

Cable Comments

By LARK L. SAMOUELIAN
Executive Director,
SW Oakland Cable Comm.



I dedicate this column to Judy Kral, a Plymouth resident, who has been our Administrative Assistant

for the Southwestern Oakland Cable Commission for the past seven and one half years. Judy has just retired from her position but her contributions will remain as we continue to promote and develop new strategies to attract a greater television audience. We have always

brainstormed because we have always appreciated each others ideas. The simplest idea can lead to another helpful idea. Over the years, Judy would always surprise me as I conducted my administrative business, with new ways for us to reach more people. She would use her natural creative talents to come up with ideas and she would also develop a plan of action. She even began editing our SWOCC newsletter. Any one of our staff could be seen walking through our halls asking for variations on specific ideas.

When one does produce a television show it is easy to get caught up in the production itself. Please take note to have someone other than yourself plan to prepare the publicity. If you must, do it yourself, take the time to map out a plan of action. Here are several considerations:

• Determine who your target audience is. It may be as large as the metropolitan area or as specific as your neighborhood association, a classroom of children or a specific age or interest area.

• Next find out if this target group already has access to some existing publicity tools, for example a church bulletin, an organizations newsletter, flyers from school to parents, an-

other television show or a radio program.

• Appeal to your Community Television Organization for a grant to cover design and printing costs. Also consider asking an organization with similar objectives to donate to your non-profit volunteer project.

• Write our a Press Release. Keep it simple and interesting. Just the facts man! Let the writers fill in the more detailed information. Send the press release to the periodicals and tabloids covering the target audience area.

• Prepare a thank you flyer for your crew, guests and studio audience's well as passers by. Keep it simple with a eye catching picture that will tell the title of your show, guests and topic. CHANNEL, DAY AND TIME!

• If you have an ongoing series, your Community Access Center may be interested in consolidating several series and sending out a Direct Mailer. We have found that this form of advertisement is very effective.

• Another advantage of all the wonderful video footage which you have just shot. Listen to your audio track as well and create a 30 second promo for your show. This can be scheduled in between other shows. Use your audio track for a radio program.

• David Zurich of Omnicon says that "when the truck rolls or the cameras are set up they get tons of calls." "When is the show going to be aired" they ask. Producers should wear their shows personalized T-shirts and have those flyers ready.

Remember, how exciting it is to recognize someone you know while watching TV. Don't discount this. You and your guests are exciting especially to those who know you.

• Prepare an even shorter an-



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ouncement to go on the digital numeric channels of the cable lineup. Alert the intended audience. People do read this. Omnicon has such announcements on Channel 15 when they are not video program scheduled. MetroVision has a Community Bulletin board on Channel 3.

Most importantly is the commitment. Be serious about your show before anything you do and follow through on this personal commitment. The press does not take lightly to missed deadlines nor to inaccurate information. The Cable Companies, Community Access Stations provides the weekly schedule in the Newspapers and TV Guide. At least two weeks in advance. Frankly this time schedule is going to be more organized and adds incentive to follow through beyond the shoot in the studio.

Therefore, we all thank a person like Judy Kral who took her responsibilities so seriously. She also added a creative dimension which enhanced everyone's productivity and success. Look around you and share your ideas in television and watch your audience grow!