find prima donnas, but then that   s another story. I   m a paid member of both organizations.

If you are one of the few lucky ones who will be going to NAB2002, look us up at the Pixel Instruments booth #20744 on the second level of the Las Vegas Convention Center expansion. If you   d like to see exactly, there is a map on the Pixel Instruments website: www.Pixelinstgruments.TV

Jim Mendrala will also be at NAB2002, but not in any one place. If you contact me, I can direct you to him. My Cell phone is (541) 999-1863 and I   ll have it with me.

What do you think about all of this?
Let   s go to press!
Later, Larry

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additional information. [*http://www.Tech-Notes.tv*](http://www.Tech-Notes.tv)

Thanks.