

RADIO+TELEVISION BUSINESS REPORT

THE FINANCIAL + REGULATORY VOICE OF ELECTRONIC MEDIA

CAPITAL ACHIEVEMENT

Dick Wiley's mark in Washington is indelible. After 53 years in D.C., he's still actively engaged in broadcast media's biggest concerns.

TEN NAB SHOW MUST-SEES
FUTURI'S AI-FUELED RADIO FUTURE
COCKTAILS, CONVERSATION,
CULTIVATION
BROADCAST TELEVISION'S
BEST LEADERS OF 2023



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RADIO + TELEVISION BUSINESS REPORT

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CAPITAL ACHIEVEMENT

He was an FCC Chairman, a Commissioner, and General Counsel from 1970 through 1977. He then launched one of the nation’s most prominent communications law firms. Today, Richard E. “Dick” Wiley, Chairman Emeritus of Wiley Rein LLP, is being celebrated, as many of the broadcast technology developments that are poised to reshape radio and television have come about largely thanks to efforts for which he’s advocated across five decades in Washington.

In 1970, at the age of 36, Dick Wiley joined the Federal Communications Commission. At the time of his arrival in Washington from Chicago, FM radio was just gaining traction beyond Easy Listening and Classical formats. The cassette was still nascent, with 8-track players the biggest

competition to radio in the car. There were no cable channels; there was no way to watch programs on demand. That’s a far cry from today.

“It was a different world,” Wiley remarks. And Wiley played at least some role in helping to usher in the plethora



of choices today's consumers have, thanks to regulatory policies he brought forth while serving as FCC Chairman. Does Wiley believe that media technology progress was largely driven by his time at the Commission? Or would he say the evolution in devices and program delivery seen over the last 50 years would have come regardless of regulatory policy?

"I think it is probably a combination of both," Wiley says. "Technology, obviously, is what has driven communications — radio, TV, telephone, and wireless. We've had a very dramatic technical revolution. Fortunately, the FCC through the years, and perhaps starting around the time I was there, tried to lessen the regulation of broadcasting. I think that helped the industry to develop, no doubt about it."

That was just the beginning of massive changes, including broadcast TV's transition from analog to high-definition. While that took place two decades after Wiley's time at the FCC, he was heavily involved with the shift.

And that's just one major accomplishment for an individual who originally had every intention of joining either the Federal Trade Commission or the antitrust division of the Justice Department.

"I had worked in a presidential campaign and gotten to know a few folks in the White House," Wiley says. That was during the Nixon Administration, and those at the White House who were speaking with Wiley suggested he fill a General Counsel opening at the FCC. "One year later, one of the Commissioners left, and, lo and behold, I became one. Two years later, I became Chairman."

Timing was everything for Wiley. "Technology was beginning to change," he says. "It was a very exciting period."

While the media the FCC regulates has been wholly reshaped by technology, has the FCC itself evolved, with regulatory focal points such as universal broadband access an example of its response to new technologies?

Yes, Wiley says. Take, for instance, the development of cable television. Competition arrived from direct broadcast satellite companies Dish and DirecTV. Then the telephone companies entered the fray, with U-Verse from AT&T a direct competitor to established MVPDs. The "cable company" no longer exists as it did 40 years ago.

On the telephone side, Wiley saw the 1982 breakup of AT&T and the following year co-founded the law firm that is today known simply as Wiley. Later, he witnessed the companies that had been split up under the Reagan Administration become consolidated once again. Then there's his firsthand experience seeing the first-ever "brick" cellular telephone.

"I think one of the most exciting developments was wireless telephones and telecommunications," Wiley says. "I was at the Commission and somebody came along and said, 'We've got this mobile phone we want you to hear.' This was 50 years ago. It was a great big block that you held on your shoulder. Now you have a computer in your hand, and to me that is just amazing."

A CALL TO END REGULATORY LIMITATIONS

For the NAB and many broadcast radio station owners, deregulation is the solution to declining revenue, and to addressing the notion that broadcast faces unfair competition from unregulated "Big Tech" companies that have succeeded with local digital. Looking back to his time at the Commission, when ownership limits were vastly

“We ought to create a level playing field for broadcasting by letting them perhaps negotiate collectively with the tech companies regarding use of their news content, and perhaps deregulate broadcasting even more.”

different, does Wiley have a particular definition of fair competitive regulatory policy in 2023?

“I thought at the time, when I was at the Commission, that broadcasting was heavily overregulated, and that’s when we started the first initial steps to try to give the broadcasters more freedom to compete, particularly when you saw the development of emerging technologies like cable and satellite,” Wiley says.

Today, the tech giants are diverting a lot of advertising revenue from broadcasting. “We ought to create a level playing field for broadcasting by letting them perhaps negotiate collectively with the tech companies regarding use of their news content, and perhaps deregulate broadcasting even more,” Wiley believes. “Broadcasting still has great limitations on how many stations you can have and, for television, the audience you can reach. Cable and telephone companies generally can grow as much as they want to, but that’s not true of broadcasting.”

With local news integral to the future, and present, of broadcast television, Wiley’s own media consumption habits have undoubtedly evolved since the days of *The Washington Star* and WTOP-AM on 1500 kHz. “It’s amazing,” he says. “We have a whole new universe of communications sources for the American people, and broadcasting has to be given the opportunity to compete in that world. It gets difficult to do so when you’re one of the few industries being regulated.”

That’s not to say Wiley isn’t a fan of the innumerable sources for information the American people have. “You see people walking down the street and they’re all looking at

their phones,” he says. “That’s where they’re getting their information. Broadcasting is competing with all of that. Advertising revenue is absolutely essential for broadcasting, and if the tech companies are able to divert that, it’s going to be difficult.”

Meanwhile, Wiley believes one of the biggest sources of consternation facing broadcast television companies is retransmission consent. Even with battles erupting practically every few months, Wiley has made it clear as to his thoughts on “a marketplace solution” enacted by Congress.

“The theory is there is a value to the signal that broadcasting has, and the parties can get together and work out their own solution to it, without government intervention, and it was a brilliant Congressional move in that regard,” Wiley shares. “Retransmission consent is still a very vital element, and it makes a lot of sense today, just as it did when it was originally created.”

CAMARADERIE AND INNOVATION

After the election of President Carter, Wiley exited the Commission, but not immediately. Interestingly, the new administration kept Wiley at the agency for a year before making a change. Once he departed the FCC, Wiley joined Kirkland & Ellis as Managing Partner of the Chicago-based firm’s D.C. office.

“It was helpful to me to be able to spend a year at the FCC in the Carter Administration, surprisingly,” Wiley recalls. “I got to know a lot of the Carter people, and when I went out into private practice, I had advantages because I was known at the FCC and got along with both sides.”

Congratulations, Dick Wiley!

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“Retransmission consent is still a very vital element, and it makes a lot of sense today, just as it did when it was originally created.”

Wiley wanted to stay in Washington, and built a communications-focused law practice at Kirkland. It started with eight lawyers. Five years later, the team had increased to 25. Then came the split-up of AT&T, and in 1983 Wiley, along with Bert Rein and 35 other attorneys, departed Kirkland to start what would become the nation’s biggest communications law firm, while expanding to numerous other practice areas.

Today, as Wiley Rein LLP prepares to celebrate its 40th anniversary in May, there are more than 250 lawyers in the Wiley family, with the Telecom, Media & Technology team still a very large one.

That’s thanks to the camaraderie seen in Washington in the late 1970s, something that had largely disappeared by 1995, when a new group of Republicans entered Congress and bipartisanship slowly faded away.

“I followed President Ford and President Carter, and when it came to moderate deregulation, they were probably on the same wavelength,” Wiley says. “When I met the Carter transition team, I assumed I was through. But I said I wanted to stay six more months and finish my term.” The team responded by asking him to remain as Chairman.

“Maybe today we see less of that,” Wiley continues. “Maybe we have a lot more inter-party differences, but I think a lot of people on Capitol Hill can see the need for bipartisan activity, and I think we will see a lot more of that in the next year or two with a Republican House and Democratic Senate. They will find new ways to get along.”

In 1997, Wiley was honored with the Charles F. Jenkins Lifetime Achievement Award — an Emmy. The statuette came in recognition of Wiley’s ongoing contributions that have significantly affected the state of television technology and engineering. This is linked to Wiley’s role in the development of HD television in the U.S.

With industry excitement over NEXTGEN TV in an era where 5G and streaming are dominating the headlines, does Wiley believe ATSC 3.0’s fullest potential could be clouded by the digital technology giants and changing viewer habits?

“I’m very pleased to have been involved in the development of high-definition television and spent almost nine years working on that with 1,000 volunteers,” he says. “I think now we have ATSC 3.0, and it combines the very best of broadband and advanced television, so you find broadcasters being able to develop and use their signals not only for ultra-high-definition reception and better mobile reception, but also datacasting. It will allow them to better compete in a broadband world.”

PROGRESS, WITH LIMITATIONS

The FCC today is perhaps in uncharted waters. For the entire duration of the Biden administration, no fifth FCC Commissioner has been confirmed by Congress, resulting in a 2-2 deadlock and no pathway to the Democratic policymaking the White House was betting on in early 2020.

“It’s unfortunate that they haven’t been able to get a fifth Commissioner,” Wiley said, just weeks after Gigi

Sohn withdrew as Biden’s nominee to serve on the FCC. As **RBR+TVBR** went to press, there was little discussion of how the White House would proceed, leaving the Rosenworcel Commission limited in what it can accomplish.

That said, Rosenworcel has been stellar in her time leading the FCC, Wiley says. “To her credit, Chairwoman Rosenworcel and the other Commissioners have found ways to be able to cooperate and find solutions. In many cases, there have been 4-0 votes. They may not deal with ‘Net Neutrality’ or something totally controversial, but I do think the Commission has made a lot of progress under her leadership.”

Eventually, a fifth Commissioner will be confirmed, Wiley says. Will that occur before the 2024 U.S. Presidential Election? “I’m sure that’ll happen,” he says.

On March 6, Wiley was honored as the recipient of the Broadcasters Foundation of America’s 2023 Lifetime Achievement Award. What was the first thought that came to Wiley’s mind when he learned about the honor?

“Surprise!” he says with a hearty laugh. “I didn’t know that was coming. They’d already given me the Lowry Mays Award in 2014, so I thought they’d pretty much taken care of me. In the past they’d given this award to Dick Clark and Charles Osgood — hallowed names in broadcasting. To pick an old former regulator was a little surprising, I think!”

About the selection of Wiley as the 2023 Lifetime Achievement Award winner, BFOA Chairman Scott Herman said, “Dick’s commitment to fight for our industry in Washington has given broadcasters the opportunity to grow their business.” What is the No. 1 thing Wiley believes the broadcast industry can do to future-proof its businesses and ensure there is growth ahead?

“It’s a tough world out there, no doubt, because there is so much competition,” Wiley says. “But through the years local radio and television have been able to survive, and compete, and prosper, and that is going to continue.”

That will be true even as new technological advances arrive, Wiley believes. “Broadcasting will find a way to survive.”

Wiley may very well be in his office and observing the next evolution for America’s broadcasters. Although he turns 89 years old on July 20, he has no plans to retire and devote more time to tennis (or take up pickleball).

“I like coming in here to Wiley Rein and enjoy working,” he says. “The firm has allowed me to stay on as a partner, and I intend to do that.”

As such, the Quadrennial Review of the FCC’s media ownership rules will be of continued interest to Wiley, along with other regulatory policy he once helped shape.

Industry leaders saluted Dick Wiley in a five-minute video tribute shown on March 6 in New York, as he received the Broadcasters Foundation of America’s Lifetime Achievement Award. To view the video, please visit: <https://vimeo.com/nabstudio/review/803224766/fabd04eb7b>

wiley



**Congratulations to our own
co-founder Richard E. Wiley
on his Lifetime Achievement
Award from the Broadcasters
Foundation of America.**



SALUTING BROADCAST TELEVISION'S BEST LEADERS

From live must-see sports to vitally important local news, and from prime-time favorites to daytime syndicated fare, broadcast television's presence remains strong and essential. These are the individuals who are ensuring free over-the-air television is future-proof and resilient.

For the fifth consecutive year, the **Radio + Television Business Report** is saluting the most respected senior executives in broadcast television. And, thanks to **RBR+TVBR** reader input, we've expanded our ranked list to 20 leaders. The 2023 rankings are based on nominations from TV industry professionals

and others close to broadcast media. **RBR+TVBR's** editorial team finalizes the rankings based on a curated review. We congratulate our 20 honorees of 2023, and salute all who are working hard to make free-to-air television stronger than ever amid increased competition for viewers.

