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# The Future of Television: An Analysis on the Impact of the Internet on Both National and Local Television

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*University of the Incarnate Word*

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# **The Future of Television: An Analysis on the Impact of the Internet on both national and local Television.**

By Sarae Rodriguez

Presented to: The Graduate Faculty of  
University of the Incarnate Word

Committee Chairperson: Dr. Valerie K. Greenberg

Committee Member: Professor Michael L. Mercer

Department: Communication Arts

Degree: Master of Arts

# The Future of Television: An Analysis on the Impact of the Internet on both national and local Television.

by

Sarae Rodriguez

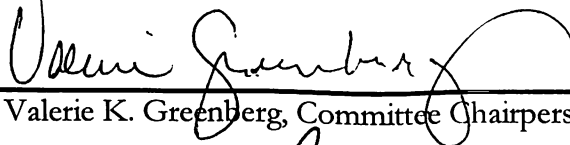
A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of  
the requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts

University of the Incarnate Word

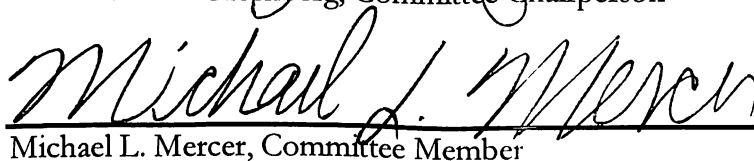
2007

Approved:



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## **Abstract**

Television has served as the most influential medium in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Its popularity soared as programming developed on broadcast TV in the 1950s. Like television, the Internet was developed slowly in stages, over a number of years. Today, both mediums are widely used. However, more people are starting to read, view and download television news and entertainment content on the Internet. In order for the major networks and local TV stations to transition in the media broadcasting industry, station websites have become a requirement, so viewers may have the alternative to watch television on the Internet. This transition has resulted in many changes for the network's and local TV station's news, entertainment and advertising practices. In this thesis, the author will research, analyze, identify, compare and discuss the changes networks and local TV stations have undergone due to the influences from the Internet. A short history of television and the Internet will be provided, to include the adoption of interactive television websites on the Internet. The researchers' areas of primary concentration will consist of news and entertainment content and video streaming, along with advertising. The purpose of the research is to explore the current TV and Internet convergence on a national and local level.

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## **Introduction**

For as long as many can remember, a television set was a part of the American home. Nowadays, a personal computer can be added to the standard electronic device in the American home. As a result, we are currently experiencing a convergence between the two.

In prior years, most Americans spent a majority of their spare time watching television to obtain their news and entertainment. Studies show a large percentage of Americans are using the personal computer more than the television set to get their news and entertainment (Sass). The Internet has played a huge role in why Americans are choosing their personal computers over their television sets. Personal computers allow online users so many more features not available to a viewer on a television set. A few examples include: in-depth coverage of news and entertainment, the option to discuss national and local topics of importance through forums and free on-demand TV show downloads 24/7.

As a result, the recent demand has forced television stations to go online. This transition has been slow and is still currently under way. Interactive television viewing websites initially started with the major networks and now local stations are following. These websites were immediately identified to provide an enormous opportunity for advertising revenue, allowing more on-demand features with programming, in-depth story coverage and time flexibility for the online viewer.

The merging attempts for the two mediums have undergone much scrutiny both at the network and local TV station level. The future of television at this point is unknown to most and everyone is trying to figure out if the two mediums will complement one

another or if one will replace the other in order to stay competitive in the media  
broadcasting industry.

## **Purpose**

The purpose of this paper is to research, analyze, identify, compare and discuss the changes the TV networks and local stations have implemented due to the influences from the Internet.

## **Researchable Question**

In what ways has the introduction of the Internet changed the way TV networks and local stations broadcast news and entertainment and what do the local television station employees predict for the future of television on the Internet?



## Conceptual Framework

The overall focus is on the changes TV networks and local stations have undergone as a result of the Internet.

“The Internet, the computer and related technologies have transformed our daily lives, have changed the way we communicate, do business, gather information, shop and entertain ourselves. Even technology once considered very ‘modern’ — photography, the telephone, movies, television — has been altered or replaced by faster and more dynamic media that allow more manipulation and control by the individual” (Greenberg).

Today “more than 100 million Americans get most of their news from websites” (News Brief). Television and newspapers continue to lead, but online news is following strong right behind the two long-standing news sources.

This researcher hopes to discover how national television networks and local television stations are confronting the Internet. Some view the Internet as a user friendly and very diverse medium (Poster). For this reason, the writer will explore the areas of in-depth news and entertainment content, video streaming and advertising on network and local television websites. According to communications and technology guru Marshall McLuhan, “the content of any new medium is frequently the old medium that it replaces.” This author will determine if the Internet is expected to replace television or serve as another platform to distribute content both at a national and local level.

The writer will also research the small-town view on a global phenomenon, the Internet, most local TV stations do not seem to grasp just yet.

## Literature Review

In the early part of 2000, the Internet had “a thousand voices bloom” and “allowed almost anyone to become a publisher” (Ledbetter, 46). During this time, a variety of mediums were establishing websites to help bring wider audiences through access to external links, timeliness and an edit-to-publish cycle that only took minutes (Ledbetter, 47). These website strengths sounded great for television networks and stations.

Richard Tedesco researched the co-mingling between the two media and found success occurred through a trial-and-error formula in the early days (58). His article points out how “developing content for both television and the Internet,” along with the “process of figuring out what works for each respective audience — and may attract both” was not an easy task (58). It seems the significant differences between the two mediums were first recognized during this time. Despite the obstacles in sight, many believed “the Web was the future of TV” (Tedesco, 58).

As a result, “all the networks felt they should play the same role of being a network, a mass-market, general-purpose collection of services, and none of them were succeeding” (Kerschbaumer, 54). A majority of networks tried to give online users an interactive compelling experience and most took a minority stake in a number of Internet companies (55). The “one thing all of the networks had in common was putting their websites to good use as marketing tools for their on-air content” (56). Since then, networks have tried to imitate the “focus on the user” as Yahoo has done successfully (Kerschbaumer, 58).

In 2001, the Internet was “deepening its grip on society” (Schroeder, 22).

Schroeder states, “with unimaginable speed, more people are using, buying online and having their lives changed by the Internet. The fact is the Internet has so dramatically changed the way we live and work...that is virtually inescapable and unquestionably here to stay” (22). During this time, Americans expected quality online content to be free as they do with TV networks news, which is supported by advertising. By the middle of the year, “the Internet reached more than 57 percent of U.S. households, and showed a deeper penetration at work” (Schroeder, 22). Experts predicted, “ad buying on the Web to grow by as much as 500 percent in the next three to five years” (Schroeder, 22).

Over the next few years “the media universe showed fragmenting into a million pieces as consumers revel in the empowerment of cable TV, the Internet and mobile media” (Wigley, 13). In 2006, Glen Dickson reports watching TV over the Internet brought about new services, such as Internet Protocol TV (IPTV) and TiVoCast, allowing programming on TV sets via the Internet (22). They “both use the public Internet to deliver video and both use a proprietary set-top box that connects to a TV set to display it” (Dickson, 22). IPTV struggled to deliver on its promise (Murphy, 15). A few of the reasons it failed included: high subscription fees, quality of content, convergence and the ability to consume content through mobile or PC platforms (Murphy, 15).

By September 2006, Abbey Klaassen quotes, “the long-promised convergence of the Web and TV might actually be upon us — this time for real” (3). She explains how gaming consoles such as Xbox 360 and Sony’s PlayStation are connected to both the

Internet and the TV, giving the most potential to make the convergence happen (25).

Klaassen states, “the two biggest barriers to connected-entertainment devices are content availability and user experience” (36). She notes TV networks are offering more of their content online and streaming their shows (41). Her report states, “the bulk of the content is still locked up in the walled garden that is cable or satellite TV services...hardware and software companies are creating media-center PCs and set-top boxes that connect the computer to the TV” (65).

In October 2006, Google bought YouTube for \$1.6 billion (Atkinson, 1). From that moment on, Google has been considered the newest TV powerhouse online. Atkinson reports on Albert Cheng, an ABC Television Group exec, who did not feel the deal was much of a game changer due to the networks’ own moves to online streaming (20). Cheng also stated, “that whoever controls the sales relationships with advertisers is best positioned for the future” (Atkinson, 30). His final comment stated, “so long as Google isn’t a content producer, it isn’t a competitor” (Atkinson, 40). Google Chief Executive Officer Eric Schmidt responded to media companies immediately after the purchase. He assured, “Google does not want to get into content creation” (Atkinson, 45).

Throughout the fall, “new, cost-effective broadband channels began to chase a single-minded audience” (Becker, 20). According to Becker, servicing audiences that are too small to be profitable through traditional TV is exactly what the Internet is good for (20). She points out maintaining user intimacy and the site’s viability is crucial for success (20). Reports show “networks have made tremendous progress” (Becker, 10).

