

S E C O N D E D I T I O N

The Electronic Media

An Introduction to the Profession

Peter B. Orlik

The Electronic Media

An Introduction to the Profession

SECOND EDITION

Peter B. Orlik

Central Michigan University

Iowa State University Press / Ames

To my media colleagues,
who inspired this project,
and to my loving wife,
who inspires me.

Peter B. Orlik is professor and founder of the Broadcast & Cinematic Arts Department at Central Michigan University. He has served as a communications/performing arts consultant to the deans and presidents of several universities and has been on the board of directors of the Broadcast Education Association. His industry experience includes work as a freelance and advertising agency copywriter, radio music director, and assistant creative services director at a network owned-and-operated television station.

First edition © 1992 Allyn & Bacon, A Division of Simon and Schuster, Inc., Needham Heights, Massachusetts 02194

Second edition © 1997 Iowa State University Press, Ames, Iowa 50014
All rights reserved

Authorization to photocopy items for internal or personal use, or the internal or personal use of specific clients, is granted by Iowa State University Press, provided that the base fee of \$.10 per copy is paid directly to the Copyright Clearance Center, 27 Congress Street, Salem, MA 01970. For those organizations that have been granted a photocopy license by CCC, a separate system of payments has been arranged. The fee code for users of the Transactional Reporting Service is 0-8138-2438-9/97 \$.10.

☺ Printed on acid-free paper in the United States of America

Second edition, 1997

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Orlik, Peter B.

The electronic media: an introduction to the profession / Peter B. Orlik.—2nd ed.

p. cm.

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 0-8138-2438-9 (acid-free paper)

1. Mass media. I. Title.

P90.074 1997

302.23—DC21

96-45422

Last digit is the print number: 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

Preface

Welcome to the electronic media world! In formally introducing you to a subject to which you were informally oriented soon after your birth (if not before), this book unequivocally reflects four of the author's fundamental beliefs.

Belief number one is that the electronic media are serviced and directed by true professionals. A *profession* is usually thought of as an educated calling to which someone permanently devotes his or her working life. As you will discover in the following chapters, and in the professional profiles they contain, such devotion is a prerequisite to success in radio/television. Inevitably, our industry is marked by long hours, continuous training, substantial stress, and periodic personal risk. If you want a comparatively stable, predictable career, look elsewhere. If you want rapid change, unanticipated opportunities, and a zigzag career path that might lead from stations to advertising agencies, to government service, to marketing management and back again, a career in the electronic media may fill the bill. Contrary to popular belief, this is not a field for which you train in six months or can learn in six years. Instead, to devote yourself to a media-focused career is to devote yourself to a thirty- or forty-year internship—the completion of which is always just beyond the next big assignment or job change.

Belief number two is that electronic media careers are personally gratifying. Sometimes you can make a lot of money. But more often, you earn a comparatively modest living in which the limited financial returns are partially compensated for by the diversity of people and problems with which you are able to become involved. Some of the brightest, most industrious, most passionate, and most compassionate people on earth are involved in radio/television-related enterprises. Unfortunately, the industry also shelters some of the biggest sleazeballs it will ever be your misfortune to meet. Part of the gratification you derive from being in this profession is discovering how to tell the difference—and learning to react accordingly. Because of their scope and intrusive place in our society, electronic media operations can make a fundamental impact on the way audiences see their world and themselves. If you can feel good about how you contributed to this vision, there are few more intense satisfactions.

Belief number three is that the electronic media now encompass much more than over-the-air broadcasting. As our title, *The Electronic Media*, implies and the text chapters demonstrate, an ever-expanding number of vehicles and careers are being established beyond the boundaries of the conventional radio or television station. Given the range of technologies now available, the delivery system (the hardware) is becoming less and less crucial. Much more important are the content we are able to disseminate via that system and whether or not that content possesses the capability to inspire, entertain, comfort, educate, and sell (not necessarily in that order). In the United States, at least, our profession did begin with local stations. But where it is going is much less clear. Technologically, local stations are no longer the only avenue by which we can electronically communicate with our audiences. Some authorities would argue that stations are no longer even necessary in the accomplishment of that linking task. What is unequivocally required, however, is the ability to plan, design, target, and execute audiovisual messages so that they reach the right people efficiently, effectively, and in the most timely manner possible. Authentic members of our profession are well attuned to the fact that they are engaged in the practice of mediated communication and not merely the broadcasting, cable, or on-line biz.

Belief number four is that you are reading this book to ascertain whether you wish to launch an electronic media career. Or at least you are attempting to better understand how these media operate so as to put them to appropriate use in another profession as well as in your personal life. By the time you have completed the fifteen chapters that follow, you will have been exposed to information, issues, and people that should serve either or both of these purposes.

