

EXHIBIT 1

Cable TV rates rising again, but service and selection rising, too

MediaOne is raising rates with the new year and folks in its Fresno-Clovis-Madera service area are whining.

Give us more channels with better programming, say cable subscribers, and while you're at it, could you integrate telephone service and Internet access for our computers?

But when the cable company asks us to pay for what we say we want, the phones start ringing in protest.

Yes, unhappy campers, cable used to cost \$20 a month for basic service. But that was two presidents, a recession, a war and God-knows-what-else ago. And all you got for your 20 bucks were 19 channels, half of which you could view for free over the air.

The rate hike next month takes basic service from just under \$1 a day to a little over that: less than a dime-a-day increase.

That's for more than four dozen networks plus 13 local stations (some of which *don't* come very well over the air). And, if you're willing to part with more dough, there are 10 movie channels, too.

MediaOne is in the middle of a multimillion-dollar, two-year rebuilding project that will make more channels available. Rewiring also lays the groundwork for computer and telephonic service.

MediaOne also invested heavily in improving service. Instead of contracting out for installation and repair staff, MediaOne has its own people, who have won national recognition for their consumer service.

When its forerunner, Continental Cablevision, took over in 1986, service hours were pretty much 9 a.m.-5 p.m. weekdays. If you worked, you had to take time off to get cable installed or fixed. Of course, half the time the cable person didn't show, so it was a total waste. Weekend or nighttime service didn't exist.

Now, you can call most anytime and get help, sometimes instantaneously via computer.

There's more: When Continental took over, the community-access channel was a bad joke: boring government meetings and community event notices.

Now, MediaOne's community channel also airs public forums, political debates, a retransmission of KSEE, Channel 24's weeknight newscast and ethnic programming.



LANNY LARSON
BROADCAST BEAT

It showcases sports, too, including Fresno State basketball coach Jerry Tarkanian's weekly show, Bulldogs softball and volleyball games, plus high school sports. Last year, when no broadcast station would carry one Fresno State game, MediaOne did.

MediaOne isn't perfect, but it can look back proudly on a record of accomplishment and forward with its commitment to a future only beginning to emerge.

The plain fact is that nearly everything cable subscribers expect of their cable company costs more, just like all other things we want in life. It's time to stop carping and start appreciating a company that listens to the people it serves.

Home stretch: I have one more week to go on the broadcast beat.

So before I get away, here are answers to questions readers have been asking lately.

■ **Why are you so hard on Channel 18?**

KVPT, Fresno's PBS affiliate, is a terrific community asset that's been baby-sitting our kids and entertaining and educating the rest of us for 20 years.

But in some ways, it seems stuck in 1977: too many and too-long pledge campaigns, strange preemptions, stranger scheduling, local programming that does not reflect community diversity and few shows attractive to young-adult viewers.

The station has new equipment to look better on-air and to stay on the air, too, not a small consideration.

Now, it needs to improve what goes on the air by forging new partnerships with the university and community groups and by enticing younger contributors and viewers.

The challenge for KVPT is to live up to its potential, which will assure its survival no matter what financial roadblocks pop up.

■ **Whatever happened to Laura Garcia and Brent Schweigert?**

Last fall, KSEE, Channel 24, weekend co-anchor Garcia accepted a reporting job in Phoenix. A few weeks later, husband Schweigert, the 5 p.m. weekday KSEE co-anchor, was hired at the same station as morning newscast co-host.

■ **Why doesn't The Bee run a radio program log?**

Two reasons:
■ Talk-radio topics (the most requested item) are decided at the last minute, so any listing we published in advance couldn't be current;

■ With scores of stations involved, information would be difficult to assemble and verify.

The Bee publishes a listing of Valley radio stations and their formats on Page 2 of the Spotlight section each Sunday.

Lanny Larson is The Bee's broadcast columnist. His column runs Fridays. Phone, 441-6497; fax, 441-6457; e-mail, llarson@fresnobee.com.