In another article, Becker explores several network strides. She talks about upgraded players for highest-quality video and a theatrical experience along with minimized clicks to full episodes (10). Networks also decided to begin “use of focus-group research and usability testing to find out what consumers want” (Becker, 10). ABC was the first of the broadcasting networks to introduce Video Player; NBC followed shortly and FOX created a completely different “On Demand” Player (Becker, 10). Becker feels, “the casual TV viewer will not drop the remote and reach for a mouse just yet” (10).

In November 2006, “Nielsen launches National TV/Web fusion database” (Consoli, 6). This information merges television and Internet viewer/user panels into one single dataset, allowing programmers and advertisers to maximize the relationship between TV and Internet use (6-7). The database can provide extensive demographics and segment various regions in the country, too. “The sample fused data report produced off of April 2006 data shows that 40 percent of the U.S. population is more television-centric, while 24 percent is more Internet-centric, and 15 percent use both the TV and the Web heavily in equal portions” (Consoli, 8).

Earlier this year at the annual Consumer Electronics Show in Las Vegas, Web-to-TV convergence products were a big hit (Dickson, 64). “The explosion of video content on the Internet in 2006 has given rise to a bumper crop of TV/PC devices” (Johnston, 30). As a result, it is reported, “2007 will be the year when TV and PC finally start to settle their differences and make nice” (Johnston, 30). The struggle for the moment seems to be how these devices deal with bandwidth.

A device that has really hit the masses is the mobile. In March 2007, Verizon Wireless launched eight channels of programming that could be received by the new Samsung phone in 20 markets (Dickson, 14). The content is provided by CBS, Comedy Central, ESPN, Fox, MTV, Nickelodeon and NBC (Dickson, 14). The users raved about the news content appeal to the service. Dickson quotes, “for the first time, we have a 24/7 connection with consumers and a way to serve ads to them” (14). Shortly after, other mobile-TV offerings followed such as Sprint and CBS.

Local TV stations may in fact have an edge in the mobile space. The content local stations specialize in (news, weather, traffic and other community information) is better-suited to digest in segments and on a small screen (Bachman, 16). She reports mobile TV is in its infancy, coming at a time when stations have just begun to turn the corner on making their websites bona fide money-makers (16). The content is delivered as text or static picture via Wireless Access Protocol, a sort of mini-website or texting via Short Message Service and stations have begun to integrate video, too (Bachman, 16)

Networks are currently going through much experimentation. For example, NBC incorporated social-networking features such as: registrations, preferences, playlists and the ability to create public profiles with shared videos and photos on the website in the spring (Johnston, 16). Johnson also reports NBC Universal and News Corp. created a website this summer that hosts television shows and movies from both companies (16). NBC also began to offer the ability to stream full-length episodes of “Late Night Conan

O'Brien," making it the first of the late-night talkers to offer complete episodes on the Web (Levith, 24). In Sacramento, KXTV transitioned a "former news anchor into a Web-only anchor who moderates live chats with viewers, explains how the newsroom makes decisions, anchors breaking news and pursues stories of interest to the Web audience" (Potter, 54). Another station, KARE-TV in Minneapolis, is trying another approach. The station is trying a half-hour daily news "hybrid simulcast" on TV and online at 4 p.m. discussing news and inviting users to participate via webcam (Potter, 54). According to reports, CNN.com does better than the TV broadcast (Hampp, 3). Hampp reports, "almost everybody across pretty much every economic and age demographic learns of breaking news online, increasingly on mobile" (15). He points to "coverage of Sept. 11 as most representative of the shift" (21).

Networks are "becoming necessarily bolder in integrating Web 2.0 technology, the next generation of Web applications that includes social networks, blogs and wikis (Hemingway, 22). Plus, advertisers are leaning towards the Web due to direct measures on how well their ads are working, unlike broadcasting TV (Andariese, 26). The Internet is "a brave new world for marketers," presenting an opportunity to have a different marketing mix for every consumer (Hartley, 14). Hartley reports everyone sees the Internet as an experiment (14). "Marketing in the future will not be about the masses but about understanding micro-segments of customers and using tools that enable marketing to get more granular and take campaigns to a one-to-one level" (Gundersen, 24).

As a result of all of these changes, “measuring the Web got more complex” (Klaassen, 3). Klaassen reports total minutes are the newest metric Nielsen/Net Ratings’ will report as a way to rank websites’ audiences (9). The report will measure total audience, time spent and frequency of use and page views (Klaassen, 21). ComScore, its chief competitor, will report the same metrics (Klaassen, 30). “Plus, unlike TV, where a single measurement is used both for planning purposes and as a currency, the Web relies on panel-based audience measurement, such as Nielsen/Net Ratings and ComScore, to plan and third-party ad-servicing data to measure the currency-impressions served” (Klassen, 33).

In another article, Klaassen explains why the Web video is the new 30-second spot (1-23). She quotes, “the website is replacing the 30 as the central expression of a brand” and “in most cases, rich-video sites can be made for half the cost of a 30-second spot” (3). Klaassen points out plenty of critics say the Web will never be a replacement for TV’s reach and ability to create interest, but there is no denying the depth of experience a website allows (20).

Steinberg reports TV measurement has come up short this year (8). “The ability of TV ratings king Nielsen Media Research to measure people as they scamper across a range of media venues will not be fully realized until 2011” (Steinberg, 8). Reports show “129 million households who access the Internet via broadband, an estimated 81 million are accessing television shows and movies via this connection” (Christopher, 15).



Women in the United States in the 45-54 age bracket spend the most time with media, followed by adult males (Christopher, 15).

On Sept. 1, 2007, “the Archos 605 player made a big advance in the still-troubled world of Internet TV” (Edwards, 6). The video player surfs the Web, downloads content and docks with a TV. It also includes a built-in Web browser with Adobe Flash Player support, which improves the search for Web content (Edwards, 6). “To make the experience more TiVo-like they included a programming guide that is free for the first year” (Edwards, 6). Edwards notes setting up the Archos 605 was not hard, but not as user-friendly as it should be (6). He also points out the downfall of downloading large files with a Wi-Fi to be long (6). Overall, “despite the occasional hassle, this device offers one of the best experiences available in the still-troubled arena of Internet TV” (Edwards, 6).

## Methodology

The purpose of this thesis is to explore television and the influences from the Internet in order to obtain a better understanding on the future of television. An overview on the history, recent convergence, comparison and contrast along with future outlook on both mediums will be presented. This writer will research, analyze, observe, identify, compare and discuss the changes resulting from the recent television and Internet convergence at the TV network and local level. The creation, advertising and execution of interactive local television-viewing websites will be researched and discussed in great depth. The areas of primary concentration include: in-depth news and entertainment content; on-demand video stream programming; the emerging advertising potential online vs. television.

The research to be conducted will include the use of knowledge claims, strategies of inquiry and detailed procedures of data collection, analysis and writing (Creswell, 3).

From the knowledge claims this author will only incorporate post positivism and constructivism and exclude advocacy and pragmatism. Under the determination section of the post positivism position, the writer will examine causes (Internet explosion/online video streaming) that influence outcomes (TV station websites/changes in television viewing and advertising practices). Understanding is the segment of constructivism this researcher will investigate. For that, this writer will seek to better understand the world in which we live in, regarding television and Internet usage among various demographics.

As for the strategies of inquiry, the research to be conducted will be done under a mixed methods approach. Some observation and interviews (qualitative data) will be

combined with a survey (quantitative data). Such combined research will provide a more comprehensive analysis of the changes the Internet has forced on TV networks and local stations.

First, the writer will research and observe each TV network and affiliated local TV station/s website (to compare and contrast). The concentration will primarily be on the NBC, FOX/MY NETWORK, CBS, ABC and Univision affiliates. During a one week period the researcher will watch various programming during the day, evening and night hours to identify how often any reference to the national network or local station's website are mentioned, shown or advertised. Last, the writer will contact the six local TV stations in an attempt to interview anyone tied into the station's website. The areas may include: research, advertising sales, content management and so forth.

Second, the writer will have nine graduate communication students fill out a questionnaire consisting of 15 questions regarding television and Internet use (refer to appendices IX).

These research strategies should provide enough in-depth material to successfully research, analyze, identify, compare and discuss the changes TV networks and local stations have undergone due to the influences from the Internet. The purpose of the research is to obtain a better understanding of the future of television.

## **Data Analysis**

The researcher studied the national networks (NBC, FOX/MY NETWORK, CBS, ABC and Univision) and local TV station affiliates (WOAI, KABB/KMYS, KENS, KSAT and KWEX) for several months. For one week, this author observed the national networks and local TV station affiliates to identify the impacts of the station's websites on-air.