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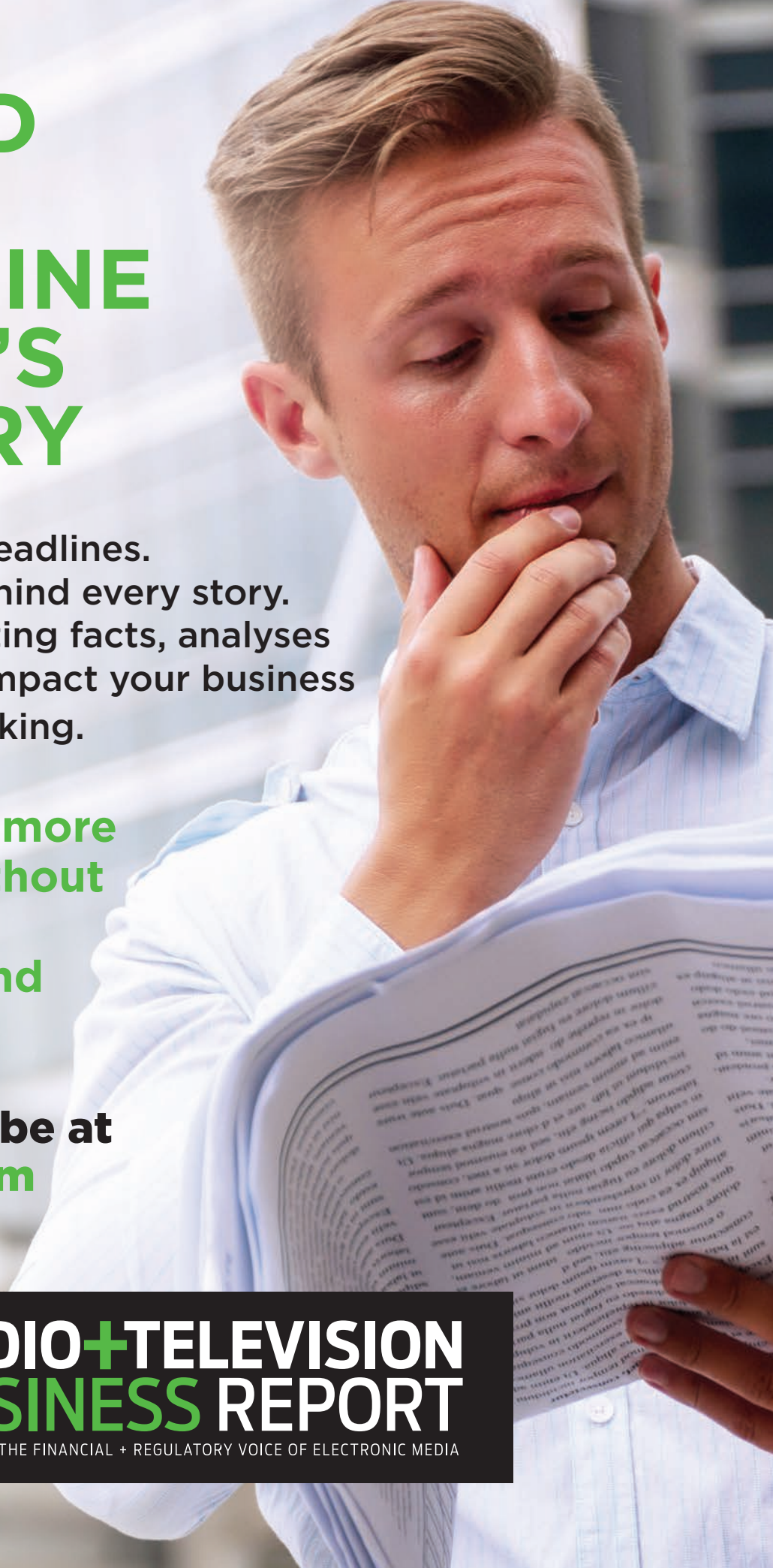
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Perry Sook

1 PERRY SOOK
Founder and Chairman/CEO, Nexstar Media Group
2022 Rank: No. 2

In 1996, Nexstar Media Group's total holdings comprised one television station, a property serving the Wilkes Barre-Scranton-Hazleton market in Northeast Pennsylvania. Today, Nexstar is the largest single owner of broadcast television stations in the U.S., thanks in part to transformative deals that included its successful acquisition of Tribune Broadcasting. Nexstar's biggest stations now include WGN-9 in Chicago and KTLA-5 in Los Angeles.

There's more: In addition to Nexstar's presence in markets as diverse as Honolulu; Minot, N.D.; Albuquerque; Norfolk; and Dayton, Ohio; the company is the parent of the NewsNation MVPD-distributed news and information network born out of the former WGN America. And, as of October 2022, it is the 100% owner of The CW Network. This has reshaped Nexstar, making it perhaps No. 5 of what is now America's "Big 5" networks, joining the ranks of FOX, ABC, NBC, and CBS as a network and station owner.

Lest we forget, Nexstar also has cult fave Antenna TV, a digital multicast network reaching 91% of U.S. households with second-run fare including classic Johnny Carson-era *Tonight Show* episodes; and The Hill, today a digital-first news brand fully evolved from its origins as a Republican-leaning Capitol Hill newspaper.

How has this already positively impacted Nexstar? As The CW continues to be retooled by the company, Nexstar's tale is one of the industry's strongest, with total TV advertising revenue rising by 23.1% to \$2.22 billion and net income jumping by 13.6% to \$943.5 million.

All this growth has resulted in Sook's first No. 1 ranking in **RBR+TVBR's** *Broadcast Television's Best Leaders* list.

While Nexstar's growth has been noteworthy and exceptional, what does Sook consider to be some of the

"The revenue opportunity for applications using our spectrum could rival our retransmission revenues by the end of this decade."

— Perry Sook

bigger challenges — and opportunities yet to be had — for broadcast television today?

"The biggest opportunity ahead is the continued transition to ATSC 3.0," he says. "The conversion to ATSC 3.0 and NEXTGEN TV has always been a top priority for Nexstar, and we continue to lead the industry in total deployment of ATSC 3.0 TV, with markets reaching approximately 35% of the U.S. households. We have a goal of reaching 50% of the U.S. population with ATSC 3.0 signals via our stations by the end of 2023. We continue to believe the revenue opportunity for applications using our spectrum could rival our retransmission revenues by the end of this decade."

Leadership of broadcast television in the coming decades is also something Nexstar is actively looking toward, and Sook says the company has always been focused on developing the talent and leadership of its employees. "We have well-established training programs and promote from within whenever possible," he says. "Many of the general managers of our TV stations have moved through the management ranks at Nexstar, gaining valuable business and industry experience, prior to becoming GMs."

Nexstar is also very focused on developing a diverse pool of leadership talent. "Our Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Council has launched several Employee Resource Groups designed to bring people together to discuss issues of common interest and ways of promoting diversity, equality, and inclusion," Sook says, "and we have developed a mentorship program for minority employees so that we can better identify and promote deserving staff members throughout the company."

2 JACK ABERNETHY
Chief Executive Officer, FOX Television Stations
2022 Rank: No. 1

In 2022, the Los Angeles-based CEO of FOX Television Stations was honored by **RBR+TVBR** and his peers with a ranking at the top of *Broadcast Television's Best Leaders*. With a group including WNYW-5 in New York, WTVT-13 in Tampa, KMSP-9 in Minneapolis, and KDFW-4 in Dallas, Abernethy oversees 28 stations across 17 markets that have established themselves as leaders for local news and network programming, including Super Bowl LVII.

Abernethy's achievements led the Broadcasters Foundation of America to bestow upon him the Golden Mike Award at a March 6 black-tie fundraiser in New York. "We're proud to honor Jack for his distinguished career, and the success his leadership has brought to the FOX Television Stations," said Scott Herman, Chairman of the Broadcasters Foundation. "A champion of local news and live events,

CONGRATULATIONS PERRY SOOK

Honored as one of 2023's **BEST** leaders in broadcast television.



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THE HILL BESTREVIEWS



Jack Abernethy

Jack's vision has propelled the FOX group of stations to the forefront in their markets, earning recognition across the industry." Broadcasters Foundation President Tim McCarthy added, "Jack is one of the most respected and admired individuals in broadcasting. We're grateful for his support of the charitable mission of the Broadcasters Foundation, and we're delighted to have an opportunity to recognize his many contributions to our industry."

Abernethy has been in his role since 2004, and much has changed since then, he says: "Business as usual is over." While growth in streaming offers "substantial opportunities" for the entire broadcasting industry, he notes, "We

need to meet our audience where they are consuming our local news products, across all linear and digital platforms. Being nimble and efficient will allow us to continue to create smart growth and sales initiatives that have the potential to stand out in a crowded marketplace."

The ability to lure and train the future leaders in broadcast television has also evolved significantly over the last 19 years. "I honestly cannot recall a time in my career where such a strong commitment to attracting, motivating, and supporting our top talent has been more essential," Abernethy says. "Our collective ability to emerge from such a chaotic recent past and fuel a promising future is imperative. As leaders, we must challenge our teams to produce their very best work and trust they'll deliver. The function of leadership is to produce more leaders, not more followers."

At FOX, Abernethy and his team work to ensure that all young talent are digitally savvy, learn quickly, and are receptive to change. He says, "We have to make 'the future of work' work for them, just like our mentors and former leaders did for those of us who are now in leadership. Our challenge is to create a diverse, inclusive culture that can adapt to constant evolution and change.

"One of the things I tell our young executives is that you never want to be part of the 'this is the way we have always done it' club. Be active. Fail spectacularly. Look for ideas outside of your comfort zone and take risks. Create new and ingenious formats for newscasts and original programming. We all need to seize the current tremendous opportunity to replace and reinvent dying platforms — including the old syndication model and newspapers. Our future growth and success depend on it."



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Jack Abernethy

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Pat LaPlatney

Named one of the broadcast industry's Top 20 leaders for the fifth straight year. Congratulations, Pat, on this well-deserved honor!

JORDAN WERTLIEB

SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT, HEARST
PRESIDENT, HEARST TELEVISION
MAY 2023, EVP, COO, HEARST



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Hearst Television salutes our President for his distinguished leadership and ongoing support of broadcast television.



Pat LaPlatney

3 PAT LAPLATNEY

President/co-CEO, Gray Television
2022 Rank: No. 3

“It’s a great honor to make the *Best Leaders* list.” That’s the first reaction from Pat LaPlatney to being honored once again by the industry for his efforts, which have helped to make Gray Television one of the strongest broadcast television station ownership groups in the U.S.

In fact, despite concerns about a possible macro-economic recession expressed by many outside of Gray Television, there’s minimal concern in the C-Suite.

“We believe that our businesses performed well throughout last year and have started 2023 in a strong position,” LaPlatney’s colleague and co-CEO Hilton Howell Jr. said with the release of Gray’s full-year 2022 earnings. Total revenue totaled \$3.7 billion, rising 52% to a record level for Gray. At the same time, core advertising was up 26% to \$1.5 billion.

4 JORDAN WERTLIEB

President, Hearst Television
2022 Rank: No. 4

Since the start of our annual *Broadcast Television’s Best Leaders* list, Jordan Wertlieb has stood tall as an individual recognized for excellence as he heads a group of privately held over-the-air television stations that continue to outperform in their 26 markets. Hearst is the third-largest ABC affiliate group, and its properties range from KMBC-9 in Kansas City and flagship WCVB-5 in Boston to KHBS-40 in Fort Smith, Ark., and WAPT-16 in Jackson, Miss.

Wertlieb’s appearance in our 2023 rankings is his last to reflect his role as President of Hearst Television; on February 28, parent company Hearst elevated Wertlieb to EVP/Chief Operations Officer. With that shift, Michael Hayes has been appointed the new President of Hearst Television. The changes are effective May 1, following the 2023 NAB Show in Las Vegas.

“Jordan’s 10 years atop Hearst Television have produced record operating results and journalism of great distinction,” said Hearst President/CEO Steven R. Swartz. “He has established himself as an outstanding leader both at Hearst and within the television industry, and he will be a great partner to me and to all of our Hearst colleagues in the next stage of our company’s growth.”

Wertlieb said, “Hearst has been a staple of my life and my family’s life for nearly 30 years, and each day its creativity, community leadership, and customer focus make me proud.”

Wertlieb’s career in television dates back to 1986. Before joining Hearst, he served in research and sales positions at Katz Communications. In 1993, Wertlieb earned the role of Sales Manager for WCVB-5. Six years later, he was appointed GSM of WBAL-11 in Baltimore, rising to President/GM in 2005.

Today, with new C-Suite duties on the horizon, Wertlieb is also an immediate past Chairman of the NAB Joint Board of Directors, a Past President-Chairman of the NBC affiliates board, and the TV Chair for Forecast 2023, hosted by **Radio + Television Business Report** and co-owned publication *Radio Ink*. On March 2, Wertlieb was honored with the Radio Television Digital News Association (RTDNA) Foundation First Amendment Leadership Award.



Jordan Wertlieb

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**ONE OF BROADCAST
TELEVISION'S BEST
LEADERS**

**#1 – TOP TECH
LEADER IN
BROADCASTING**



Brian Lawlor

5 BRIAN LAWLOR
President of Scripps Sports and President of Local Media (as of March 24, 2023), The E.W. Scripps Co.
2022 Rank: No. 5

While Hearst’s Jordan Wertlieb is being promoted and will remain somewhat connected to the company’s broadcast television stations, one can say with certainty that 2023 marks the final appearance on the *Broadcast Television’s Best Leaders* rankings for Brian Lawlor.

On December 15, 2022, Lawlor, who has led Scripps’ Local Media division since 2009, was appointed President of newly created Scripps Sports. It’s a bold new role for Lawlor, and speaks to Scripps’ ambitions to snag regional sports teams via rights agreements that would bring live play-by-play back to free-to-air television.

Adam Symson, President/CEO of The E.W. Scripps Co., believes the company’s attitude toward gaining broadcast

rights to pro sports teams is validated by the performance of its television stations under Lawlor’s leadership. “Brian is a highly regarded broadcast executive who has transformed our local media business — building the division from 10 TV stations in 2009 to 61 today. For the last year, he has already been leading the Scripps sports plan, bringing the same commitment to entrepreneurship and creativity for the company.”