Plan of the Book

Section One of *The Electronic Media*, “The Big Picture,” introduces you to the entire mass communication spectrum and to how the radio/television media specifically fit within this spectrum. You also learn about the forces that subdivide the electronic media and become acquainted with the associated enterprises that are important to our industry’s functioning.

Section Two, “Chronicles,” provides the historical background necessary to comprehend why our profession is now the way it is. To make this information more digestible, it is divided

into individual discussions of technological, legal, and radio and television operational evolution. A separate chapter on the development of noncommercial and international systems (Chapter 9) gives you a glimpse of these less-publicized endeavors.

Section Three, "Professional Perspectives," then details the specific operations and responsibilities carried out by electronic media personnel. In Chapters 10, 11, 12, and 13, you are exposed to the tasks and issues facing professionals who create radio/television content and those who technically package and sell it. You also learn how managerial roles are apportioned and are introduced to the men and women who evaluate and analyze our field.

Finally, Section Four, "Sneak Preview," isolates trends and speculations for the future. Given the accelerating events in the electronic media, you may find that some of these speculations have already come true or been disproved. Either way, you will have been exposed to how timelocked any printed book becomes when it attempts to keep up with changes in electronic media. Section Four concludes with a more personalized conversation in Chapter 15. Here, three highly respected members of our profession give you some final things to think about as you set out to "cue up" your own career.

Special Features of The Electronic Media

Professional Profiles. No single author can provide you with the insights you need to begin to grasp the complexity of today's media scene. Therefore, interspersed among the chapters are professional profiles composed by key individuals who hold vital positions throughout our industry. These media practitioners come from large and small enterprises. Some are persons relatively new to the field. Other profile authors have devoted more than a quarter-century to their calling. The twin commonalities binding them are a love of this profession and each person's demonstrated ability to succeed in it. Through their written profiles, these dedicated communicators have fashioned brief conversations with you, conversations intended to give you an accurate and unvarnished view of what is required to function effectively in our field today.

Benchmarks. Following Chapters 6, 8, and 9, summary timelines have been provided to help you recall key chronologies in our field. These isolate and reemphasize important events that are discussed in the preceding chapters. Thus, the benchmark at the end

of Chapter 6 lists key technological and legal happenings; the one following Chapter 8 cross-compares major events in radio and television operational history; and the benchmark that comes after Chapter 9 summarizes noncommercial and international occurrences.

Chapter-ending Study Aids. Each of our fifteen chapters concludes with three features designed to improve your mastery of the subject matter. “Chapter Flashback” provides a brief summation of the major topics presented in that chapter. “Review Probes” then presents several questions designed to help you rethink chapter material as a self-test of your comprehension. Finally, “Suggested Background Explorations” gives you options for further reading about the issues and events the chapter has raised.

Instructor’s Manual with Test Questions. This separate volume (available to teachers adopting this text) includes a sample course syllabus, suggested projects, lecture and discussion topics, as well as essay and multiple-choice questions.

This Book’s Ultimate Goal

The electronic media offer a wide range of “love it or leave it” career paths. This text will have succeeded if it helps each individual reader to decide whether loving or leaving is his or her more appropriate choice.

Acknowledgments

First, and most obviously, thanks are extended to the dozens of media professionals who contributed profiles to *The Electronic Media*. Each contributor is a top practitioner in his or her own branch of our industry, and each took time from the intense scheduling pressures that are the hallmarks of our business to share personal insights with you, the reader. Any profession remains strong only when its veterans willingly give of their expertise in tutoring their successors. The profile authors in *The Electronic Media* have amply demonstrated such a willingness. Special gratitude is extended to Jay Rouman, who, in addition to composing his own profile, lent his vast technical expertise to critiquing and improving the discussions of broadcast and computer technology.

Thanks are also extended to David Darst, of Central Michigan University's Library Instructional Resources, who used his photographic skills to create and refine many of the illustrations used in this text. Additional appreciation is expressed to CMU's Broadcast & Cinematic Arts Department for support of this project and to its office manager, Patti Hohlbein, who provided a wealth of manuscript services including the reformatting of all of the book's professional profiles.

I am likewise indebted to Laura Moran at the Iowa State University Press for her enthusiastic backing of this project and to Carla Tollefson for shepherding it through production. Writing a text is never an easy endeavor, but it is a manageable one when an author is encouraged by such experienced and congenial editors.

I also wish to express both thanks to—and pride in—several of my students of yesterday who, as today's media professionals, have contributed their insightful profiles to this book. These include Dave Antil, Jon Bengston, Paul Boscarino, Jay Campbell, Kevin Campbell, Gerald Downey, Robin Lin Duvall, Ron Herman, Wayne Hindmarsh, Tim Jackson, Kris Kelly, Jeffrey Kimble, Mimi Levich, Gary Lico, Tim Pollard, Jay Rouman, Stephen Serkaian, Philip Sgriccia, Rick Sykes, Phil Tower, and Patty Williamson.