In overview, all national networks promoted their websites extensively. Many used creative graphics and concepts to deliver the message to the viewer. In any given morning, afternoon, evening and late night network program the website would be mentioned at least two to five times for any 30 minute or one hour show. Locally, KENS and KSAT promote their website much more frequently than WOAI and KABB/KMYS. They actually have their websites embedded in the newscast logo. WOAI and KABB/KMYS will have frequent on-air mentions. KWEX will only mention the website for a very unusual story they may be tracking or wanting feedback from viewers on. All the major networks offer their more popular shows online. Some networks offer both short clips and full-length videos. The local TV stations provide a majority of their news and other programming content online in short clips only.

The respondents to the 15-question survey were nine communication graduate students ranging from ages 23 to 50 from the University of the Incarnate Word in San Antonio, Texas. The demographics included: three females, six males, seven Hispanics, one Caucasian and one African American. All respondents used the Internet and 60 percent watched television on the Internet and were the youngest respondents. The

respondents primarily watched television on the Internet at night and typically comedy and drama programming. Most noted time flexibility and avoiding lengthy commercials on why they view television online. A majority of the graduate students feel television will always be around, however, they do acknowledge the merging between the two mediums and only speculate a convergence in the future based on their studies and experiences.

This researcher investigated local TV stations' websites a bit further by speaking to local TV station employees tied to the station's website (please refer to appendices VII). This author's goal is to obtain a better understanding of the transition online. The researcher asked all of the employees the same 25 questions (please refer to appendices VIII). The following pages explain what this writer found during the interviews that may surprise you.

**Bob Gambert (a.k.a. CyberBob) – WOAI web director**

*Interview held 10/2/07 between 5:30-6:30 p.m. at Sam's Burger Joint.*

A native from Ohio, Mr. Gambert, joined the Air Force after high school. He spent 10 years traveling the world and providing weather forecasts to the flight crews. During this time, Bob strived to be a better weatherman. He decided to embark in the understandings of the recent technology weathermen used. As a result, his initiative for self-education created a hobby that has led him into his current position as a web director for WOAI.com today.

The transition did not happen overnight. He originally started as a part-time weather producer that led to a full-time position. During that time Mr. Gambert actually created the first station website in San Antonio. He presented the suggestion to the station and it was widely accepted and incorporated. His job at that point encompassed the continued designing and maintaining of the website. He even did some of the first Internet reporting in San Antonio.

With the expansion of the Internet, the station acknowledged the importance of his website roles. Ultimately, all his experience and expertise in the TV industry and Internet landed him his full-time position as web director. Mr. Gambert has gone through four ownership changes at the same station. He foresees his future role as web executive producer for the same station someday and told me why.

Mr. Gambert stated, "he does not see the future of television diminishing. What he does predict is a huge shift in television-watching." He called it "a time-shifted TV viewer" and the numbers in San Antonio are only increasing. He explained how the

Internet offers viewers time flexibility to view television 24 hours a day, seven days a week is why he coined the term. He then identified how this will completely change the way local station's broadcast in every aspect.

Right now local stations concentrate on the local news for the most revenue and everything is calculated around the 5 and 10 p.m. newscasts. Today's newscast includes: local, national, special interest, health, weather and sports. Other newscasts and local programming such as "San Antonio Living" provide local content and play important roles, but are not the key ingredients in the local station's business decisions.

The Internet now provides the local newscast along with local programming content in segments, so viewers can pick and choose the stories they want at the time most convenient for them. Right now WOAI.com will provide online viewers with a 15-second pre-roll, 15-second advertisement and five minutes of content. That cycle is repeated and seems to be working. Even new advertising models such as video overlays are being incorporated due to the high traffic on the website. All of these changes will result in what he called "a news cycle change."

He went on to state, "how local news stations will be required to transition from 'news centric' to 'story centric' model as the Internet becomes more prevalent amongst viewers." This will position local TV stations in similar circumstances local newspapers faced in prior years. He explained how he would not be surprised to only see one or two local TV stations in the future. The *San Antonio Express-News* is a perfect example of a decline in a medium. He mentioned how fewer stations would result in higher costs for

advertisers, but would prove to be beneficial for the local TV station. Plus, he went on to say how the cable news wars formed two sides, the same will happen at the local level.

In Mr. Gambert's opinion, local TV stations may have a future if they switch away from branding and focusing all of their efforts on the local news at 5 and 10 p.m. Instead, he states, "local TV stations should shift efforts towards creating good local content programming." It is only a matter of time before an electronic device that incorporates an "all-in-one" concept where both the TV and Internet programming will be available at anytime for the viewer will be the norm. The Internet offers infinite shelf space, while TV broadcast is limited. It would only benefit local TV stations to use their websites as another platform to disburse their local content-driven programming. This will allow local TV stations the ability to offer multiple distribution sources for all of the content produced. Advertisers would continue to work closely with all facets of the local TV station's business operations. This in turn he quotes, "would result in benefits for the local TV station, advertisers and the viewers. Is that not the goal?"

The WOAI-TV station is an affiliate of the NBC network. Online WOAI.com does not have much of an affiliation with the network. NBC.com, however, has "acknowledged that now, more than ever, viewers want to be in control of how, when and where they consume their favorite entertainment" (O'Malley). In September they hired an online innovator for the past 10 years at Microsoft, Cameron Death, who will oversee the digital production and content for NBC.com (Petersen). Apparently, "he can marry



an incredible creative idea with the strategic needs of an advertiser and make it all entertaining for the consumer — which means everyone wins” (Petersen).

In the researchers’ analysis it seems evident both the network and local TV station have similar strategies in confronting the Internet and best of all benefiting equally the business and consumer. The reader may refer to appendices I and II for Internet demographics.

**Gwen Miller – KABB/KMYS national sales manager**

*Interview held 10/4/07 between 3-4 p.m. at FOX 29/my35 TV Station.*

She obtained her degree in marketing primarily working in sales most of her life. Her experience with the station has only been about three years. Her primary role with the stations is sales-driven. About a year ago though, she along with the director of sales saw the potential with the Internet and began experimenting on improvements. They desperately wanted to change the static websites that had been in place for years and started looking at how they may be able to make these websites more interactive for the viewers.

Both stations are part of the Sinclair Broadcasting Group, which owns about 60 television stations in about 37 markets. She immediately explained why FOX29 and the my35 websites have been somewhat behind the curve in comparison to other local stations. She spoke about how corporate has not identified or created a unified look for the stations to mirror. So, up until this point a lot has been done within the station by a combined effort from other employees who have some technical expertise, design talents and creative local content suggestions for promotions, news and sports primarily.

Movie pages were the first ideas they started off with and today they actually are streaming some news and sports video through the “Video On-Demand” section of their websites. The director selects the stories chosen based on importance. She noted how most of the staff involved with the station’s websites is not really trained or experts in the medium and are learning as the station’s websites progress. She told me there is no website team currently in place that designs graphics, creates content, maintains web

pages or provides technical support. She said, “locally the TV stations are finally starting to accept the merging of the two mediums.” Nationally, she says, “the two mediums have merged for some time now.” Unfortunately, the struggle still lies at the local level since not much direction is given from corporate to follow.

During the interview we talked about the online user who wants things tailored to them and on-demand when they are available. This tends to be the online formula this researcher comes across frequently. The interviewer explained to Ms. Frames how research shows this online formula should stay relative to the TV station’s website goals. She agreed and went on to mention how many of the local TV station websites are trying to offer too much information for viewers on the sites. Ms. Frames states, “they are trying to be too many different things for too many people and viewers are being sent all over cyberspace.” She continued with her discussion on how the goal should be concentrating on what the stations know best, television and not real estate, automobiles and so forth. She feels this is the one area where the local TV stations have been failing at merging the two mediums effectively.

The stations are currently working the revenue aspects under a sponsorship program which includes a 15-second pre-roll, an advertising banner and a 15-second commercial before news, weather and sports content is displayed. Both stations are also providing television promotions throughout the day to increase content, page views and unique visitors to the websites. She feels a local push by the advertisers might be how the station’s websites might develop more so. Right now, they have an internal corporate

tracking system in place. They are not currently using a TV/Internet fusion database. Locally, television still is offering the most revenue profits, but she does see how the Internet may be able to offer so much potential in the future.

It appears Ms. Frames understands the importance of the Internet, but faces local TV station constraints. She provided the researcher an article highlighting “the No. 1 use of the Internet is personal communication” (Karrfalt, 4). This author feels Ms. Frames is trying to still work out all the kinks like most in the community.