As Scripps works to identify its “next steps for division leadership,” Lawlor continues to oversee a broad range of properties including WPTV-5 in West Palm Beach; KSBY-6 in San Luis Obispo, Calif.; WESH-2 in Orlando; and flagship WCPO-9 in Cincinnati.

Speaking with **RBR+TVBR** about what he believes the biggest challenges and opportunities are for broadcast television, Lawlor says, “Relevance is one of the top issues facing broadcasters. Networks’ interests are less aligned than ever as they work to develop direct-to-consumer platforms that compete with the broadcast product. As we have learned, news and sports remain the biggest drivers of viewer engagement. In 2022, live sports accounted for 94 of the top 100 shows on TV. This is an opportunity for local broadcasters. The traditional sports distribution model is broken.”

With regional sports networks under the Bally Sports and AT&T banners seeing particularly deep struggles across the start of 2023, Lawlor is convinced that professional sports teams seeking market reach will embrace Scripps Sports, as reach is the foundation of the broadcast platform. “This is an opportunity for local broadcasters to go back to the future and look for opportunities to put professional sports back on local TV stations so entire markets can share in the excitement of their local teams.”

Lawlor is a board member of both the NAB and the Broadcasters Foundation of America, and also serves on the advisory board of the Howard Center for Investigative Journalism at the Walter Cronkite School of Mass Communication at Arizona State University. Scripps owns KNXV-15 in Phoenix, the market’s ABC affiliate. He is a past chairman of the ABC Board of Governors and a former president and chairman of the NBC Affiliates Board. He also previously served as the Television Board chairman for the NAB.

6 CHRIS RIPLEY
President/CEO, Sinclair Broadcast Group
2022 Rank: No. 6

Even if you’ve barely paid attention to the voluntary transition of broadcast television stations to the ATSC 3.0 digital standard, you’re likely aware of the outsized role Sinclair Broadcast Group has played with respect to the growing acceptance and awareness of NEXTGEN TV. Through its ONE Media 3.0 subsidiary, Sinclair is perhaps the No. 1 broadcast television company fueling the shift from the current digital broadcast standard. And, with Dielectric among its assets, getting TV stations broadcast-ready is very much within the purview of Chris Ripley.

That’s in addition to overseeing a diverse group of free-to-air television



Chris Ripley

stations including CBS affiliate WPEC-12 in West Palm Beach, ABC powerhouse KOMO-4 in Seattle, and flagship station FOX affiliate WBFF-45 in Baltimore.

Thus, while datacasting via ATSC 3.0 is a big initiative for Sinclair, ensuring Sinclair’s local TV stations are armed and ready to compete with local digital on news and entertainment programming is key for Ripley. Sinclair continues to succeed.

Some may wonder about Sinclair’s present state of affairs, given its interest in Diamond Sports Group, which controls the Bally Sports regional sports networks. The RSNs entered the first quarter of 2023 with myriad fiscal troubles. However, the subsidiary is wholly independent of Sinclair, limiting its exposure to that entity.



Congratulations
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SCRIPPS SPORTS PRESIDENT

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Thank you for your commitment to entrepreneurship and creativity throughout your leadership of Scripps' Local Media group, growing the local TV station portfolio from 10 in 2009 to 61 today, and helping to transforming Scripps into one of the largest TV broadcasters in the country.

Give light  and the people will find their own way
SCRIPPS

7 LYNN BEALL

Executive VP/Chief Operations Officer, TEGNA
2022 Rank: No. 7

As the Spring 2023 RBR+TVBR Special Report went to press, the future of TEGNA remained in question — that is, with respect to its ownership. On February 24, a long-awaited FCC approval of TEGNA's privatization via an acquisition led by Soohyung Kim's Standard General did not arrive. Instead, the FCC Media Bureau, led by Holly Saurer, issued a Hearing Designation Order, placing key questions about the proposed transaction in the hands of an Administrative Law Judge.

Some say that very action could all but derail a deal that was announced nearly 18 months ago, and would see Cox Media Group's majority owner, Apollo Global Management, take a significant albeit non-voting minority equity stake in a new TEGNA.

While that very much seemed possible, erasing a CEO



Lynn Beall

transition from Deb McDermott to Dave Lougee, one thing remains clear: It is business as usual at TEGNA, which in early March appointed a new President/GM in Central Texas for its stations there. And TEGNA's earnings rose year-over-year in 2022, fueled by strong political advertising dollars.

Lynn Beall is to thank for much of that prowess across 2022. In her role, Beall leads operations across TEGNA's 64 stations, which include such powerhouse properties as KGW-8 in Portland, Ore.; WGRZ-2 in Buffalo; and WTSP-10 in Tampa-St. Petersburg.

Previously, Beall was Executive VP and Senior VP of Gannett Broadcasting, positions she held while President/General Manager of KSDK-5, the NBC affiliate in St. Louis. Prior to her corporate roles, Beall held marketing, programming, and sales positions at five TEGNA stations, including WUSA-9

in Washington, D.C.

Beall is currently chair of the CBS Television Affiliates Association Board and vice chair of the National Association of Broadcasters Television Board and serves on the T. Howard Foundation Board of Directors.

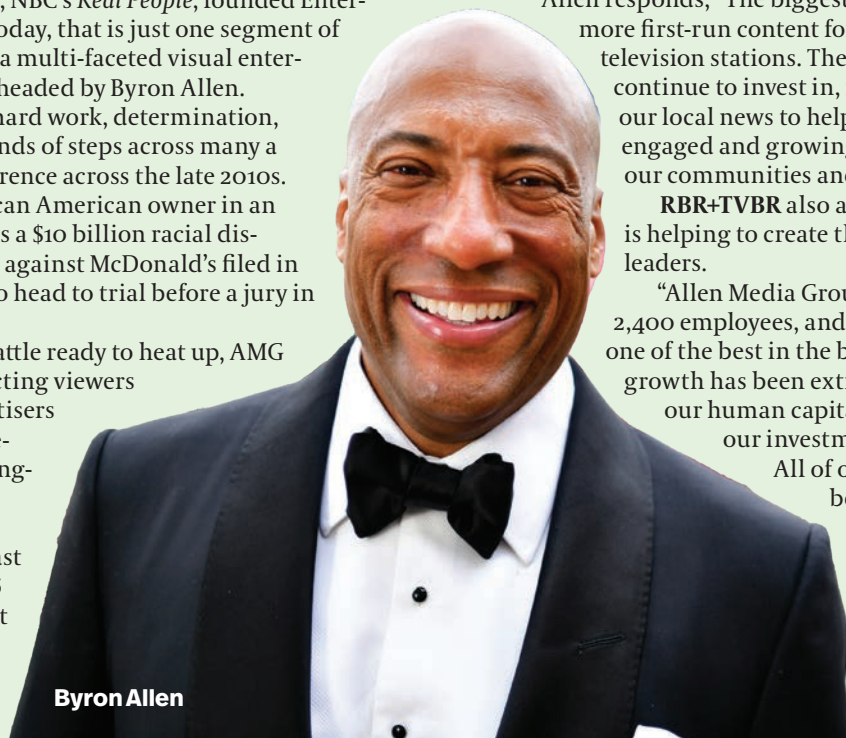
8 BYRON ALLEN

Founder and Chairman/CEO, Allen Media Group
2022 Rank: No. 8

Thirty years ago, an individual remembered for his role as a co-host of perhaps the first reality television series to air in prime-time, NBC's *Real People*, founded Entertainment Studios. Today, that is just one segment of Allen Media Group, a multi-faceted visual entertainment company headed by Byron Allen.

It's the result of hard work, determination, and logging thousands of steps across many a NATPE Miami conference across the late 2010s. And it puts the African American owner in an advocacy role, too, as a \$10 billion racial discrimination lawsuit against McDonald's filed in May 2021 is poised to head to trial before a jury in May 2023.

With the legal battle ready to heat up, AMG has been busy attracting viewers and potential advertisers to its Local Now free-streaming advertising-based on-demand "FAST" channel platform; 12 multicast TV networks; and 36 free-to-air broadcast TV stations across such markets as Honolulu, where



Byron Allen

KITV-4 is the ABC affiliate for the entire state of Hawaii. Oh, and Allen is celebrating five years of ownership of The Weather Channel.

Allen is hardly slowing down. He still seeks to become the single largest owner of broadcast TV stations in the U.S.

Asked by RBR+TVBR what some of the biggest challenges and opportunities are for broadcast television today, Allen responds, "The biggest challenge is getting more first-run content for local broadcast television stations. The local affiliates must continue to invest in, improve, and promote our local news to help keep audiences engaged and growing so we can better serve our communities and our country."

RBR+TVBR also asked Allen how AMG is helping to create the industry's future leaders.

"Allen Media Group has approximately 2,400 employees, and our leadership team is one of the best in the business," he says. "Our growth has been extraordinary because of our human capital, our content, and our investment in technology.

All of our achievements are because of a deep bench of creative and innovative leaders at Allen Media Group — which I started from my dining room table 30 years ago."

TEGNA salutes our own

LYNN BEALL

Executive Vice President and
Chief Operating Officer
of Media Operations

Congratulations on
being selected as one
of Broadcast Television's
Best Leaders.

Your leadership, vision
and dedication are
invaluable to all of us
at TEGNA.

TEGNA





Wendy McMahon

9 WENDY McMAHON President and co-Head, CBS News & Stations 2022 Rank: NEW

In May 2021, Wendy McMahon quickly resurfaced at CBS after serving as President of ABC Owned Television Stations. Her new role? As head of the Paramount Global collection of broadcast TV stations that includes KCBS-2 in Los Angeles, WBBM-2 in Chicago, and KOVR-13 in Sacramento, among other properties.

McMahon rose through the ranks at KABC-7 in Los Angeles as a star VP/Programming and Marketing, and later took on digital efforts for ABC's eight owned stations. But, before all of that, McMahon worked for CBS, and since she's returned the 29-year television industry veteran has been working alongside Neeraj Khemlani, also a President and co-head but focused on CBS News.

Nearly two years into her role, McMahon has fueled the creation of 24/7 CBS News-branded digital channels associated with many of its owned stations. Perhaps the biggest move was launching "CBS News Detroit" at previously forlorn WWJ-62, bringing local news to the property for the first time since CBS acquired the station in the 1990s. Then there's the big local news revamp in Los Angeles, which sees KCAL-9 take the lead on Southland-focused newscasts in the ultra-competitive early-morning time slot.

Those efforts put McMahon among *Broadcast Television's Best Leaders* for the first time.

10 VALARI STAAB Chairman, NBCUniversal Local 2022 Rank: RE-ENTRY

For the first time since 2020, Valari Staab is among *Broadcast Television's Best Leaders*. "I am honored to be recognized and very proud to work with an exceptional group of journalists and broadcast professionals who are committed to making a positive impact in their communities," Staab says.

Staab joined NBCUniversal in June 2011 as President of the NBC Owned Television Stations, a position she held for two years before expanding her responsibilities to include the 30 Telemundo local stations the company owns, as well as NECN (New England Cable News), the largest 24-hour regional news network in the country.

Staab has worked in local television for more than 30 years, primarily at the ABC Owned Television Stations, where she served in a variety of roles in general management, research, and creative services. Before joining NBCUniversal, she was President/GM of KGO-7 in San Francisco for eight years. "As a lifelong local broadcaster, I know very well how important local TV stations can be to our communities," Staab says.

Staab rose to her current role in January 2022, and had been President of what was then called the NBC Owned Television Stations group from 2011. At the time of her promotion, Mark Lazarus, Chairman of NBCUniversal Television and Streaming, praised Staab as "an outstanding, innovative leader with a proven track record of success" who "transformed" NBCU's local business and is a valuable part of the NBCU management team.

This was equally recognized by her peers, with her return to our rankings in 2023.



Valari Staab

CBS NEWS AND STATIONS



CBS News and Stations Celebrates Our Team Members Across the Country Who Make the Three C's of Content, Culture and Community the North Stars of Our Organization.

11 CHAD MATTHEWS

President, ABC Owned Television Stations
2022 Rank: NEW

In late January 2022, a new individual was charged with overseeing day-to-day management for the eight ABC-owned television stations owned by The Walt Disney Company. Getting the job was the President/GM of WABC-7 in New York.

Now President of ABC Owned Television Stations, which comprises properties in New York, Los Angeles, Chicago, Philadelphia, San Francisco, Houston, Raleigh-Durham, and Fresno, Chad Matthews has gained the attention of his industry peers with his first-ever placement among *Broadcast Television's Best Leaders*.

Matthews started his career at WABC in 2000 and was promoted to senior executive producer in 2002. In 2012, he exited WABC for a five-year stint as Assistant News Director at NBC-owned WTVJ-6 in Miami-Fort Lauderdale. He returned to New York in 2017.

Speaking to **RBR+TVBR** for the first time as one of *Broadcast Television's Best Leaders*, Matthews addresses the challenges and opportunities free-to-air TV stations face today. "While we maintain our marketplace leadership, one of the biggest challenges — that is also a great opportunity — is fulfilling the high demands of each market to produce enough content for all our platforms. While our stations enjoy a robust linear viewership, we offer more options than ever for the audience that consumes media via streaming platforms."

