

Cable's Regional and Local Public Service Programming

While broadcasters are demanding that Congress force cable operators to carry many untried and untested channels, local cable systems have long filled the void of local programming by developing dozens of local, regional and state community, news and public affairs networks that offer a wide range of important programming.

These cable networks provide communities with local news and weather, high school and collegiate sports, public affairs, community and local political coverage, educational, arts and children's programming plus channels dedicated to serving foreign language audiences.

- **Local News and Weather** -- There are approximately 40 regional cable news networks serving major markets or DMAs across the country offering primarily news programming, but also weather, sports and business updates, and extensive local election coverage, especially during an election year. Some also offer coverage of local college and high school sports games, and locally produced informational shows. Some of the networks include: Bay News 9, which serves Tampa and St. Petersburg, FL; Chicagoland Television News, which serves Chicago and its suburbs; CN8, which serves more than eight communities in the Mid-Atlantic and New England regions; Las Vegas One, which serves the Las Vegas metro area; NewsChannel 15, which serves three communities in the San Diego, CA area; News 12, which offers five channels for five distinct communities in the New York region; and Ohio News Network, which serves major towns across the state.
- **Public Affairs/Political Programming** -- There are State Public Affairs Networks (SPANs) in 23 states that offer coverage of a wide variety of state government activities on cable, including gavel-to-gavel election coverage, House and Senate sessions, hearings, debates and deliberations. Some of the services also offer coverage of local events throughout their state, including high school sports games, cultural activities and fairs. The 23 states include: Alaska, Arizona, California, Connecticut, Florida, Illinois, Indiana, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Montana, Nevada, New Jersey, New York, Ohio, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Texas and Washington. Most regional cable news networks also cover local political events in their communities.
- **Community Public Affairs Programming** – Most local cable systems across the country offer programming that appeals to the interests of the communities they serve. Some systems with representative examples include: Charter Communications of Riverside, CA, which produced and aired for the past two winters *After the Firestorm*, which documents a deadly firestorm in California's inland region and recognizes the work of the emergency response teams who aided local citizens; Comcast of Oaks, PA, which offered *Troop Greetings On Demand*, the ability for families separated from family members at military posts overseas to record 20-second personalized video messages, made available for viewing throughout the holiday season; Time Warner Cable of Milwaukee, WI, which offered a *Cable Hang Tough Video Contest* to help students create scripts for thirty-second PSAs to encourage their peers to prevent violence and drug abuse, and which were aired on the system; and Cox Communications of Fairfax, VA,

which produced and continues to air an interactive town hall meeting among representatives of the local MADD chapter, county police and the public schools discussing the dangers of teenage drinking and driving, as part of its *Cox MADD – In Real Life* initiative.

- Educational/Children's Programming – As members of the cable industry's Cable in the Classroom (CIC) education foundation, approximately 8,500 local cable systems offer their local community K-12 schools more than 500 hours a month of educationally-rich and commercial-free programming from 30 national cable networks. Combined, these cable systems serve more than 81,000 K-12 schools in the United States, a figure which represents 78 percent of all American schools, serving 86 percent of all students (four out of five) in the country. In addition, systems with other representative examples of educational programming include: Cox Communications of Fort Walton, FL, which offers an annual *Cox Academic Tournament* in the winter, featuring students from area high schools facing off in quiz bowl-style competitions, which are taped and aired on the system; Comcast of Dover, DE, which offers an annual *TV Tutors Live!* television show Mondays through Thursdays every fall, helping 4th-8th graders with their homework; and Time Warner Cable of Honolulu, HI, which produces and features annually, thirty-second PSAs showcasing local outstanding educators and their accomplishments.
- Local Cultural/Arts Programming – Some systems with representative examples include: Time Warner Cable's Nebraska Division, which recently featured its *FAME* project, designed to expose at-risk students to theatre and real Broadway artists, resulting in a student-produced closing number which aired on the local community access channel; Bright House Networks in Tampa Bay, FL, which covers the annual *Bright Stars Senior Talent Show*, featuring talented area citizens aged 50+ performing song and dance routines; and Time Warner Cable of Milwaukee, WI, which recently featured *The Rockstar Project*, created to highlight Wisconsin's musical talent and to find a top-level vocalist, and offered the taping of more than 200 auditions on the system's Wisconsin On Demand channel.
- Foreign Language Programming – Several regional cable networks across the country are dedicated to serving programming to various cultural groups, usually in native languages. Representative examples include: The Arabic Channel, which offers Arabic-language programming, such as children's shows, soccer, news and films to the New York City area; National Greek Television (NGTV), which features Greek-language news, sports, drama and movies for the New York City area; Nippon Golden Network, which offers Japanese-language news, sports and dramas to Southern California and Hawaii; and Dragon TV, which features Chinese and Taiwanese programming from more than six popular Asian TV channels for the San Francisco Bay area.
- Local/Regional Professional, Collegiate and High School Sports – There are close to 30 regional sports networks serving major markets or DMAs across the country. Some of the networks, with examples of their coverage, include: Comcast Sports Net, which serves the Mid-Atlantic region and offers coverage of MLB's Orioles baseball, NHL's Capitals hockey, NBA's Wizards basketball, and collegiate events; Fox Sports Net Midwest, which offers coverage of MLB's St. Louis Cardinals and Kansas City Royals baseball and area university basketball; Yankee Entertainment and Sports Network (YES), which serves the New York City area and offers coverage of Yankees baseball; and Sun Sports, which serves the state of Florida with coverage of NBA's Orlando Magic and Miami Heat basketball, NHL's Tampa Bay Lightning hockey and Florida collegiate and high school athletics; among others. Many of the regional cable news networks and some of the state public affairs networks also cover local high school athletics.