**David Ostmo- KABB/KMYS director of operations  
and regional manager for Sinclair Broadcasting Group**

*Interview held 10/15/07 between 1-4 p.m. at KABB/KMYS station.*

Mr. Ostmo graduated from high school in 1976. After high school he immediately became part of the radio and television industry. He worked in both mediums for about 10 years in a variety of positions. His expertise was primarily in the technical aspects for both mediums. Due to personal and professional reasons, in the mid-1980s he decided to primarily work in the television industry. He has worked in Iowa, Oklahoma, for universities and in 1992 he moved to San Antonio to start KABB-TV. He actually found the location, created the building structure, oversaw all of the technical engineering aspects and implemented the initial start-up operations for the station. In 1995 he became the director of operations on both the engineer and production side. Three years later his role incorporated the position of regional manager for Sinclair Broadcasting Group. He would now oversee several markets throughout the nation. He stated, "that in the television industry it no longer is advantageous to be specialized." It seems anyone involved in this industry must be able to wear many hats and expect to multi-task all the time.

The stations started a website back in 1995. They were among the first to establish an online presence in town. He gave an analogy on how they specifically are avoiding a "NASCAR" look (overload of advertising and information) to their websites. He and his advertising colleague, Gwen Frames, agree the other station websites in town are cluttered with information. This makes it very difficult for the online user to navigate throughout the website efficiently. For this reason, KABB/KMYS websites are very

different from the other TV station websites in town. Both their websites have a unified look with some tailoring to the individual station's niche audiences. Their efforts are not corporate-driven; instead each website has a unique identity. He comments, "online TV station websites should not all have similar looks and approaches. Each station should have something unique about them that will separate them from all the other TV stations. This is how broadcasters originally were successful; they brought a unique identity to the TV station." Mr. Ostmo went on to explain how he feels the local stations in town have not determined what they want to be yet. They have just created websites that bombard the online user with all sorts of information and are just trying to be everything to everyone. The KABB/KMYS websites have been designed not to follow the information overload format. Instead, he says, "they are taking a wait-and-see approach and adding to the pages in a more deliberate fashion." They are designing their two sites to be visually appealing to the eye and user-friendly to the online user.

He also notes "KABB/KMYS websites are the leaders of technical information in town." He even went on to say how other non-affiliated television stations throughout the United States have mirrored their technical reception guide information. "Imitation is the sincerest form of flattery, but some of it has been a direct copy of the information almost word for word, along with pictures completely adopted illegally in some cases," he said.

Mr. Ostmo told me KABB/KMYS is trying to personalize and tailor their websites to niche audiences. The stations overall goal is very different from the other local TV stations in town, he explained. KABB/KMYS is not working towards being No.

1 or world domination. He quotes, "their mission is to exist comfortably amongst specific niches." They strive to offer their content in a unique way, separating themselves from the local TV stations. For example, for the sport fanatic, a fantasy football league and raw footage of Friday night high school football games is provided online. He continued his interview by discussing how their websites are the only sites in town (and the nation) that offer American Sign Language for the hearing-impaired on their weather newscasts. They will also continue their current efforts to educate viewers about the digital conversion expected in 2009. This researcher clearly acknowledges these are just a few of the features they have created for their websites differentiating them from the local TV stations in town.

He also talked about how the networks have been working with the websites much more in-depth than the local TV stations have due to financial and manpower reasons. He has seen a lot of experimentation and trial-and-error on the network's websites. KABB/KMYS has chosen a different approach to only initiate action on a decision that will continue to exist on the websites from that point forward. He states, "they would hate to create a demand for something unless they would be able to sustain that type of effort online." Most of their research is empirical. In his opinion, it may not be helpful to overanalyze things. He also discussed how network shows (such as "M.A.S.H.," "Cheers" and "Seinfeld") encountered similar research experiences on success rates. He believes a lot of decisions are made on best-educated and professional experience guesses. He also talked about how sometimes you just have to go with a gut

instinct and take a chance, especially in this industry. He explains how they mirror a similar course when it comes to directions initiated with their online website efforts. In his opinion, people primarily go online to local TV station websites for a few reasons. These reasons are for station information, programming and technical support inquiries. In his view, he stated, “our society is heading towards a more interactive world.” As a result, KABB/KMYS is leaning towards an Internet-based solution for their viewers. The websites are providing an extension of the stations for their viewers, allowing them an opportunity to extend their brand and over-the-air broadcasting and vice versa.

He went on to discuss how electronic TV/PC devices have been talked about since the early stages of the Internet explosion. Mr. Ostmo foresees the technological advancements already taking place and they will be available to everyone in the very near future. In his technical expertise, television would no longer be what we have known it to be. Instead, it will be more like and serve more like a computer monitor does today. He explains how in the future you will be buying components to feed into your monitor that will converge your television and Internet all in one central location. He also went on to tell me about the plans to deliver streaming video using a portion of their over-the-air signal to not only the home, but portable devices such as a mobile. He explains the Internet offers this option in real-time right now. However, the current obstacle stations are facing is figuring out other platforms to offer these same features.



For starters broadcasters are struggling since the traditional model of people watching one program stream in real-time is changing. In his view, it is not going away completely, but being replaced by people who want to watch programs on demand. For this reason, he expects change in the industry, but not a complete replacement. He said, “television was expected to kill off the movie industry when it first was introduced and how it never happened.” From his experience, each time new technology comes along, the television industry is forced to change and evolve. For this reason, he does not expect the Internet to kill off television. He feels there will always be a demand for people watching real-time programming, but he does agree it is going to dramatically change in the future. In his opinion, the home delivery signal by either medium will reinforce each other and not necessarily replace each other.

Mr. Ostmo explains why he does not predict a merging of local TV stations in the future either. He does, however, expect local TV stations to consolidate their resources to reduce costs as a result of declines in revenues and ratings in the industry. Some U.S. television stations apparently already share resources, facilities and even outsource. He also mentioned a concept along the notion of a local press association. Each local TV station would use the same news resource for broadcast and online news content. They would, however, distinguish themselves through station branding. It seems all of the local TV stations currently contract a free-lance photographer for all the nighttime accidents in town, exemplifying that local TV stations are already heading towards a consolidation of resources.

He also talked about how newspapers shared resources during declining times to reduce costs and it was effective. The reason for the newspapers' consolidation throughout the nation was due to the newspapers' inability to adapt quickly with the ever-changing lifestyle of the American. Mr. Ostmo reiterates television, on the other hand, was able to adapt and change quickly. For this reason, television has been successful and will continue to be a dominant medium. Overall, Mr. Ostmo forecasts the Internet and television being a complement and supplement for one another now and in the future.

It is obvious to this researcher the KABB/KMYS websites have little tie to the FOX and MY Network websites. FOX.com is "trying to tune into community needs and respond to them instead of pushing content out at people. It is a much more interactive approach" (Karrfalt, 8). This concept seems to mirror the KABB/KMYS mindset too. So even though they may not work together on their online efforts, it seems apparent they have common goals aligned for their websites.

**Melissa Hernandez – KENS research director**

*Interview held 10/5/07 between 1:30-3:00 p.m. at KENS TV Station.*

She obtained her English degree from St. Mary's University where she encountered the Internet. Before her role at KENS, she worked with the *Express-News* and at the KABB/MY35 local TV station in town. She educated herself on the Internet and its capabilities over the years. First, she took it upon herself to understand the scheme of html coding. Then she began to create her own websites and today she is an active web user both personally and professionally.

Belo, owner of KENS-TV, employs her. She is primarily responsible for being a liaison between the television station and Nielsen. She provides qualitative and quantitative data and ensures the station's programming titles are reported correctly. She uses the research found externally for sales aspects to identify niche markets and internally for the news department, to determine valuable local content for the viewers. Her research recognizes KENS as the local television station in town that provides the most local content for the San Antonio viewer. This enables them to have a very strong sense of community and why she has become a part of the KENS team.

In her forecast of television, she does not feel it will dwindle. "Television would continue to be the most dominant medium due to the simple fact that is available to the masses," she said. She went on to explain how two key factors will keep television in the lead, education and income levels. Her comments went on to recognize how most of the San Antonio population does not have access to the Internet at home and is unable to read beyond a seventh-grade level. She explained for those individuals, television is their only

source of local and national news and entertainment. Her terminology for the observable fact was an education gap, very similar to the “Digital Divide” coining the same ideas and concepts. She went on to show me a current map where a majority of the U.S. population did not use new technological rating systems such as people meters. Instead, most of the U.S. population used the traditional hand-written rating systems. It was very obvious to this researcher a huge education and economic gap existed amongst the nation.

What she has seen television stations do in the last two years with the Internet has been using the medium as another sales tool. This way the television reaches the masses and the Internet takes that same message with a twist for those individuals who have gone online. Her comments went on to explain how online advertising offers businesses more flexibility if, for example, they did not actually have a physical location in San Antonio.

She compared newspapers and television and why television unlike newspapers will continue to remain the dominant medium. It all went back again to an education gap. Before television, the elite originally used newspapers and a town crier disseminated information to the masses. Since inception, television has served as the town crier for the masses that is able to include images that invoke emotion. For this reason, she quotes, “television is a medium like no other.”