Now that the pandemic is largely behind us, the primary focus for Matthews and his team is keeping the communities



GRAHAM MEDIA GROUP

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CATHERINE BADALAMENTE

ONE OF RADIO+TELEVISION BUSINESS REPORT'S TOP LEADERS IN TELEVISION

KPRC LOCAL 4 NEWS 6 WKMG abc 12 Expect more. WJXT CW 17 WSLs 10 SND SOCIAL NEWS DESK



Disney

Congratulates

Chad Matthews

President, ABC Owned Television Stations

RADIO + TELEVISION BUSINESS REPORT'S

**"Broadcast Television's
Best Leaders"**



owned
television stations

where ABC owns stations, and the viewers in those locales, engaged. He comments, “Studies show that local news is one of the most trusted sources of information. Keeping our viewers updated on the news that’s important to them, delivered by our reporters and anchors who they know and trust, is one real way to achieve that engagement.”

Going beyond the newscast is one innovation being touted. This includes the recently launched ABC Owned Television Stations’ Neighborhood Safety Tracker, an interactive website and app that provides viewers with up-to-date crime and safety information tailored to each individual market.

Asked how ABC Owned Television Stations are helping to develop tomorrow’s industry leaders, Matthews says, “We are constantly looking at new ways to engage and recruit talent as the next generation is turning to digital platforms to get their news and information.” He points to the “ABC Owned Television University,” a series of regular workshops and classes focused on skill-building. “We are also very focused on recruiting and mentoring at journalism conferences including NAHJ, NABJ, AAJA, and NLGJA, which I am personally involved with,” Matthews says. “We have partnerships with colleges and universities to recruit, grow, and mentor our future leaders. We recognize the need to be more inclusive and to ensure we reach an audience that is increasingly diverse.”

The bottom line for Matthews is that local news is a part of the fabric of the communities ABC Owned Television Stations serve. “We at the local news level are leading the charge to deliver reliable news and programming that reflect the rich diversity of those communities,” he says. “Our job is to continue to serve by demonstrating the value of representation in the stories we cover, showing diversity in front of and behind the camera, and to grow the next generation of media professionals.”



Catherine Badalamente

12 CATHERINE BADALAMENTE

President/CEO, Graham Media Group
2022 Rank: NEW

With the early-2022 retirement of Emily Barr, who ranked No. 9 in our 2022 rankings, Graham Media Group shifted its headquarters back to Detroit from Chicago and selected Catherine Badalamente as Barr’s successor.

Since then, Badalamente has put her imprint on a group of stations that includes flagship NBC affiliate WDIV “LOCAL 4” in Detroit, a dominant broadcast TV station

in the Motor City. There’s also a big digital push seen across the GMG stations, with “bonus newscasts” available to those using the apps for each station that were launched just weeks after Badalamente’s ascent to CEO.

What is her vision for how Graham Media Group will thrive in the coming years? Badalamente shared her thoughts in October 2022 in a *TVB Next Women: Coffee* series appearance. “Let’s think audience first, and let’s give them the best possible experience,” she said.

Asked to discuss her vision for Graham’s seven media hubs, Badalamente said, “We are fixated on finding a path forward. It’s not going to be surprising to anyone when I tell them that we have to figure out a replacement for retrans, we need to be figuring out how we can be more profitable, we have to look at revenue declines and audience declines ... those are a lot of what I’m talking to the stations about, and not in a scary way, but what an amazing opportunity for us as an organization.” Badalamente also praised Graham Media Group for being able to take advantages of the opportunities rather than focusing on the challenges.

With experience in digital, where does she see the intertwining of online and linear delivery of content for Graham in the coming years? “I always say that I am not a digital person and I am not a broadcast person, but I am an audience-first person. Because one of the things I think, from a broadcast standpoint, is that we are always thinking about us being the person upon high, pushing this message out,” she said. “What people want today is a voice, and that is what digital has allowed them to do. We need to look at the audience, and what the audience needs from us.”

13 ROB HUBBARD

President/CEO, Hubbard Television Group and VP, Hubbard Broadcasting
2022 Rank: No. 10

Rob Hubbard, one of the third generation of broadcasters at Hubbard, oversees a group of properties including KSTP-5 in Minneapolis-St. Paul, the Twin Cities’ ABC affiliate. It was the first television station to sign on the air in the upper Midwest and is joined by six other stations in Minnesota. There are also three TV stations in the state of New York, and a trio of television stations in New Mexico.

And there’s more, as Hubbard Media Group owns the REELZCHANNEL, distributed via cable and satellite.

Rob Hubbard maintains a low profile, but has again achieved national recognition for his efforts overseeing the privately held group of stations.

Interestingly, Hubbard holds a B.A. in Psychology from the University of Minnesota. Perhaps that has aided in his abilities to lead the TV stations and achieve continued success.



Rob Hubbard

14 JIMMY GOODMON

President/COO, Capitol Broadcasting Co.
2022 Rank: No. 11

James F. Goodman Jr. is described by Capitol Broadcasting Co. as a lifelong broadcaster with a passion for the business. He's spent a quarter-century working in various roles at multiple company entities, having started out as a 16-year-old camera operator for WRAL-5 on Raleigh's 5am newscast. Since then, Goodman has handled promotions, programming, and operations and has even been an integral player in the selling of radio and television advertising.

On September 4, 2017, Goodman was promoted to his current role. With that, he became the fourth generation of his family to hold the title of Capitol Broadcasting President, following in the footsteps of his father Jim, great-uncle Fred Fletcher, and company founder A.J. Fletcher — Jimmy's great-grandfather.

Prior to his election as President, Goodman served 12 years as Vice President & General Manager of CBC New Media Group, where he developed a successful vision and strategy for emerging media business opportunities. Specifically, Goodman managed WRAL.com, Capitol's digital channel initiatives including three MDTV channels, and Albright



Jimmy Goodman

Digital, a digital solutions provider that aids car dealers with Internet marketing. He also successfully developed and spun out News Over Wireless (now StepLeader, Inc.), a mobile solutions provider that powers mobile platforms for over 300 TV and radio stations across the country.



Mike Meara

15 MIKE MEARA

President of Broadcast, News-Press & Gazette Co.
2022 Rank: No. 12

With its headquarters in St. Joseph, Mo., and television stations in California, Oregon, Idaho, Colorado, Texas, and neighboring Kansas, family-owned NPG continues to demonstrate broadcast excellence in the markets where it maintains a presence.

Much of that is thanks to Mike Meara, who again appears among *Broadcast Television's Best Leaders*.

Speaking to **RBR+TVBR**, Meara shares why NPG sees

“Like most industries, finding and retaining good people and the uncertainty of the global economy present challenges and uncertainties.”

— Mike Meara

great opportunities for broadcast television in the years ahead. “At the core, we remain relevant in NPG markets as a trusted provider of local news, weather, and information,” he says. “We can still successfully connect our viewers/readers to the community, and we can still successfully connect local businesses to customers.”

It's intriguing to note that NPG values its *readers*. While it does own newspapers, it also acknowledges that the TV station websites, where written stories appear, are of consumer value, too. Meanwhile, local ad growth is on the rise, with Automotive “showing signs of life.” Additionally, the political spending environment remains robust, and the subscription business is stable, Meara says.

“We are still optimistic that consumer benefits and business models will emerge from the ATSC 3.0 rollouts,” Meara says. “As far as challenges, like most industries, finding and retaining good people and the uncertainty of the global economy present challenges and uncertainties.”

Asked how NPG is playing its part in helping to create the industry's leaders of the future, Meara says, “We are focused on and finding success with finding local talent and growing our own stars. We have great leaders in our markets and corporate support that allows for successful onboarding and training. Investing in and growing people who are invested in the community long-term is a winning formula for us. This success is evident in our GM succession planning — our last four GM hires have been internal promotions.”



Neal Sabin

16 NEAL SABIN EVP and President of Content and Networks, Weigel Broadcasting 2022 Rank: No. 13

From the MeTV Network, a popular digital multicast television offering, to The CW Network's Chicago affiliate, WCIU-26, and the CBS affiliate serving Milwaukee, Weigel Broadcasting has gained national recognition for its abilities as a privately held operation owned by Norm Shapiro.

Leading the TV stations on a day-to-day basis is Neal Sabin, who has been associated with WCIU since 1994 and became MeTV President in 2011. A 1978 Northwestern University graduate who resides in Chicago today, Sabin believes one of the biggest challenges ahead for television comes down to making it "cool" to future generations. Additionally, he believes accessibility is poised to become a bigger issue in the digital age. As such, digital antenna-delivered content, Weigel's specialty, is poised to gain in importance, Sabin believes.

"This may conflict short-term with retransmission consent priorities, but in the long term we need everyone to have free, over-the-air television access," Sabin says. "This is important not only for our businesses to thrive, but for democracy and our society at large. Without significant, credible local and national news product, we will be in danger as a country. Being accessible on all the new platforms and being compensated for carriage is essential as well for these same reasons."

17 ALBERT RODRIGUEZ COO and Head of Mega TV 2022 Rank: No. 15

For the final time, Albert Rodriguez appears among his peers as one of *Broadcast Television's Best Leaders*. That's because Mega TV owner Spanish Broadcasting System in February agreed to sell the Spanish-language network — as well as its headquarters building — to VOZ Media for \$64 million.

Once the sale is complete, Mega TV will conclude its run as a unique value proposition for Hispanic consumers in Puerto Rico, Miami, Central Florida, and other markets across the U.S. thanks to its national distribution via DirecTV.

The valuation for Mega TV is thanks in part to Rodriguez's leadership of the operation, overseeing revenue both online and on-air. He has also helped to create a program designed to help mentor the broadcast media industry's leaders of the future.

Rodriguez shares, "SBS is committed to building an innovative future for broadcasting, and has programs aimed at promoting and developing the next generation of industry leaders. Additionally, we offer mentorship or internship programs to help aspiring industry professionals gain experience and expertise. By prioritizing diversity and inclusivity in our hiring and promotion practices, we foster a culture of innovation and creativity that will allow us to stay competitive and thrive in the future."

With SBS preparing to exit broadcast television, Rodriguez was asked to share what he views as some of the biggest challenges it faces today. "The increasing competition from other forms of media such as social media and streaming services" is one concern. The other, he says, is the need to adapt to changing viewer preferences, tapping into consumer desire "for more vertical and square video formats."

Additionally, Rodriguez says TV broadcasters continue to face challenges from viewers increasingly turning to



Albert Rodriguez

digital media for their news and entertainment needs. This has led to declining viewership and revenue for some operators.

"At the same time, there are also opportunities for broadcast television to stay relevant, such as by embracing new technologies to enhance the viewing experience and by increasing efforts to better represent diversity in film and TV," Rodriguez says. "Overall, broadcast television has challenges and opportunities, and companies will need to adapt their strategies and operations to stay competitive in a rapidly evolving media landscape."



DuJuan McCoy

18 DUJUAN MCCOY
 Owner and President/CEO, Circle City Broadcasting
 2022 Rank: No. 14

Across Indiana and in its state capital, Indianapolis, DuJuan McCoy continues to achieve strong growth at the television stations that comprise Circle City Broadcasting. They include The CW Network affiliate for Indianapolis, WISH-8. At that station, a “groundbreaking” new set was one of January’s biggest broadcast technology stories. Today, the television station’s studio features a 30-foot curved 4K video wall that is the largest of its kind currently in use by a TV station in the Midwest.

McCoy said, “The new innovative studio is designed with the viewer in mind. The studio shows our commitment to offering the best news service to our community, and the technological advancements are our way of investing in the future of news.” WISH-8 produces upward of 80 hours of news and local entertainment each week.

That has helped WISH-8 and sibling WNDY-20 to become a part of the Indianapolis community. At a Forecast 2023 conference session in November 2022, McCoy offered an easy explanation as to how WISH-8 achieved No. 2 ratings. “It is about being hyper, hyper, hyper, hyper local,” he said. That also helped McCoy move forward in launching a podcast network.

Katz Media Group Proudly Congratulates Broadcast Television’s Best Leaders of 2023

We salute our friends and partners, and all of this year’s Best Leaders for their extraordinary contributions to the Broadcast Industry!



Byron Allen
 Founder, Chairman, and CEO
 Allen Media Group



DuJuan McCoy
 Owner, President, and CEO
 Circle City Broadcasting



Chris Ripley
 President and CEO
 Sinclair Broadcast Group



Jordan Wertlieb
 Executive Vice President
 and COO
 Hearst



Brian Lawlor
 President, Scripps Sports
 The E.W. Scripps Co.



Mike Meara
 President, Broadcast
 News-Press & Gazette Co.



Perry Sook
 Chairman and CEO
 Nexstar Media Group



19 DIANE KNIOWSKI

President of U.S. Local Media,
TelevisaUnivision
2022 Rank: NEW

For the past five years, Diane Kniewski has played a key role in making sure the Univision and UniMás-branded stations owned by TelevisaUnivision remain vitally important to Spanish-language television viewers in the markets where the company owns broadcast television stations.

Now, for the first time, the Chief Local Media Officer is ranked in our *Broadcast Television's Best Leaders* list. It comes following stints in local news, sales management, and multi-station leadership, with prior positions at ABC, Lin Media, Media General, and Nexstar Media Group.

Kniewski has also served as President of the Texas Association of Broadcasters and the Michigan Association of Broadcasters and been an active member of the NAB across her entire career.

For Kniewski, one of the biggest challenges for broadcast television stations today is staying relevant in the middle of all the new digital content products. "Our challenges are providing Spanish-speaking talent that can build and drive content, and to really understand how to address and provide more information on the issues that impact the Hispanic communities we serve," she tells **RBR+TVBR**.