On the Internet, streaming video is doing a similar role, but the dilemma has been on the differences between the two medium’s concentration times. Television viewers will watch an entire newscast for 30 minutes without any hesitation. The online viewer wants the immediate gratification and may only spend less than half the time the

television viewer may spend. Right now individual news stories are delivered in one minute and 10 seconds via the television set. The online viewer wants that same content in 30 seconds or less. She also commented on the difficulties with piracy issues and the potential barometers that may assist television stations and advertisers on the desires and wants of the online user vs. the television viewer.

KENS-TV has a combined effort with the local newspaper, the *Express-News*; so online users get content from two powerful mediums in one location. She states, “news and sports as the pages hit most by the online viewers on their website.” Both mediums are two separate entities that complement one another, but they are still competitors.

Melissa went on to give specific details about some of the ratings dilemmas with the new technologies in place, especially Digital Video Recorders (DVRs) and the Internet. She noted Neilson came up with a continuity rating for television stations to follow and she expects other ideas will be developed to help television stations keep viewers engaged in their content. She went on to explain how the new technologies are trying to be television, whether through a mobile phone or on the Internet.

In her opinion, “the Internet is just trying to be like television” with a twist in engaging the viewer. In the end, she feels television will dominate the Internet. Television will still end up being the one medium that will be able to pull the most resources. Plus, the simple fact no one owns the Internet and that the medium is very segmented puts the Internet as a medium in chaos. Ultimately, she believes television will

bring in more revenue and the Internet will be just another platform for content distribution and another sales tool for local TV stations to use.

Ms. Hernandez felt strongly that television is the more dominant medium for the future in San Antonio (refer to appendices V and VI). The tie to the *Express-News* makes MySA.com a very unique website unlike any of the other local TV station websites. In this writer's opinion, the two mediums facilitate MySA.com to disseminate their individual content on a common platform.

To this author, KENS' tie with the *Express-News* has allowed MySA.com to offer similar features provided at the national level, locally. For example, CBS recently "launched a digital production studio, 'EyeLab,' that will creatively edit its full-length shows, news programs and sports coverage into bite-sized clips for a generation of YouTube-obsessed dabblers" (O'Malley). MySA.com only provides short video clips for common reasons.

## **Julie Weber – MySA.com general manager**

*Phone interview held between 3- 4 p.m. at her office and my home.*

Mrs. Weber obtained her master's degree from the University of the Incarnate Word in 1996. She has worked for the local newspaper, the *Express-News*, for about 10 years. Her roles have varied over the years at the newspaper, but for about five years she has been a part of the transition onto the Internet that the local newspaper has been exploring. In December 1999 MySA.com was created and she explained how it is a separate business that incorporates the only local newspaper, KENS 5 TV station and the Internet. She was a part of the beginning stages of MySA.com, left for a couple of years to work for Hearst Digital and came back to MySA.com in May 2002.

Mrs. Weber started the interview with her thoughts on the enormous potential the Internet has to offer locally and nationally. She explained the advertising potential online. Her discussion went on to state, "how online advertising is more cost-effective and reaches a much larger audience than traditional mediums." She gave an example between direct mail vs. target e-mail. In her explanation she discusses the cost differences. For a direct-mail item, the cost is 42 cents for first-class or 21 cents for bulk, while target e-mail only cost seven cents. Mrs. Weber cited from the Interactive Advertising Bureau (IAB) which reported, "Internet advertising revenues (U.S.) for the first six months of 2007 were nearly \$10 billion, setting a new record and representing a nearly 27 percent increase over the first half of 2006" (refer to appendices III and IV). She mentions how MySA.com is seeing large increases and double-digit increases year over year. Mrs. Weber believes online advertising is becoming the medium of choice. It is obvious to

her; online advertising is cost-effective and reaches a larger audience that is easily tracked.

According to her, MySA.com averages about 1.3 million unique-users a month. She explained the daily average varies depending on what the news is for that day. The daily average may range from 500 to 1 million page-views a day. Mrs. Weber went on to discuss how online tracking is more effective on a month timeframe vs. a daily average.

We also talked about the approach MySA.com follows. She used a great analogy between supply and demand between a convenient store and Wal-Mart. Mrs. Weber confirmed the website's approach is to provide a wide range of items, however, it incorporates a local slant that makes MySA.com unique to the San Antonio online user. The website offers numerous subsections for the personalization or tailoring the online user may desire. She also talked about the increase in blogs on the site and she explained how MySA.com monitors receipt of the blogs from KENS and the *Express-News* for posting only. They do not edit the blogs and will only try to eliminate posting of unprofessional items. She summarized by stating, "the website is trying to be everything 'San Antonio' to people in San Antonio or those interested in the city."

Mrs. Weber goes on to explain the convergence between the two mediums as the *Express-News* runs a newspaper and KENS runs a TV station. They have joined forces to provide their local content on a common site for online audiences. Her discussion continues with identifying the two as competitors in their core mediums with joint efforts online since a joint ownership exists between the two regarding the website at this



moment. Mrs. Weber views MySA.com being a complement and supplement between the two mediums. The *Express-News* is able to provide more in-depth coverage on a story that may not be feasible to do on television. Whereas, KENS offers the interactive elements of video the local newspaper is unable to do and offers extensive photos the local newspaper may not have the space to provide. They both promote the website extensively in their core mediums and together online, they are able to offer the online user so many more features unavailable individually.

For this researcher, joint effort websites between two dominant mediums such as KENS and the *Express-News* truly show the experimentation currently under way online.

**David Ibanez – KSAT.com managing editor**

*Interview held on 10/16/07 between 7:30- 9 p.m. by phone.*

Mr. Ibanez grew up in San Diego, Texas. He graduated from high school in 1978 and spent a few years working in an auto-part store. At some point, he realized he wanted to do something better with his life. He decided to enroll at Corpus Christi State University where he obtained a bachelor's degree in communication over a six-year period. In his last year of college, he interned at the local NBC affiliate doing a number of jobs. During his internship, he was offered a part-time graphic operator position and in a few months it led into a full-time position. Not even six months later he was producing the weekend newscast and another six months later he was producing the 10 o'clock weekend newscasts. He held this role for several years until 1989 when he decided to work for the NBC affiliate in Wichita, Kan., holding similar roles. In 1991 he returned to Corpus Christi and by this time he was producing the 10 o'clock newscasts during the week. In 1995, Mr. Ibanez received a call and was asked to join KSAT 12 TV in San Antonio. He was offered the 5 o'clock producer position, which he gladly accepted. In 2000, Mr. Ibanez became a contractor for IBS (the Internet Broadcasting System). IBS is a partner of Post News Week who is a parent company of KSAT.

It was at this time that IBS went to Post News Week and began to discuss the absence of a website with the executives. The initial push to create an online presence through a website in San Antonio began. They would provide the infrastructure and anything else that would be required and the station had to just find the means to pay for it. In September 2000, clickonsa.com was born. Mr. Ibanez has been the managing editor

of the station's website since its inception. During this time, he worked alongside two other full-time editors. At this point, he used his producing newscast expertise to determine which stories should be transitioned to the website. The broadcast content had to obviously change to a print version format for online. They also produced images, uploaded video and created slideshows.

Within a year IBS was not doing well financially. The company began to start laying people off and before he knew it, he was all alone working on the website. For the next three years Mr. Ibanez was the only person working on all aspects of the station's website. Within the last year a part-time person who assists with the 5, 6 and 10 o'clock newscasts has been added. He discussed how they are planning to have some of their reporters write content online in the near future. Plus, they do receive some additional assistance from newscast producers and video editors with the uploading of video news clips. Online, Mr. Ibanez states, "he has total editorial judgment, while the news producers decide what video clips should be covered."

He talked about a special feature the KSAT.com website offers known as the "hot button" concept. It originally started as a "seen it on 12" widget that in time was identified to be unsuccessful. Apparently, most people have difficulty finding things online. For this reason, Post News Week decided to keep the concept and change the phrase to something catchy. Plus, they wanted a user-friendly navigation for it on the website. Six months ago the "hot button" was created. Broadcasters refer to the button on the website throughout the newscast on specific stories chosen. The button is positioned

on the left section of the main home page and is exactly what its word means. This button navigates the online user to a page where additional information about specific stories is displayed. He also mentioned how KSAT.com is being proactive on the “Digital Conversion” in 2009. They have a physical countdown and offer educational information to provide to their viewers. He also discussed how some of the online stories are offered via mobile devices. It is on a subscription program that is limited, but very much available. These are just some of the ways the writer identified they are separating themselves from the other local TV stations and attempting to stay competitive amongst the industry in town.

Mr. Ibanez also talked about how management made a decision about the website promotion aspect on the newscast logo. Management identified it was important to point viewers to their website in a continuous fashion. The idea had to be evident and not require broadcasters to verbally refer to the website throughout the newscast. He remarks, “how he initially pushed for such an effort and it has only been a few years that they have provided the website on the newscast logo.”

According to Mr. Ibanez, the station subscribes to a company known as “Web Trends” that helps track the traffic that occurs on their website. He explains how it is very effective in breaking down the hits, page views, unique visitors, top stories and what type of media online users view most (such as text, video and podcasting). In his opinion, the online Nielsen ratings system is not very highly regarded by the industry right now. It has failed to provide consistent data and the industry is still trying to determine what is best,

more page views by one online user or fewer page views by more online users. Mr. Ibanez feels the industry has a few more trial-and-errors to experience before they can create a good formula to follow.

For KSAT.com, online users come to the site to read stories primarily. He feels most online users do not upload video due to personal restrictions or technical difficulties. Unless it is some type of compelling video that must be seen, then online users will initiate video up-loads. He expressed, "the biggest obstacle they face online is to turn broadcast material into print material quickly." Plus, the writing and video content for each medium is very different.

During the interview, we went on to talk about finding other avenues to attract viewers online. The researcher discussed with him how some other northern TV stations have full-time anchors on the web that are creating a personalized experience for the online user, while other TV stations are providing a hybrid simulcast on TV and the Internet. He does not predict any local TV stations moving in a similar direction. He states, "the Internet is a new medium that is catching on, but he does not foresee TV stations' management trading TV for the web." Apparently, KSAT is working on some new ideas he is unable to share. However, he did comment on some possible micro-sites of sorts. He explained how one northern TV station found a way to incorporate mothers and was very successful in attracting more online viewers for their TV station website. In his view, he still feels online efforts are unable to compete with television. He discussed how the network and local station have different relationships online vs. television. The

only tie they have online with the network is a video player for some news and entertainment programming. On television, KSAT.com is an affiliate and must follow instruction from the network, whereas, online there is no affiliation and there are no rules to follow.

As for online advertising, he sees the potential to only be greater for advertisers with a niche. He gave an example of the local experts section on their website. Anyone who specializes in a service is considered an expert for a yearly fee. This allows the advertiser an opportunity to advertise their services on the website. In his observation, "online advertising provides another avenue for advertisers who may not have the money to spend on TV advertising." For advertisers who have the financial backing for television, the website provides an extension to television advertising. Either way, Mr. Ibanez does not predict television stations relying solely on the website for advertising dollars.

On KSAT.com, video content typically entails a 15-second advertising pre-roll. He stated, "the sales department decided this format corporately." However, he mentioned there is discussion to move to a five-second pre-roll online soon. On their website, their stories will typically range from one and a half minutes to no more than three minutes. KSAT research has shown the online user does not spend extensive time watching videos.

In his opinion, he does not forecast the consolidation of the local TV stations. He does not even anticipate the local TV stations combining resources much or outsourcing either. He explains how individual photography, video, anchors and so forth

differentiates local TV stations in town. In his view, there is too much money and too much competition at stake to ever attempt such a consolidation risk. Plus, so many people would be without a job and affect our local economy even more so. He identified how some of the smaller stations might be able to make such a transition, but he ultimately does not see a complete consolidation between all of the local TV stations. He comments, “even though the Internet is revolutionizing the way our society obtains information, television will still continue to be the dominant medium in the future.”

This researcher clearly found an online presence with this local TV station to be later than most. The ABC network, on the other hand, seems to have a strong online presence and continues to make all types of deals (like with AOL) to stay competitive. This interview showed this writer an example of a network and local station with little to no affiliation online and efforts vary much in opposite spectrums online.

**Tammy Dorsey – Univision sales promotion/marketing manager  
and Miguel Gaytan – Univision assignment editor**

Mrs. Dorsey has worked for Univision for 10 years. Her primary role involves sales promotion and marketing for the TV station. She is also responsible for research, sales and promotion duties for the station's website. Mrs. Dorsey does not have any specific training or background with websites, she in time evolved into the position. She stated, "how in the television industry you no longer should be specialized in any one area. In order to become a part of the industry successfully, you must be able to do multiple jobs." The expectations of television employees are growing dramatically right now.

Univision.com in San Antonio launched in 2002. It was not until 2004 that the website received any local input or local selling features. In 2006 the website finally obtained the uploading local video capability. The station does not have a website department, they, like many of the local TV stations combine efforts from a few employees. The website as a whole is corporately operated directly out of Miami, Fla., with five city editors who cover the whole nation. The research is currently done by an internal tracking team and headed by corporate.

For the San Antonio portion of the website, Mrs. Dorsey works alongside three other co-workers who assist with video uploads, community events, technical support and local news content online. Miguel Gaytan joined our interview to provide the news content and some of the technical aspects he is responsible for on the website. His primary job at Univision is being the news assignment editor. Mr. Gaytan began



employment at Univision two years ago and he does bring in some website knowledge and experience to the station.

Mrs. Dorsey explained how the advertising is done both at the national and local level for the website. As for the news content on the San Antonio section, it has been more of a trial-and-error experience. Their website provides some national content from corporate and the rest is local content provided from the station. She comments, the content is offered on a “daily basis” or as a “need to know” only basis.

She also explained how their website is much different from the local TV stations in town. They discussed how a close tie with corporate has primarily been a benefit for them, but the one area that is a bit of struggle entails the rules to be followed online as a result of the corporate tie-in. The local TV stations, on the other hand, have free rein on every aspect of their websites, which can be very advantageous locally.

They both explained how corporate handles most of the online advancements such as mobile device transmission, blogs, podcasting and other features the online users demands. The TV station is able to provide a local personalized slant through a question section on specific topics. For example, right now they have the whole immigration topic up for discussion. Their website also incorporates links for several Spanish radio stations they are affiliated with, making their website a “San Antonio” website for the Univision company. The format and look for the website was given by the national network.

She also explained how they do not use advertising pre-rolls before their video content as the other local TV station websites in town do. They have the option, but have

currently chosen not to follow such a format. Instead, other forms of advertising are used and she discussed how they have a sponsorship type of program in place for all of their advertising. In her opinion, “she does not predict advertising on the Internet to exceed television advertising.”

This researcher also discussed clutter on local TV station’s websites with them. Mrs. Dorsey does not see their site to be bombarded with information. In her view, “it is the job of the website to provide as much information on a variety of topics to their viewers.” She explained how in broadcasting you have a short time to disseminate information, whereas, online you are able to provide more in-depth information about a specific story and or topic. They apparently have special sections throughout the week that they tie-in with advertising online through the sponsorship program. It is her belief; the TV station’s goal is to offer as much information available to the online user.

They both went on to explain how the video content used in their broadcast is the same video content they offer online. Typically the video will be anywhere from 30 seconds to no more than two minutes. The norm is roughly one minute and a half and a two-minute segment is usually some type of series or unusual story. They believe the online user does not spend a lot of time watching video online. As mentioned earlier, they choose their news content on a daily basis and attempt to have a quick turnaround from broadcast to online. They do not promote their website on their TV station broadcasts extensively, for the sole purpose that they do not have complete control over the website

efforts. In their opinion, promotions should be initiated by the company handling the majority of the website efforts.

When this researcher asked both of them if they would forecast the future of the Internet and television, they both strongly agreed the two mediums would exist for many years to come. They expect things to change from what we know today. To them the two mediums would serve as a supplement and complement to one another. They both expressed how they do not foresee the Internet dominating television. It is Mrs. Dorsey's belief "that people cannot live without television."

Mr. Gaytan looked more at the newsgathering elements side. He felt it is more cost-effective and timely to follow a television format than it is to follow an online format. His discussion explained the difficulties with equipment, completely different styles of writing for each medium, technical obstacles with posting content and video from a remote site that breaking news does not present with television for example. He went on to explain how TV stations have already been making large investments for the digital conversion in 2009. He states, "the manpower and cost to completely transition online would be very expensive." He does, however, forecast the importance of the Internet for the television industry. In his experience, television will continue to adapt and change, as the demand grows online. At the moment though, he is not confident TV stations both at the network and local level are ready to make that transition completely.

With regards to a consolidation between the local TV stations in town, he does not foresee their station experiencing such a transformation. The reasons he noted included: “the huge tie-in with corporate, the affiliations with local radio stations and simply for the sole purpose of the Spanish-language barrier.”

They both discussed similar concepts along the “Digital Divide” and why they think the Internet may not end up being as dominant as most are predicting the medium to be in the future. In their research many people do not have a computer at home or access to the Internet on a daily basis. They confirmed education and income barriers throughout the nation, especially in the local San Antonio community. For that reason, they believe the Internet will be an extension that will supplement and complement their TV station.

Univision appears to be the only local TV station with a close tie to the national network. Interestingly, this local TV station website seems to be one of the more dominant websites in town, despite its late arrival to the online scene. “Univision.com is the first Spanish-language website to be accredited by the Media Rating Council (MRC) and now the longest-running MRC accredited website, in any language. The website has maintained successful MRC accreditation while experiencing explosive traffic growth and providing the Internet’s most innovative cross-platform programming and services. Univision.com received 300 million website visits and delivered 4.4 billion page views in 2006” (Hispanic PR Wire). It is apparent to the writer the close tie-in with corporate has contributed to the local TV station website success.