"We have diversity inside our diversity. That means that the audience in Miami, with a heavy Cuban population, has a different heritage than the audience in New York, with a heavy Puerto Rican heritage. It is important that our content is 'in culture' and in the tone and style that reflects that audience in that market."

In everything Kniewski's team at TelevisaUnivision plans and pursues, she ensures that the company engages and delivers solutions for its U.S. Hispanic consumers. "Our audience relies on us to present the problem and then provide the solution," she says. "We are one of the limited resources for the community. Therefore, we drive the content locally to inform the Hispanic community, as we are responsible for serving them with accurate and relevant information."

In fact, TelevisaUnivision is focused on being the "go-to" resource for local Hispanic communities during hurricanes, tornados, storms, or flooding, "with reliable information and tangible options to relieve those in need."

This includes the annual summertime Safe Water campaign, designed to educate people about the importance of being educated and on alert when going into either a pool or the ocean. "We provide them with information



Diane Kniewski

ahead of the swim season," Kniewski says. "Every year, we distribute over 30,000 whistles, lanyards, and information on safety tips for handling children in the water and where to reach out in an emergency, and we educate the audience about tides, rip currents, warning flag colors, and what is best when going to the ocean."

Meanwhile, Kniewski says TelevisaUnivision is working on different initiatives to attract and develop new talent that will contribute to the advancement of the industry. Its "Student Training and Employment Program," or STEP, was created at the beginning of 2020 and is built to bring new talent to the local broadcasting business. There was a particular focus on digital content in Spanish.

She shares, "We joined forces with Florida International University and developed an annual paid internship program for 60 students with a curriculum that would qualify for class credits. Each trimester, 20 seniors or grad students work daily creating videos and digital content for Univision stations across the U.S. The students are

provided with a laptop, a cell phone, a camera kit, and a desk and are supported and guided by a full-time professor. This program allows us to build new content for our platforms and create a pool of potential hires for our company and any company looking for Spanish-speaking content builders."

After running the program for three years, TelevisaUnivision realized it had created a much-needed pipeline for building Spanish-speaking broadcast talent. Thus, TelevisaUnivision decided to expand the program to other areas of the company. Currently, the STEP program includes training for news production, master control training, and station operations for television, radio, and digital. "To date, over 80 interns have participated in this program, and we have hired the students, as well as our Spanish-language competitors."

The other program, STORM, was developed to approach the need of Spanish-speaking meteorologists.

"Our company had a limited number of Spanish-speaking meteorologists, and our markets are in critical weather areas," Kniewski says. "For our company to provide relevant weather information, we needed to solve the problem of not having enough Spanish-speaking weather talent or certified meteorologists."

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**ALBERT
RODRIGUEZ**

AND TO ALL THE
**BROADCAST
TELEVISION LEADERS!**



me9da tv



SPANISH BROADCASTING SYSTEM



Manuel Martinez

20 MANUEL MARTINEZ President, Telemundo Station Group 2022 Rank: NEW

Rounding out *Broadcast Television's Best Leaders* of 2023 is the individual who has led the Telemundo Station Group since November 2013 and who retired at the end of

March 2023 — Manuel Martinez.

As such, Martinez's first appearance in *Broadcast Television's Best Leaders* will be his last, with his successor yet to be revealed as **RBR+TVBR's** Spring 2023 issue went to press.

Martinez became the head of Telemundo's owned stations after a year as President/GM of WTVJ-6 in Miami, the NBCUniversal Local NBC affiliate. At the time, he reported to Valari Staab. Now, as he settles into life after NBCU, he can look back on his last few years as an equal to Staab, thanks to NBCU's 360-degree approach to reaching consumers and its commitment to fully integrating NBC and Telemundo stations' management and operations.

Prior to joining WTVJ, Martinez served as President/GM of WTVJ's sibling, Telemundo affiliate WSCV-51. He also led the Telemundo Station Group Digital Unit, where he drove the effort to relaunch the websites of five stations and launch websites in six other markets for the first time.

ABOUT BROADCAST TELEVISION'S BEST LEADERS: The fifth annual *Broadcast Television's Best Leaders List* is generated from **Radio + Television Business Report** reader nominations, which are used to fuel **RBR+TVBR's** staff research and editorial evaluation based on 2022 reported revenues for broadcast television companies and corporate units. **RBR+TVBR** reader nominations were gathered via e-mail during the first quarter of 2023. © 2023 Streamline Publishing, Inc.

STUDIO-TO-ANTENNA NETWORKING AND CONTROL GETS LAS VEGAS SPOTLIGHT

DNAV put together an end-to-end radio demo crossing three 2023 NAB Show booths using redundant connections and SAS Global Connect software, with a separate Dante-enabled studio routing and control demo.

For visitors to the 2023 NAB Show perusing the vast expo floors of the West Hall and Central Hall of the Las Vegas Convention Center, systems integrator DNAV's latest technology might catch their attention.

As New Jersey-based DNAV sees it, a multi-booth journey of interoperable radio workflows and technologies across two halls — with a few interesting surprises along the way, including processing and control of a live AM broadcast — were set to woo engineers and broadcast radio decisionmakers alike.

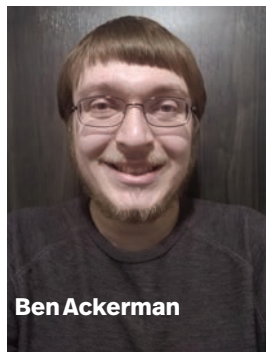
As **RBR+TVBR** went to press, DNAV's end-to-end radio broadcast and production demo were scheduled to take attendees across three booths in the West Hall, while visitors to the Audinate booth in the Central Hall of the LVCC were poised to see DNAV's Dante-enabled studio routing and control experience in action.

The West Hall demo, in particular, was designed to illustrate DNAV's mission to supply broadcast customers with advanced technological solutions from origination to transmission. DNAV

also looked forward to sharing its creative technical design and integration capacities for modern radio studios with advanced digital audio networking capabilities.

"From the originating audio source, across local and wide area networks and into the sky, we are a firm to creatively and intelligently advance every phase of the production and air chain," said DNAV Principal Daniel Hyatt. "We are thrilled to work with our manufacturer partners and the global leader in digital audio networking at NAB this year to provide a glimpse into the future of radio and show broadcasters how to leverage technology for new business opportunities and revenue streams."

How is the End-to-End Radio Demo being developed? DNAV's demonstration leverages the latest in broadcast audio advancements to simulate the air chain. "DNAV's technical architecture will enable the demo via a robust assembly of point-to-point systems, including bonded cellular and microwave connections



Ben Ackerman

to move audio and data from one place to the next," the company said. DNAV is also creating a redundant ring that will demonstrate how broadcasters can establish multiple signal paths and simulate how backup connections take over upon disabling primary links.

At the heart of the demo is SAS Global Connect Software, which makes its public debut at the 2023 NAB Show. SAS Global Connect takes Audio-over-IP innovation a step forward with a complete command-and-control structure for SAS and third-party broadcast devices living on local and wide-area networks. It acts as a software-based NOC for broadcasters to centrally manage entire network operations and can interface with all components in a broadcast infrastructure from microphones to antennas.

For the demo, audio will originate in the Sierra Automated Systems (SAS) booth (West Hall No. 3315) with an SAS Stratos Smartcast AoIP console taking in microphone feeds from Electro-Voice, Shure, and other microphones. Automation via PlayoutONE will work in conjunction with SAS Global Connect in its cloud-based software structure to seamlessly connect audio over microwave and bonded cellular to the Orban Labs booth (West Hall No. 2543) for audio processing. At Orban, the signals will be processed for live streams and on-air AM/FM broadcasts using the Orban XPN-AM and OPTIMOD 5950 audio processors and OPTIMOD PC-n 1600 audio processing software.

"The Orban XPN-AM provides high modulation density for AM signals, which lowers the noise floor and improves signal quality," Hyatt said. "That provides the widest dynamic range available for AM radio to date, renewing the AM signal and improving audio quality in areas where it was diminished in the past."

DNAV and Orban will present a continuous live audio demo running with the XPN-AM, controlled from the floor of the NAB Show and operating thousands of miles away, in the City of New York. "Visitors will hear the audio on both the old audio processor that was in

place streaming back live from that transmitter site via a dummy load and compare that to the live over-the-air audio with real-time adjustments made from NAB," Hyatt shared. "That same audio will be heard over the air on a 50,000-watt AM station."

DNAV did not close which radio station is participating in the live audio demonstration ahead of the NAB Show. But it did share that its demonstration will conclude at American Amplifier Technologies, a manufacturer of radio and TV transmitters, antennas, feed line, and associated RF components (West Hall No. 3758).

There, DNAV will showcase the reception of the microwave and bonded cellular connected links via an American Amplifier Technologies transmitter and antenna system, all of which communicate with SAS Global Connect. The audience can see all command-and-control parameters for those transmitters and learn how SAS Global Connect can be used to control and monitor the same transmitters from anywhere in the world.

DNAV's presence in the Audinate booth (Central Hall No. 5725) encapsulates a turnkey micro studio that shows the control capabilities of SAS Global Connect within the popular Dante environment. This micro studio, DNAV says, highlights its product usability among users and its interoperability between broadcast technology products offered by DNAV and other Dante-enabled hardware manufacturers in broadcast, live performance, theater, TV, and radio. "While this is foremost a standalone demonstration, DNAV intends to show the power of its local area networking experience to Dante users," DNAV said.

It also continues a trend of interoperability for broadcast technology companies. "We will

certainly establish a software tie-in with SAS that can allow multiple signal route changes and various audio delivery points between the West and Central Halls," Hyatt concluded, noting that it will exist outside of the West Hall ring. "Everything we do at NAB this year will be connected in some manner."

DNAV is the official North American manufacturer's representative for SAS, Orban, and American Amplifier Technologies. In January, it expanded its regional field services talent base and strengthened its software programming expertise with "one versatile new hire," bolstering its regional and technical growth objectives.

Ben Ackerman was hired as a Software and Field Services Engineer. "Ben is a versatile specialist who will cover regional field service work and software programming for SAS products and other networked radio and audio systems," DNAV said.

Based in Rochester, N.Y., Ackerman previously spent seven years at WXXI Public Broadcasting, the parent of the market's NPR and PBS Member stations. There, he rose from an intern into the role of Broadcast Engineer, working closely with engineering staff to help design and maintain broadcast systems for WXXI-FM/AM/TV, WRUR-FM, WEOS-FM, WITH-FM, and WXXY-FM.

"As one of those rare talents who knows both broadcast engineering and software development, Ben will help DNAV fulfill its role as a full-service dealer, installer, and technical services provider," Hyatt said. "Ben, along with other recently hired employees in sales, engineering, and field services, will help DNAV build a strong foundation for continued growth and regional expansion."

Ackerman's duties at DNAV are two-fold. As a Field Services Engineer, he joins a growing team of regional field technicians expanding DNAV's service reach into new areas. His duties include traveling to assist with radio station integrations and maintaining transmitter sites in Buffalo, Rochester, and Syracuse, N.Y. His integration work will include installing SAS systems along with other equipment.

Ackerman will also help to develop new software and work on existing software solutions.



FUTURI EXPLAINS IT ALL ... OR AT LEAST GPT

Daniel Anstandig dishes on new tech advancements that are reshaping radio and even TV. Should we be excited, or scared?

On February 23, Futuri, the company Daniel Anstandig leads as CEO, made a bold announcement, one that is already “revolutionizing the audio industry.” RadioGPT was officially launched, and it has received a lot of attention for what it can do. Some think it can accomplish tasks that, until now, have required a human. But that’s not entirely accurate, Anstandig says.

Speaking with **RBR+TVBR**, he begins with how RadioGPT came to be, and when the Futuri team first explored the possibility of rolling out an AI-driven localized radio content tool. “We started in R&D three years ago exploring AI voices and looking at ways to create more live and localized airshifts using AI,” Anstandig says.

“We were really inspired to develop a solution for unstaffed airshifts, and to make way more compelling airshifts than all



Daniel Anstandig

sweepers or the shows that have perhaps-dated voicetracks. It’s frustrating when you hear a great live and local personality who does their job well and they take their audience on an emotional journey and they get out into the community, and then you have that person surrounded on the next airshift by liner cards or voicetracks.”

Futuri also noted that fierce competition looms from the likes of Apple, Amazon, Pandora, and YouTube. “These are companies that certainly would love to take Time Spent Listening away from broadcast radio and are finding every possible way to endear themselves to audiences around the world,” Anstandig says.

Enter RadioGPT, which Futuri views as a way to help broadcast radio create more localized content. “It’s part of a mission we started in 2009 with the company’s creation: what if radio and TV were invented after the Internet?” Anstandig says. “Artificial intelligence would be a major part of our operating strategies and our overall operating models to grow content, audience, and revenue.”

Already, RadioGPT is being put to the test by Alpha Media in the U.S. and by one of Canada's biggest radio station owners, Rogers Sports & Media. "It's not just an off-the-shelf product to throw on the airwaves," Anstandig says when asked if any of the companies' radio stations have implemented it for broadcast use and if the everyday listener would notice. "There is customization and integration work that is done to put RadioGPT to work on a broadcast station," he points out, noting that AI hosts are getting personalization in a manner that equates to bringing a new show to a station's lineup.