This is summary of the researchers overall findings on the interviews.

<b>TV Station Website</b>	<b>Interviewers</b>	<b>Website efforts</b>	<b>What impacts has the Internet had on TV?</b>	<b>Will TV remain dominant over the Internet?</b>
WOAI.com	Robert Gambert (Aka Cyberbob)	Full-time	Mr. Gambert points out the already time-shifted TV viewer.	Mr. Gambert predicts the Internet will play a big role in the future of television.
KABB/KMYS.com	Gwen Frames and David Ostmo	Both part-time	Gwen Frames and David Ostmo anticipate a niche audience TV viewer for both mediums to develop.	Mr. Ostmo expects TV to change, adapt and evolve with the Internet.
MySA.com	Melissa Hernandez and Julie Weber	Melissa: part-time and Julie: full-time	Mrs. Weber sees enormous potential online with advertising and experiences an easier advertising tracking system online than any other medium.	Ms. Hernandez predicts TV will remain the dominant medium available to the masses due to the income and education barriers throughout the U.S.
KSAT.com	David Ibanez	Full-time	Mr. Ibanez identifies versatile writing skills for broadcast and print amongst employees.	Mr. Ibanez does not foresee management trading TV for the web.
Univision.com	Tammy Dorsey and Miguel Galvan	Both part-time	Both agree they serve as a complement and supplement to one another.	Mrs. Dorsey does not believe people can live without TV. Mr. Galvan does not project a transition to be the most cost-effective right now.

## Conclusion

This thesis reveals changes national networks and local TV stations have undergone due to the influences from the Internet.

To this researcher, television networks have been extensively experimenting with their websites for the last few years. All types of approaches for their content have been researched, tested and implemented. They, unlike the local TV stations, have had the financial backing for such testing. The author found networks to initiate numerous alliances with other companies to enhance features on their websites such as the ability to share, embed, influence and interact with everything they see on-air and online.

In San Antonio, most TV stations do not have a website team in place with Internet experts. The television and Internet convergence has been slow and currently under way in the San Antonio community. The local TV station websites try to provide rich and comprehensive community portals that offer local content, but fail to provide a national footprint, other than the Univision affiliate.

Interestingly it seems the Internet is considered the most measurable of all the mediums. Advertising specifically is expected to grow rapidly and exponentially online, especially as “the video distribution wars online between networks heat up” (Cassidy). Some networks are relying primarily on themselves for distribution while others have numerous licensing agreements with other websites. According to *Televisionweek* magazine, “networks have proven in the last year that consumers will watch ad-supported shows for free, both on the network websites and other portals” (Whitney, 20). It seems viewers will trade a 30-second commercial online over a two-minute commercial break

on television. This researcher learned the new technologies of video streaming and downloading are battling for dominance online and “On-Demand” and “Live” video streaming appears to have the upper hand right now.

TV networks and local stations exist for profit. This writer found out the Internet is changing local TV and it is estimated that by 2010 online video will represent 35 percent of total online revenues (TBR). This researcher discovered both at the national and local level, “online viewers cite personal convenience and avoiding commercials as their top reason for watching TV broadcasts on the Internet” (O’Malley). According to a survey by Burst Media, 58.3 percent of the Web users watch TV, especially dramas, comedies and sports (Sass).

It seems evident to the writer that the Internet is a very dominant medium. Right now, “television is almost everywhere people want it to be – mobile, phone, Internet, WiFi, WiMax, or DSL broadband” (Zappolo). The Internet is gaining enormous momentum and expected to surpass the television experience we have all known for many years. Although the transition with content specifically has not been the easiest, both national networks and local TV stations seem to handle their websites accordingly at this time. It is apparent television websites are successful due to the in-depth coverage of news and entertainment, the option to discuss national and local topics of importance through forums, the enormous potential for advertising revenue and free on-demand TV show downloads 24/7.

Nationally, the TV networks have jumped onboard and have experienced much trial-and-error, but continue to accept the Internet as a medium with strength. While locally, most station employees tied to the Internet acknowledge the impacts the Internet is having on the station, but there seems to be a “rear-view mirror” approach in place by many. As communication and technology guru Marshall McLuhan once stated. “when faced with a totally new situation, we tend always to attach ourselves to the objects, to the flavor of the most recent past. We look at the present through a rear-view mirror. We march backwards into the future” (McLuhan and Fiore, 73-74).

This researcher concludes the “rear-view mirror” approach due to several findings between the national and local TV stations online efforts. All but one station had a close affiliation to the national networks. They, unlike the local stations have faced the Internet convergence head strong from the beginning and continue to do so today. Each local TV station appears to distinguish themselves by providing unique content, but most of the stations continue to regard television as the leading medium. National networks have portrayed their website content equally important to the on-air television broadcasting content. Locally, some employees even implied taking a “wait-and-see” approach when it came to website efforts, while networks have taken a more aggressive approach. It has been very interesting for this researcher to encounter such differing website efforts between national networks and local TV stations.

Dr. Valerie Greenberg, director of graduate studies for communication arts at the University of the Incarnate Word, comments on two scenarios where she foresaw the



Internet as a major competitor to television. Her first experience came when Princess Diana died in August 1997. Dr. Greenberg was returning from an out-of-town trip and found herself arriving home to go straight to her computer and the Internet instead of the television. To her it only made sense to go online, so she may obtain non-linear research right away, whereas, television is unable to provide this feature. The following year, Dr. Greenberg realized the enormity of the Internet's impact on our society during the Clinton-Lewinsky scandal. Specifically in September 1998 when the Starr report became available online and everyone was trying to read the document causing many servers to crash. Both examples clearly portray how the Internet is changing the way in which our society thinks, responds and reacts to urgent news throughout our nation. It is evident the medium is getting our attention and becoming the medium of choice amongst many.

This researcher even found the graduate communication students to embrace the changes, adapt to the new technology and evolve as future communication professionals in the radically changing television industry. It is evident to this writer; television and the Internet will converge into one user-friendly, technologically advanced and economically feasible electronic-device found in most homes throughout the nation someday.

In conclusion, "people are using, buying online and having their lives changed by the Internet. The fact is the Internet has so dramatically changed the way we live and work...that is virtually inescapable and unquestionably here to stay" (Schroeder, 22). It is only a matter of time before these two mediums converge both at the national and local level. It may take San Antonio longer than most to come on-board the transition, but it is

inevitable. As one local Internet professional noted, “a time-shifted TV viewer” already exist paving the wave of changes for the future of television right now (Gambert). As a future professional in this field, these research findings have better equipped me to enter the soon to be dramatically changed television industry. Another local television expert quoted it best, “the Internet is here to stay and television and its employees will need to adapt, change and co-exist amongst the new medium” (Ostmo). Despite the current split between many experts in the industry regarding the convergence, it is obvious the Internet’s strength as a medium is not long from becoming realized.

From these findings, suggestions for further research arise. This writer questions if the Internet will eventually replace television networks and local stations? This author also inquires what drastic measure has to occur for the local TV station employees to grasp the Internet’s impact on our society and incorporate it in our community? Finally, what additional Internet technological advances should we consider as we move into the future?

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## **Appendices**

- I. Internet Video Demographics
- II. Online Activities of U.S. Broadband Users
- III. First Six-Month Internet Revenues — 2006 vs. 2007
- IV. 2007 First Six Months Internet Ad Revenues by Advertising Format
- V. Top 15 Markets For Visiting Local TV Websites
- VI. Top 15 Markets for Heavy TV Viewers
- VII. Interviews Outline
- VIII. Interview Questions for local TV Stations
- IX. TV/Internet Convergence Survey Questions



## I. Internet Video Demographics

Online Video Audience	Heavy Viewers	Moderate Viewers
<b>*Male</b>	<b>65%</b>	54%
Female	35%	46%
Married	40%	54%
<b>*Single</b>	<b>41%</b>	23%
Divorced	6%	9%
<b>*Average Age</b>	<b>33%</b>	37
Household Income \$100,000 +	11%	7%
High Speed Internet Access location		
Home	85%	79%
Work	86%	83%

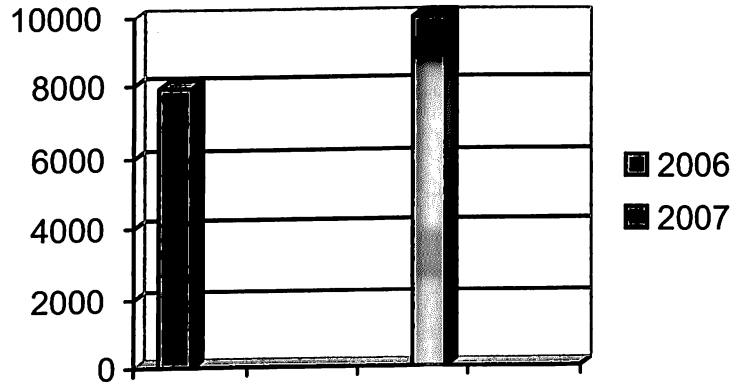
**Note:** Heavy = weekly +, Moderate = monthly but less than weekly  
 Source: eMarketer, Online Publishers Association 2/06