By the time you read this, Alpha and Rogers will be using RadioGPT. "In some cases it will be out front and shared with the audience," Anstandig says, noting that the goal is creating the most value for the listeners. "We've talked to hundreds of broadcasters and we're finding that around the world there are many applications in production for spec spots, for spot tagging, extending personalities into other dayparts, and personalized streamed fill content. The applications for RadioGPT will be different for every broadcaster."

That's why RadioGPT may not be so much of a dreaded job killer, the way automation was seen in its earliest incarnation at such stations as WJLK-FM in Asbury Park, N.J., and, later, with "The Source" from NBC Radio. Instead, RadioGPT could put more relevant content and personalization into "JACK FM"-branded stations in locales including London, Ontario, and Dayton, Ohio.

"This could be a very meaningful and helpful growth mechanism for broadcast radio," Anstandig says. "It can help radio play offense in an industry that is frequently in a defensive position against fierce and highly capitalized competitors."

With audiences wanting more content than ever, and time spent with media at the highest level in history, there are fewer content creators in broadcasting, Anstandig notes. Thus, future growth requires taking advantage of every leverage opportunity to create content that entertains and attracts audiences, and that's what Anstandig thinks RadioGPT can bring.

And, to be clear, while RadioGPT has the potential to automate certain tasks, Anstandig says, "I

do not believe people are going to be directly replaced by AI as much as people will be replaced by other people who use AI."

Human interaction, and the ability to respond to real-time events, therefore distinguishes RadioGPT from the automation of 40 to 50 years ago. A link to Futuri's TopicPulse helps in carrying out that task.

"Look, AI can't go out and hug a listener," Anstandig concludes. "It cannot go out and do a car remote or run a prize wheel. Personalities and the relationships that are built in a local market are more critical than ever. For air talent that are ultimately really connected to the audience, AI today is not going to hold a candle to a beloved local personality. But it can help to fill in those gaps around those cherished local personalities."

"This could be a very meaningful and helpful growth mechanism for broadcast radio. It can help radio play offense in an industry that is frequently in a defensive position against fierce and highly capitalized competitors."

— Daniel Anstandig, Futuri

VISUAL FORESIGHT

Three years ago Futuri announced a VP of TV and Digital Publishing Innovation. Where is Futuri with respect to its television industry offerings and growth?

"We've invested in major advancements in our systems for TV," Anstandig says. TopicPulse, which scans Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram and more than 250,000 news sources, also now has predictive technology.

This can help assignment desks in local TV newsrooms, Anstandig says. First drafts of news stories can also be used to create a short article through the power of AI, he adds, expediting the content publishing process. There's also a TV newscast-to-podcast transformation element available.

"TV has become a major focus for our company around growing content, audience, and revenue," he continues. At the NAB Show, Anstandig was scheduled to moderate a panel session titled "Using Data to Thrive in TV Sales." Another session focused on AI in newsrooms was also poised to include him.

While promoting Futuri is one thing Anstandig will be doing across the NAB Show, learning will be a key task. He believes there will be plenty of learning opportunities, including digesting more about ATSC 3.0's voluntary rollout across the U.S. "I'm curious to see what broadcasters and technology companies are doing at this stage, in particular on datacasting and mobility," he says. Virtual and augmented reality and the Metaverse are also key interest areas, as there are "tremendous business applications" for broadcasters.

Our final question to Anstandig: Are we really interviewing you, or are the responses all a construct of the AI technology Futuri is using?

"This is the real Daniel," he assures **RBR+TVBR**. "I'd like to think that if it weren't the real Daniel that it would be still a very engaging conversation. But there is a question behind your question, and that is what really is the difference between a live personality and/or AI. In the future, the lines will continue to blur. But there is a spark of creativity and emotional intelligence and adaptability and understanding and consciousness that humans have.

"In our lifetime, AI will advance to the point where there will be public hearings to discuss what civil liberties AI deserves and whether AI is entitled to certain legal rights. It won't necessarily be because AI has established a credible level of consciousness. Humans project their own emotional intelligence onto non-humans and onto technology. We are responsible for looking out for the future, while helping broadcasters grow in a challenging time."

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CREATIVE WAYS TO INDUSTRY ACHIEVEMENT

Count recently named vCreative CEO Mary DelGrande and Xperi Corp. SVP/Broadcast and Digital Audio Joe D'Angelo among those who will be attending a radio industry gathering at the 2023 NAB Show, where ideas, inspiration, thought leadership, and tasty libations collide.

Outside of that “Cocktails and Conversations” event, however, DelGrande will be squarely focused on ensuring the broadcast radio — and television — industries have the latest intelligence from the multi-platform workflow software company she has been leading as Chief Executive Officer since February 1, rising from SVP of sales.

One of DelGrande’s first major announcements since taking on the CEO post at vCreative is a contract with Yamanair, the creative service for radio. What does this bring to vCreative’s clients, and what might it presage for the year ahead?

“We were very excited to partner with Yamanair because it will streamline operations for our mutual clients,” DelGrande says. They’ll now have the option of Yamanair content automatically creating a spot in their products. “What this integration means is ‘no re-entries needed,’ resulting in immediate and impactful efficiency in their creative process. For vCreative this is another example of how we’re always looking to partner with other vendors to help our industry become more efficient.”

Efficiency appears to be a hallmark of what vCreative has been striving for since its founding by Jinny and John Laderer, who have now moved on from the business. Going forward into 2023, are there other initiatives DelGrande feels can be brought further into the industry? Do they include the television side of the business?

“Yes, and I’m thrilled you brought up TV,” she says. “Our vPro product, the next-generation platform to vPPO, manages creative for all ad types, including video, streaming, and OTT. This allows us to approach any media company looking for a media-centric workflow solution.”

When vCreative began talking to television stations, they discovered



that many were using generic project management systems that don’t have a media focus or media understanding. “We’ve had a few clients come over and they love it because we are a media-based company with media-based solutions,” DelGrande says. “It’s a great opportunity for us to get into TV.”

Digital versus traditional promotions is also a hot topic for vCreative’s customers, and having a digital component in any platforms where it makes sense “is critical

moving forward as well,” DelGrande says.

With consumer consumption of audio and video content shifting to digital by the day and by the hour, the digital capabilities within vCreative products and integrations are key for DelGrande. QUU is integrated with vPPO, and vCreative is looking to expand that partnership to vPromotions, for digital contesting, to start.

The vCreative technology and product leadership teams will be out on the NAB Show floor, identifying opportunities to bring more digital capabilities to its products. As digital technology has taken center stage at the NAB Show, the biggest thing DelGrande is looking forward to while in Las Vegas is being able to walk the floor, see the companies, and figure out if there are integration opportunities, as well as talk to clients to identify their “pain points” and explore where vCreative can help.

“Companies are looking for partners and solutions to reduce multiple points of entry, especially

Mary DelGrande spent nearly two decades in a key sales role at Premiere Networks. Is there one thing in particular from that experience that drives her leadership and goals in her current role?

“You treat people the way you want to be treated,” she says. “People that you work with or you want to be led by, you want to like them and you want to trust them. That comes from being authentic, passionate, accountable, and trustworthy.”

The other takeaway for DelGrande? “Through negotiating and managing many group deals for Mediabase and the Futuri products, I gained a better understanding of the efficiencies from a pricing and sharing of resources perspective, which helped me grow into the businesswoman I am today.”

for their sales teams,” DelGrande says. “Therefore, offering solutions where the technologies talk to one another is more important than ever, and vCreative will continue to seek out opportunities to achieve that goal.”

POTENTIAL GAME CHANGERS

The 2023 NAB Show is expecting upward of 70,000 attendees and is looking to be a big conference for broadcast technology and cool gadgetry of use to radio and TV. Does anything particular stand out to Xperi’s D’Angelo that he’s ready to learn more about, or is this a full-on exploratory mission?

He says, “I’m very excited to introduce our analytics coming out of DTS AutoStage” — giving Xperi an opportunity to engage with the industry and demonstrate what the company has been developing over the last year. Understanding the industry’s needs and how they are changing is also key to what D’Angelo hopes to gain from the conference.

DTS AutoStage is a hybrid radio platform, combining over-the-air broadcast radio with IP-delivered metadata and/or content enhancements. “It’s not an app,” D’Angelo stresses. “It’s the native radio in the car, but it is radio that takes advantage of IP-delivered content much like a Spotify or a Pandora, with rich metadata associated with their audio services.”

Mercedes-Benz, Hyundai, Kia, Genesis, and Tesla all have DTS AutoStage, and, as a built-in feature, there are no additional data costs for its use.

D’Angelo in late March enjoyed a business trip to Prague, where he attended Radiodays Europe. As Xperi Corp. has been heavily involved in DAB+, European growth of the digital radio platform is exciting to D’Angelo and his team.

Given Xperi Corp.’s continued desire to grow HD Radio, and the excitement surrounding the DTS AutoStage, where does AM fit in ... if at all? “We have a fairly large team that is constantly looking at innovating around broadcast radio, adding new services and providing the tools necessary for broadcasters to compete against ‘Big Tech,’” D’Angelo says. “Most recently, we are layering in personalization and recommendation to broadcast radio, something we do every day on our video platforms. We are adding that same functionality to radio.”

COCKTAILS, CONVERSATION, CULTIVATION

For the second consecutive year, a special radio industry-focused “Cocktails and Conversation” event was held during the 2023 CES conference in Las Vegas. Thanks to the positive response to that event, and a similar 2022 NAB Show gathering, a reprise “Cocktails and Conversation” is set for April 16 as part of the 2023 NAB Show.

Sponsored by Beasley Media Group, QUU, Benztown, vCreative, Skyview Networks, Xperi Corp., Jacobs Media Strategies, and Streamline Publishing’s *Radio + Television Business Report*, “Cocktails and Conversation” was poised to offer another opportunity to listen, learn, socialize and connect.

If the turnout seen at the 2023 CES event held at the Bellagio was any indication, the NAB Show event is a must-attend opportunity.



Beasley Media Group Chief Communications Officer Heidi Raphael, Benztown President and co-founder Dave “Chachi” Denes, RBR+TVBR and Radio Ink President/Publisher Deborah Parenti, and Sugarloaf Rock Capital Managing Partner and Guggenheim Securities Senior Advisor Drew Marcus



Drew Marcus, former iBiquity Digital Corp. CEO Bob Struble, and Xperi Corp. SVP/Broadcast and Digital Audio Joe D’Angelo



Skyview Networks SVP of Operations, Engineering & Technology Ryan Ballard and President/CEO Steve Jones chat with a “Cocktails and Conversation” guest.



RAB President/CEO Erica Farber and legendary air personality Joey Reynolds



Beasley Media Group CEO Caroline Beasley and Joe D’Angelo



Dave “Chachi” Denes poses with NAB EVP/Industry Affairs April Carty-Sipp and President/CEO Curtis LeGeyt.

TEN THINGS AT THE 2023 NAB SHOW THAT MATTER TO YOU

This year's NAB Show is expected to attract upward of 75,000 attendees. But for radio and TV professionals, what stands out when it comes to expo booth activities? RBR+TVBR connected with leaders from Dielectric; GatesAir and its parent, Thomson Broadcast; ENCO; Macnica; Multidyne; Sierra Automated Systems; and StreamGuys on what they're sharing ... and what they're interested in seeing from others.

DIELECTRIC

Keith Pelletier, President

RBR+TVBR: What is the No. 1 mission for your company with respect to NAB Show expo booth interaction and the product showcase Dielectric has in store?

PELLETIER: Our primary mission this year is to reiterate Dielectric's leadership in over-the-air broadcast innovation and high-quality product engineering. This comes not only from our show floor exhibition but also through education, as we will present two white papers. The first will be on the benefits of reconfigurable manifold combining for master antenna systems that want to add new broadcast tenants in the future. This is a breakthrough innovation for large transmission sites

that house multiple broadcasters that feed their signals to a single antenna.

Dielectric senior electrical engineer Nicole Starrett was readying to present her findings on Monday, April 17 at 11:50am in West Hall Rooms W216-218. The data applies to both radio and TV audiences.

Dielectric electrical engineer Anthony Traviglini was also putting the finishing touches on a second white paper to be delivered on April 18 at 10:50am in that same location. Traviglini will explore the use of advanced filter topology as an RF switch, rather than requiring a separate component between the filter and transmission line.

We will also announce a product related to this just before NAB, and that will be a primary focus of our exhibit.

The key takeaway from these

engineering stories: complexity in the RF chain. This could include a master antenna site that can easily add more stations without having to rip and replace their channel-combining infrastructure. Or it could be a single low-power television (LPTV) or higher-power station that wants to remove auxiliary components from the chain.

We are also formally introducing our Apollo analytics platform — our first managed-services platform.



Apollo is a software platform that works with our RFHAWKEYE IP-based remote monitoring system to provide detailed insights and reports on antenna and RF system performance trends. This is really targeted for the executive-level TV and radio engineers, especially those managing many sites, who want to identify and reconcile problems before they turn into expensive systems repairs or worse.

RBR+TVBR: In November 2022 we reported on the instillation of a new Dielectric UHF antenna at a Minneapolis TV station. This appears to be an important evolutionary step for broadcast TV. Is there more to come on this subject?

PELLETIER: The technology we used for the WUCW project was a major breakthrough. It essentially provided the bottom of the antenna stack with the same electrical performance as the top.

Traditionally, the broadcaster positioned on the bottom of the stack would have a distorted signal pattern due to the way the transmission line fed the antenna. The WUCW project proved that both top and bottom tenants can be equals on a stacked antenna system.

In addition, the WUCW antenna provided an advancement in the top mounting of a broadband antenna. There are many components that make up a broadband pylon solution, but the WUCW portion of the design made a broadband solution a reality. Dielectric has produced two broadband pylon antennas that take the place of a panel antenna that contains many more connections.

RBR+TVBR: This instillation at the CW Network affiliate serving the Twin Cities came after the September 2022 release of a Single-Mode Filter. Can you share how important this launch was for broadcasters?

PELLETIER: The transformation from ATSC 1.0 to ATSC 3.0 has many layers. One of these is that ATSC 3.0 has higher peak power than ATSC 1.0. That sets up a few important challenges, including safety margins and system longevity. It removes the complexity of filter designs that would otherwise have to operate in dual mode, which requires probe penetration to excite both modes and therefore limits the peak power handling of the filter. The broadcaster can put more power into the single mode system and stations can rest easy knowing that they have a

significantly more robust filter that can handle the disparate power needs of ATSC 1.0 and ATSC 3.0 without taxing and overburdening the RF system.

This will be a very valuable innovation for broadcasters in the years ahead that will need to deliver both ATSC 1.0 and ATSC 3.0 signals out of the same site, and address the peak power challenges between the two standards.

RBR+TVBR: The news that the longtime supplier RFS will no longer manufacture antennas and filters raised some questions from end users of that product. What is your view on that?

PELLETIER: We have fielded many inquiries from RFS customers about how these systems might be serviced by companies like Dielectric moving forward. As we started to look at repack needs nearly 10 years ago, we added and developed sales and engineering talent, and re-envisioned our manufacturing operations to strengthen our entire business model across production, delivery timelines, and technical support.

More than 80 years into our business, I think Dielectric is in exactly the position we need to be for RFS customers that need a responsive organization to address their current and future needs.

RBR+TVBR: As an attendee, what's the one thing you need to see at the NAB Show that doesn't involve your company?

PELLETIER: The rise of artificial intelligence technology in the broadcast business has been swift, and we are eager to see how suppliers operating in different areas of the broadcast ecosystem expect to leverage AI in their products and solutions in 2023.

GATESAIR

Raymond Miklius, Vice President of EMEA Sales and Channel Programs

NAB Show 2023 marks the first show where Thomson Broadcast and GatesAir will exhibit on one stand. And it marks one year since the acquisition of GatesAir by France-based Thomson Broadcast became the talk of the 2022 NAB Show.

As Raymond Miklius sees it, "The combination of two strong companies will bring an unprecedented level of capabilities to customers that are responsible for building out

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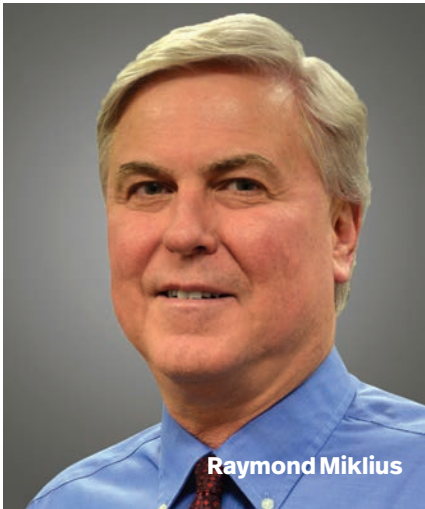
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Raymond Miklius

complicated broadcast networks.”

For GatesAir, being side-by-side with the Thomson Broadcast team means showing off the Flexiva GX Series high-efficiency, ultra-compact analog FM transmitter line and showcasing new digital radio innovations for international radio customers. There’s also an increased audience for learning about how GatesAir’s range of Maxiva TV transmitters can serve evolving digital TV architecture.

“Thomson is also highlighting some very interesting advanced ATSC 3.0 technologies,” Miklius says. That includes their “Software-Defined Television” platform for facilitating ATSC 3.0 transition and advanced deployment. “It is proposing solutions for delivery/monetization of ATSC 3.0 content with an all-software suite of encoding, packaging, and signaling that, when paired with

our transmitters, will allow both companies to offer a more complete ATSC 3.0 solution,” he says.

The GatesAir acquisition by Thomson Broadcast was completed in August 2022.

GatesAir’s efforts of late include a contract win involving the modernization of Angola’s radio stations and the expansion of Maxiva PMTX-1 transmitters to VHF TV and DAB Radio broadcasters. Is there more of an international flair to GatesAir now that it is tied to Thomson Broadcast ownership?

Not at all, says Miklius. “GatesAir has always been active in international markets and has always had an extensive global footprint. We have sold products in over 70 countries during our 101 years in business, and we have a strong channel partner network that amplifies our presence in every region. We have completed significant turnkey projects on all continents, both in support of AM/FM as well as TV deployments prior to the acquisition of GatesAir in 2022.

“Thomson Broadcast also has extensive capabilities to support large-scale turnkey projects, so we are actively taking the strengths of each entity and merging them to provide even greater value to our mutual clients.”

As at Dielectric, the news that longtime supplier RFS will no longer manufacture antennas and filters has certainly been a topic of conversation within the executive team. Asked how it affects GatesAir, Miklius shares, “GatesAir has resold many RFS

antennas and filters over the years. The main inquiry from our customers was who will provide warranty coverage for RFS products still under warranty. To date, we have not received any notice from RFS regarding this issue. We still have many global suppliers that we use in support of our sales. To date, finding alternatives has not been an issue.”

Is there one thing Miklius is looking forward to seeing at the NAB Show while he peruses the expo floor? He says, “The NAB Show always provides the opportunity to visit our existing suppliers to see new offerings that we can integrate into our portfolio, and to find new and innovative products that can be of value to our customers.”

ENCO

Ken Frommert, President

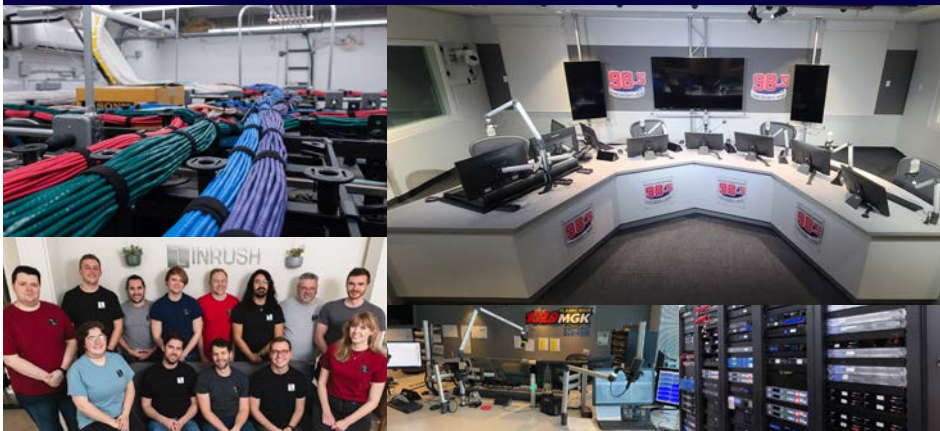
RBR+TVBR: What is the No. 1 mission for ENCO with respect to the NAB Show and what you plan on sharing with returning and prospective clients?

FROMMERT: We were energized as we returned to Las Vegas last year for the first NAB Show in several years. The main reason is that we have always valued NAB as a sounding board. We exhibit at NAB not only to show our new products but to get feedback on existing products and learn how we can develop new features and better address how they’re working today and expect them to be working three to five years from now.

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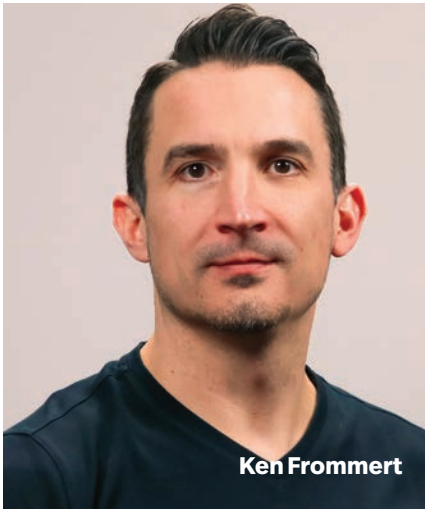
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Ken Frommert

today but is always looking to the future. We leave NAB with an understanding of emerging trends and specific customer initiatives that we need to address.

RBR+TVBR: What is the biggest takeaway from ENCO's purchase of RUSHWORKS, announced at the start of the year?

FROMMERT: It is a broad expansion of products and talent. We have retained the entire team, including founder Rush Beesley, who

will continue to lead RUSHWORKS' sales and marketing initiatives. Their engineering talent is exceptional.

Their product line takes ENCO deeper into areas we have recently started to penetrate, such as community media and local cable access stations. They strengthen our bench of automated systems and add areas like camera robotics to the mix that we traditionally relied on third-party solutions to meet. RUSHWORKS makes us stronger and makes us unique from our competition. We are returning that favor by investing in their portfolio and infrastructure, which includes a new ENCO RUSHWORKS office in the Dallas area.

RBR+TVBR: A "revamped Remote Radio Automation Interface" was a big part of ENCO's efforts at IBC2022. Looking ahead to the remainder of 2023, what's the product rollout outlook for ENCO and its focus for the U.S. television and radio industry?

FROMMERT: The first part of your question specifically relates to WebDAD 3.0. The redesigned UI provides customers with a big step forward for a variety of remote

production and control needs, all from within a web browser. It speeds up the process of uploading content and modifying playlists to voicetracking and editing audio content.

For NAB 2023, we've further expanded WebDAD 3.0 functionality to control your automation system with the addition of our array and playback deck modules. Users now have the ability to fire arrays or "hot keys" and take complete control of their DAD automation within the all-new user interface.

The spirit of that last sentence extends to our automated captioning system, enCaption 5, which was initially developed to help broadcasters more cost-efficiently communicate with hard-of-hearing clients and remain in compliance with government regulations.

We have also integrated our enTranslate system within enCaption5 as a plug-in, which offers translation for 35 languages available in the cloud or on-prem.

On the subject of AI, we have something completely new on the horizon for radio broadcasters — something that takes artificial

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intelligence in the radio workflow into two new places.

RBR+TVBR: Captioning has become a hot topic among companies seeking to gain exposure with U.S. broadcasters, and streaming opens up lots of possibilities. Is this indeed an area where growth abounds over the coming years?

FROMMERT: The need and desire for captioning continue to grow. The OTT and DTC universe brings an abundance of new media content and outlets to consumers year after year. Consumers need captions on their tablets and phones as much as they need them on their TV sets. There is a growing need for live translation across all these consumer platforms as well.

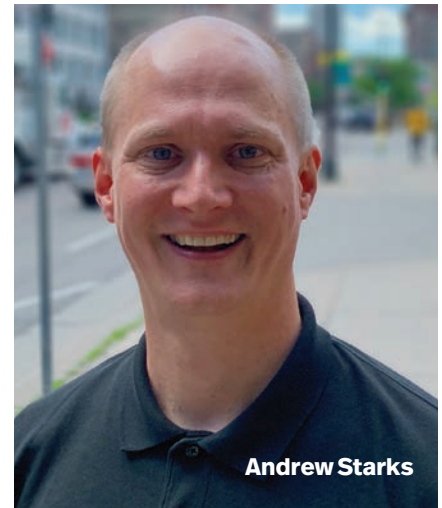
If you look just outside our industry, these same captioning tools are being applied for live open captioning during government meetings, inside courtrooms, within sports and event venues, and inside worship facilities, classrooms, and corporate meeting spaces. New applications seem to arise monthly, and we see no signs of that slowing. The evolution of AI will also continue to take captioning and translation into new applications.

AI has clearly arrived, and to mostly positive reception. I'm interested to see how companies plan to leverage AI technology to optimize workflows and save money for broadcasters. There will always be the need for humans in the broadcast workflow because there is no room for error in live broadcasting, but I do believe AI can help us work more efficiently and open new doors in terms of both saving money and new business opportunities.

Macnica

Andrew Starks, Director of Product Management

Macnica may not be wholly familiar to the broadcast media industry. That said, Macnica has established itself in the engineering and tech sector as a longtime proponent of open standards in the broadcast and professional AV industries. "We develop and aid in the definition of emerging standards that shape SDI to IP migration, both through our own technology innovations and by working closely with standards organizations including the AIMS, SMPTE, VSE, and



Andrew Starks

AMWA," says Andrew Starks, who believes there are two elements to Macnica's primary mission at the 2023 NAB Show.

"The first is education," he says. "We want everyone to understand the value and advantages of open standards, which include more secure media supply chains, a broader diversity of vendors, and stable products across the workflow. The second is fostering familiarity around how broadcasters can take advantage of

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existing standards and technologies to bring down costs, increase workflow flexibility, and produce greater return value from the investment in their media infrastructures.”

Standards introduce competition, which brings open innovation to a new level, Starks adds. “Without standards, our industry remains stuck in neutral in terms of what they can achieve with media production, contribution, and content delivery. As companies like Macnica bring SMPTE ST 2110 and IPMX standards and technologies into broader circles, it brings costs down, increases revenue volume, and creates more opportunities for interoperability and interaction.

“For example, IPMX, an emerging suite of standards from the AIMS Alliance that builds on SMPTE ST 2110, is bringing the broadcast and production universe closer to the public by making it easier and more cost-effective to enable media content-sharing opportunities, including within more virtualized and cloud-enabled environments.”