## II. Online Activities of U.S. Broadband Users

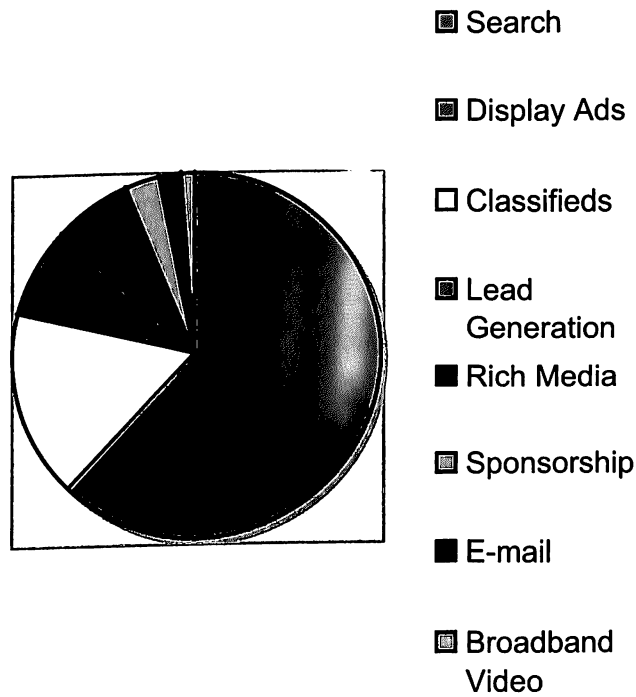
Online Activities	% of respondents
Use a search engine	86%
<b>*Read news</b>	<b>77%</b>
Check weather	74%
Online banking	73%
Shop online	71%
Play games	65%
Access local information/yellow pages	55%
Visit auction sites	54%
View health information	52%
<b>*View TV or movie listings</b>	<b>52%</b>
Make travel arrangements	45%
Listen to streaming audio	39%
<b>*Download or view streaming video</b>	<b>34%</b>
Read blogs	32%
View stock quotes or financial information	28%
<b>*Download movies or TV shows</b>	<b>21%</b>
Read RSS feeds	14%
Listen to podcasts	10%

Source: eMarketer, Ipsos Insight conducted for Isobar & Yahoo 5/06

### III. First Six-Month Internet Revenues — 2006 vs. 2007 (26.4% increase)



### IV. 2007 First Six Months Internet Ad Revenues by Advertising Format



**TOTAL — \$10 Billion**

Source: '07 Internet Advertising Revenue Report conducted by PricewaterhouseCooper

## V. Top 15 Markets For Visiting Local TV Websites

Rank	Market	% Adults
1	Raleigh-Durham	49.7
2	Tulsa	41.6
3	Denver	40.8
4	Columbia SC	39.5
5	Little Rock	39.4
6	Salt Lake	39.2
7	Madison	38.7
8	Minneapolis- St Paul	37.9
9	Columbia- Jefferson City	37.1
<b>10</b>	<b>Houston- Galveston</b>	<b>35.5</b>
11	Indianapolis	35.1
12	Greenville- Spartanburg	35.0
13	Philadelphia	34.7
14	Nashville	34.4
15	Hartford	34.2
	<i>87 Market Average</i>	<i>27.3</i>

Source: The Media Audit News Release Sept. 5, 2007

## VI. Top 15 Markets for Heavy TV Viewers

Rank	Market	% Adults
1	Daytona Beach	28.5
<b>2</b>	<b>San Antonio</b>	<b>28.2</b>
3	Toledo	27.6
4	Ocala	27.0
5	Birmingham	26.9
6	Jackson MS	26.6
7	Norfolk- Virginia Beach	26.5
8	Memphis	26.4
9	Tulsa	26.1
10	Orlando	26.0
11	Las Vegas	25.5
12	Melbourne	25.0
13	New Orleans	24.7
14	Philadelphia	24.2
15	Oklahoma City	24.1
	<i>87 Market Average</i>	<i>20.0</i>

Source: The Media Audit News Release Sept. 5, 2007

## VII. Interviews Outline

<b>TV Station Website</b>	<b>Interviewees</b>	<b>Website efforts</b>
WOAI.com	Robert Gambert (Aka Cyberbob)	Full-time
KABB/KMYS.com	Gwen Frames and David Ostmo	Part-time
MySA.com	Melissa Hernandez and Julie Weber	Melissa: part-time and Julie: full-time
KSAT.com	David Ibanez	Full-time
Univision.com	Tammy Dorsey and Miguel Galvan	Both part-time

## **VIII. Interview Questions for local TV Stations**

1. Individual's background, current position and future goals?
2. Stations tie in to: multiple stations, newspaper outlet or just standalone (obtain a better understanding)?
3. When was your website created?
4. Does your station have a website team in place? For example, individuals who handle website creation, maintenance and technical support staff?
5. Identify the research in past (TV only) and the research today (website included) and what have been the changes?
6. Identify the sales (advertising) in the past (TV only) and the sales (advertising) initiated today (website included), what have been the changes?
7. What have you seen as the differences (research, sales and content) between the network and local TV station websites?
8. Video distribution wars currently exist right now. Where do you see your network headed?
9. Where do you see the future of local TV stations (programming and advertising)?
10. The Internet is thought of as the most measurable medium. Does your website provide a more measurable medium than television has? How many hits, page views and those types of things do you measure and obtain on your website?
11. Currently an Internet (PC) and TV convergence is taking place, what steps have been taken, are being looked at and expected for this convergence?
12. What does your website offer that no other local TV station offers?

13. Do you agree with the consensus about more advertising opportunities via the web than on TV?
14. How is your website creating relationships with the viewers as local TV station personalities do on TV?
15. What type of video streaming do you offer right now?
16. What are the times for pre-rolls, advertising and actual content?
17. Nielsen launched TV/WEB fusion database in November '06. Does your station use the Nielsen/Net ratings? If not what do you use?
18. Online content matters, so what is your station doing to meet such a demand?
19. What electronic devices (TV/PC Gizmos) do you foresee (allowing for easier TV and Internet) distribution?
20. CNN's website does better than the TV station with viewers. Future predictions see networks and even local stations headed in that direction? Would you agree?
21. TV hits masses via mobile. What is your station offering for this demand? Are you using similar guidelines used for website efforts?
22. How are you currently measuring your Internet website for advertising?
23. Some would say TV stations are focusing website efforts that are not concentrating on what TV stations know best, television. How would you respond to the notion currently on mind with many local TV stations that the local websites are trying to be everything to the online viewer (by offering things such as real estate, automotive and so forth)?

24. Does the digital conversion of 2009 affect any of your plans with the website?
25. I welcome any other comments on how you would identify (past/present/future) changes the local TV station (have/are/will) undergone due to the influences of the Internet.

## **X. TV/Internet Convergence Survey Questions**

1. Age
2. Gender
3. Ethnicity
4. Do you use a computer?
5. Do you go online?
6. How often do you go online in a week?
7. Do you watch TV?
8. How often do you watch TV in a week?
9. Do you watch TV on the Internet?
10. If you watch TV online, what kinds of programs do you watch (i.e. comedy, dramas, news, reality, ect.)?
11. What time of day do you watch TV on the Internet?
12. Would you say you watch more real-time TV programming or watch more download/video streaming TV programming on the Internet?
13. Why do you watch TV online?
14. Do you foresee more people going online to watch TV?
15. In your opinion, what do you predict for the future of television?



## Biography

Sarae Rodriguez was born in Chicago, on Aug. 13, 1976, first child and daughter to Jose Antonio Rodriguez and Raquel Martinez. Her parents felt the big city was no place to raise a family and moved to Del Rio, Texas, in December 1979. Her siblings are Ubaldo Antonio Rodriguez and Valerie Marie Rodriguez. Sarae graduated from Del Rio High School in the top 15 percent of her class in 1994. Shortly after, she packed her bags and headed to San Antonio to pursue her college education. She first obtained her associate degree in radio, television and film from San Antonio College in 1999. She later completed her bachelor's degree in communication with a concentration in public relations from the University of Texas- San Antonio in 2001. Throughout her studies, Sarae was employed by USAA, one of the leading employers in San Antonio. She is the aunt of Victoria Isabel Menchaca and Andrea Sofia Rodriguez. In 2003, she took a couple of classes for the graduate program in communication arts at the University of the Incarnate Word in San Antonio. In the fall of 2006, Sarae began her full-time enrollment to obtain her master's of arts degree in communication from the University of the Incarnate Word within a year.

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Sarae Rodriguez typed this Thesis.