Macnica began to gain increased awareness among broadcast media C-Suite leaders in late summer 2022,

with the unveiling of a SMPTE ST 2110 Media Streaming SDK at IBC in Amsterdam. What is this product’s significance to broadcasters in the U.S.?

“Broadcasters are looking for new avenues to connect with viewers,” Starks says. “Our Media Streaming SDK provides our customers with the ability to create those links and develop applications through our API, which makes establishing those connections easy and efficient.

“For example, the SDK makes it easy for broadcasters and media companies to create links to remote content contributors. That is an increasingly vital part of the business for over-the-air content providers today as well as the OTT platforms they offer, and the SDK removes the complexity, expense, and complications of making that connection. The SDK offers a way to receive and send SMPTE 2110 and IPMX sources and create more flexibility workflow solutions throughout the ecosystem.”

Asked what the product rollout outlook for Macnica is for 2023, and about its focus for the U.S. television and radio industry, Starks responds, “Macnica makes

components, including IP Cores and gateway modules, that help product manufacturers develop interoperable IP products based on open standards. We exist right in the middle of helping content producers create content and helping broadcasters and media companies share that content over more platforms. We offer SMPTE ST 2110 and IPMX components for product developers that enable video and audio transport of varied bandwidth, from 1Mb to 100Mb over IP networks and connections as well as in the cloud.

“The takeaway for content providers and media professionals is that we are enabling innovation with components built with open standards that will allow developers to concentrate on customer value.”

While Macnica’s key focus area, live video transport, is perhaps the biggest opportunity for broadcasters, some may have a feeble understanding of what this is and what the benefits are.

Starks offers a layman’s explanation of the benefits. “Broadcasting has traditionally favored specialized technology that required unique equipment to deliver content, because it was all very strictly real-time. That



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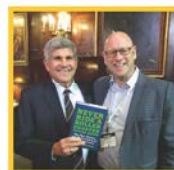
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required hardware-based solutions to achieve that precise timing. Computer technology couldn't get the job done, and the same could be said in other markets completely unrelated to broadcast. Look around, and you can see a shift taking place. The cash registers in your local supermarket are essentially computers. The same shift is happening in the video world.

"This is all made possible because there has been an enormous investment in moving the IT world forward. We have far more knowledge and resources now in terms of how to effectively apply IT network infrastructure and computers to technologies that serve a variety of industries."

In broadcast, IP technology makes it possible for Macnica to build smaller and energy-efficient systems and create systems that are geographically distributed. Whether that is in the cloud, on-premises, or in remote facilities, broadcasters have the flexibility to establish and run geographically dispersed operations that reduce costs, Starks says.

"The barrier to enter from a cost perspective is coming down, and content producers and broadcasters are doing more work in the cloud," he notes. "However, there is still a lot of fantasy and misunderstanding out there about what the cloud can realistically offer broadcasters today."

"We are reaching the point where bridging on-premises broadcast infrastructure with cloud networks is becoming essential for remote contribution, and systems are becoming more controllable. What I hope to see at NAB is a noticeable step forward in breaking down walls that hold 'any premise' media systems back from flourishing."

MultiDyne

Frank Jachetta, CEO

"We have been growing rapidly, and we are constantly trying to keep customers up to speed on our latest products and acquisitions," says Frank Jachetta.

That means the MultiDyne team headed into the 2023 NAB Show with a focus on making sure its latest system products are easy to understand. Jachetta points out, "Some of our systems work across stadiums and even across towns and cities, so the ability to show the products in workflows that are inspired by real-world examples helps customers

Audio-Over IP, Discovered by Audio

For the first time in several years, BARIX is showing off a trio of new products at the 2023 NAB Show. One of these new offerings is Reflector EVO, a next-generation cloud service for audio contribution and distribution. What are some of the key traits of this update to a product that's been around since 2010?

Reto Brader, who has served as CEO of Zurich-based BARIX for nearly a decade, comments, "We are kind of a special company in this broadcast space because this is not our dedicated space. We are actually an audio-over-IP technology company, and sometimes I say broadcast has found us."

BARIX makes products for different markets within the audio-over-IP space, including background music solutions for restaurants. In 2010, using IP technology as a backup to their main analog radio link was first explored by broadcasters. With few knowledgeable on the subject, BARIX moved forward with creating a solution that was easy to use and configure. "You have to explain to people how to set up fixed IP addresses," Brader recalls. "That was very complicated."

Today, firewalls and security are the big knowledge hurdles for broadcasters, as setting up pristine links remains a key mission for BARIX's work with radio stations.

An audio-to-audio delay of any duration was added to BARIX's solutions over the years, making sure local ad insertion "actually works." Meanwhile, a new encoder has arrived; Brader says they come out whenever BARIX thinks the market needs a new one.

This brings Brader back to Reflector EVO, which continues a relationship with audio streaming pioneer StreamGuys, now in the ad-insertion arena.

"Signal contribution is all IP today," Brader says. "Thus, integrating all devices is integral for BARIX."

How important is integration with respect to broadcast technology products? Brader responds, "It is very important. It is all IP today; ISDN lines have gone away."

Meanwhile, BARIX has developed management platforms for all of its products. "That means the customer has the infrastructure to maintain service management," Brader says.

As an IP Networking pioneer, did the pandemic reshape BARIX's consumer need and its own product innovation? Yes, Brader says with a laugh. "There are different aspects," he explains. "We make a product that streams audio with lowest delay to smartphones if you are hearing-impaired, or if you have a translator and you want to get that audio to some people, you can actually do that with this product."

During the pandemic, sales of this product slumped to zero. "It's picking up as people are coming together again," Brader says.

The other major shift COVID-19 accelerated for BARIX was doing more in terms of product assembly and delivery out of Europe. Prior to the pandemic, nearly everything was sourced from Asia. With COVID-19, one couldn't go there. With a plan to shift sourcing to European Union nations, BARIX swiftly moved forward with that initiative over the last two years.

Today, BARIX is poised to raise its knowledge level among radio industry leaders who have likely heard audio powered by BARIX but remain a bit unfamiliar with the company. "The technology in between ... it should be working," Brader concludes. "It should be robust. It should be there. You don't need to know about it. It just needs to be there."

to identify the MultiDyne technology they need for their projects."

MultiDyne's fiber optic systems are widely known for their signal-conversion abilities and fiber optic-based transport systems. In September 2022, a growth move came with the acquisition of Niagara Video Corporation. What does that mean to the consumer?

For the first time, customers will be enabled to take their signals to destinations across just about any IP network. "Mission-critical video and audio signal transport over the internet using SRT and RIST is now available with the new NIA9205 series of HD/4K AVC and HEVC encoder and decoders," Jachetta says. "The ability for



Frank Jachetta

a customer to use MultiDyne for signal formatting and extension from the glass of the fiber-optic camera adapter to the glass screen of a streaming device is now available.”

At IBC2022, power extension for camera operators was a key focus. What’s the message for 2023, and is there anything on the horizon for consumers from MultiDyne?

Jachetta shares, “There continues to be a lot of interest in our SilverBack fiber camera adapters — camera adapters that enable cinematic multicam, which is essential for live cinema events and can be adapted into broadcast workflows. We are now in our fourth generation of SilverBack systems, and we are proud to have been awarded a Technology and Engineering Emmy for our achievement.”

Camera power extension is also getting a particular NAB Show focus. “We have added more signal support to the associated SilverBack and VB product lines, the latter of which are configurable fiber throwdown products for signal transport,” Jachetta says. “The big news on the power side is that we now support 24V cameras in the SilverBack fiber optic camera adapter lineup, including advanced power extension through the SilverBack-APE.

“SilverBack adapters have long mounted on broadcast cameras from companies like Grass Valley, Panasonic, and Sony. They now mount on the latest digital cinema cameras from ARRI and RED and provide the 24VDC that these cameras demand while also handling all of the audio, video, and data that the evolving cinematic multicam broadcast workflows require. That is really important for the content producer that wants to mix the dramatic look and feel of digital cinema cameras and

A Switch To The Cloud

It’s a remote company with its headquarters at Three World Trade Center and executives located across the U.S. And, at the 2023 NAB Show, it will have a presence in the Microsoft booth, in the Evertz booth, and in the TAG Video Systems booth, too.

Not bad for SwXtch.io, a company with a unique name, pronounced like “switch,” that offers products focused on moving broadcast networks to the cloud. How did SwXtch.io land in this space, and how important is this opportunity for radio and TV stations that aren’t yet relying on cloud capabilities?

Patrick McCoy, the company’s Wilmington, Del.-based Head of Product, provides an overview of the company’s history. First, it is owned by a stock exchange – IEX Group. “They have some high-performance networking requirements they have developed as part of their trading portfolio and wanted to migrate to the cloud,” McCoy says. Specifically, migration to Azure was desired.

But, McCoy says, IEX found some roadblocks on the way, such as multicast. “They couldn’t migrate to the cloud, so, in short, that became an opportunity in that they created a startup, SwXtch.io, with a goal to close the gap in features and functionality that cloud networks are missing so people can migrate their needs to the cloud.”

He continues, “The gaps that exist for these capabilities that don’t exist in the cloud really extend across many market verticals in different industries. From financial services to media and entertainment and to broadcasters, everybody uses some of these capabilities that we are developing.” That presented a broadcast industry market opportunity.

“It is inevitable – everyone is eventually going to be migrating the cloud,” McCoy adds. “It just makes sense, and everyone is going at their own pace.”

A March 7 agreement initiated delivery to networks in the AWS Cloud for the first time. “This is a really big deal,” McCoy shares. “We are on the Azure marketplace, and our goal is to move to other clouds over time. It’s all part of our larger strategy to allow media companies to migrate their workflows into the cloud, and the cloud of their choosing. Eliminating constraints that exist in these cloud networks, such as PTP timing, reliable transport, and ground-to-cloud capabilities for those hybrid networks –all of these capabilities are removing these restraints and normalizing how the cloud looks to all of these applications and all of these workflows.”

content into their broadcast television workflows.”

On the signal support side, NAB Show 2023 also sees the addition of HDMI 2.0 and 10GbE fiber-optic transport for high-resolution TV content, Jachetta concludes.

Sierra Automated Systems

Anthony Salci, Operations Manager

It’s been at the forefront of Audio over IP innovation for LAN-based studio networking. Now, Sierra Automated Systems is using the 2023 NAB Show to communicate its technology strengths as it continues to add new talent across its sales, marketing, and engineering teams.

“Our technical support is also stronger than ever,” says Anthony

Salci of the Burbank, Calif.-based company. This includes field service technicians from SAS’s manufacturer’s representative, DNAV.

At the 2023 NAB Show, the DNAV team and SAS were to join forces to demonstrate how SAS hardware and software can speak to third-party manufacturers, moving SAS further into wide-area networking for command and control. The key message Salci has to share? How SAS helps broadcasters and networks take control of equipment and systems in geographically dispersed radio facilities, including studios and RF buildings.

For SAS, Audio over IP is the hallmark of what it offers its clients. At the start of 2023, SAS Global Connect was released. Salci shares how this can bring new benefits to broadcasters.

“The introduction of SAS Global Connect is a culmination of user input and market surveys over several years,”



Anthony Salci

he says. “Our primary goal was to hear direct from radio broadcasters about how they would benefit from a cloud-based control and monitoring mechanism with universal conformity. Global Connect breaks down the proprietary technology walls that hold back interoperability in radio broadcast and production workflows.

“We have heard from many customers about how vendors often restrict their programming capabilities to certain select components. That limits what components they can control, and how they can control them. With few exceptions, this is a dated approach that helps only the manufacturer. We want to bring more freedom to how broadcasters manage and control their entire systems.”

As a company known largely as a studio console/networking manufacturer for radio systems, what

is on the horizon from SAS? “We also intend to bring this technology to new markets,” Salci says. “There are many businesses outside of broadcast that need to efficiently move audio between rooms and distant sites, and they need to do so with the precise timing and synchronization that the broadcast world demands. Our routing and networking technology makes intelligent, speed-of-light routing possible for any business.”

Aside from sharing SAS’s story with new and potential clients, Salci and his team are interested in seeing what their friends at Orban are up to. “They will be running a demo that streams live audio from the transmitter site of a 50kw New York City AM radio station back to the booth,” he says. “Visitors can compare the program audio quality from an older audio processor, which is being run into a dummy load, with the live audio going out over the air that will run their latest audio processing software. We think that sends a strong message of confidence that they are taking audio processing quality to new heights.”

StreamGuys Eduardo Martinez, VP of Technology

For those attending the 2023 NAB Show, the StreamGuys product showcase was poised to serve as “a powerful overview” of an expanding SaaS suite, Eduardo Martinez says. Among the key features are rewindable

live streams, multi-directional content conversions for monetizing audio as video, broadcast-to-podcast automation, and a revamp of SGreports, the StreamGuys reporting platform. While live streaming is core to StreamGuys’ efforts, podcast hosting is as well.

New to NAB Show attendees in 2023 is StreamGuys’ automated audio-to-video (and vice versa) conversions, which preserve ad triggers while allowing audio and video publishers to reach platforms they wouldn’t normally have access to. “This automatically extends their digital footprint while allowing them to continue leveraging dynamic ad insertion,” Martinez says.

At the 2023 NAB Show, StreamGuys is teaming with ENCO on a West Hall expo booth.



Eduardo Martinez



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