Finally, special acknowledgment and love are extended to my wife, Chris, and our two children, Darcy and Blaine. This text was composed atop my normal teaching responsibilities, which meant that family life had to suffer so that "author life" could proceed. Their support and encouragement never faltered, and for this I am deeply grateful.

Contents

List of Professional Profiles, **xi**

Preface, **xiii**

Acknowledgments, **xvii**

Section One: The Big Picture

<i>Chapter 1</i>	Bringing Mass Media into Focus, 3
	Clarifying the Communication Task, 3
	Communications as Communication Extender, 9
	Achieving Mass Communication, 11
	Comparing Delivery Systems, 15
	Key Nonmass Media, 19
	Tuning in the Electronic Mass Media, 22
	Facing One-Way Realities, 24
	Chapter Flashback, 28
 <i>Chapter 2</i>	 Subdividing the Electronic Landscape, 31
	Hanging in There: AM Radio, 31
	Today's Audio Mainstream: FM Radio, 35
	Digital Prospects, 36
	Shortwaves and All Waves, 37
	Comparing Frequencies and Wavelengths, 41
	Television's Dual Spectrum, 45
	Cable and Microwave Systems, 48
	Associated Video Vehicles, 51
	Keeping Technology in Perspective, 58
	Chapter Flashback, 60
 <i>Chapter 3</i>	 Industry Dichotomies, 63
	Broadcast/Nonbroadcast, 63
	Free/Pay, 69
	Commercial/Noncommercial, 74
	Private/Publicly Held, 79
	Local/Network, 81
	Scrambled/Unscrambled, 84
	Home Delivery/Takeout, 87
	The Dichotomy Dynamic, 89
	Chapter Flashback, 89

<i>Chapter 4</i>	Associated Enterprises, 93
	Advertising Agencies, 93
	Public Relations Firms, 97
	Audio Recording Companies, 101
	Television and Film Producers, 108
	News Services, 112
	Audience Measurement Services, 114
	Telephone Companies, 121
	On-line Ventures, 123
	Electronics Manufacturers, 126
	Chapter Flashback, 128

Section Two: Chronicles

<i>Chapter 5</i>	Technological Maturation, 135
	The Roots of Radio, 136
	Radio Telephony Blossoms into Radio, 142
	Radio Comes of Age, 151
	The Video Venture Begins, 156
	Television Becomes a Mass Medium, 166
	The Cable Option, 173
	Emerging Alternatives, 176
	Chapter Flashback, 180

<i>Chapter 6</i>	Legal Legacies, 183
	Early Precedents, 183
	The Rules of the Game Solidify, 190
	Wars of Many Kinds, 198
	Postwar Scrutiny, 203
	Midcentury Course Corrections, 206
	More Issues, More Media, 211
	The Dynamics of Deregulation, 219
	Chapter Flashback, 227

Benchmarks I, 230

<i>Chapter 7</i>	Radio Operational History, 235
	Stumbling onto a Moneymaker, 235
	Radio's Glory Years, 245
	Postwar Perplexities, 257
	(Mostly) Profitable Fragmentation, 267
	Repackaging the Industry, 276
	Chapter Flashback, 281

<i>Chapter 8</i>	Television Operational History, 285
	Big Excitement from Small Pictures, 285
	Mixed Metaphor: The Freeze Heats up an Industry, 290
	Regroupings, 298
	TV's Young Adulthood, 305
	More Expansion and Tougher Choices, 314
	Competition Unlimited, 322
	Chapter Flashback, 333
	Benchmarks II, 336
<i>Chapter 9</i>	Noncommercial and International Adventures, 339
	Orienting Definitions, 339
	The Postponed Promise, 340
	New Support, New Missions, 348
	Raised to Chase Dollars, 357
	External Ventures—Private Shortwave, 365
	Voice of America Development, 368
	Surrogate Services, 376
	AFRTS Expeditions, 379
	Satellites and the Global Village, 380
	Chapter Flashback, 388
	Benchmarks III, 392
Section Three: Professional Perspectives	
<i>Chapter 10</i>	Performance and Creative Functions, 397
	Disc and Video Jockeys, 397
	Talk Show Hosts, 404
	Newspersons, 408
	Copywriters, 415
	Art Directors and Designers, 422
	Program Writers and Personalities, 428
	Industrial Performers and Scripters, 438
	Music Suppliers, 443
	Chapter Flashback, 447
<i>Chapter 11</i>	Facilitative Functions, 451
	Audio and Video Engineers, 451
	Lighting Directors, 457
	Camera Operators, Videographers, and Cinematographers, 461
	Film and Tape Editors, 469

Directors: Technical, Assistant, and Main, **472**
Station/System Salespersons, **481**
Station Representatives, **491**
Program Salespersons (Syndicators), **493**
Promotions People, **497**
Production House Marketers, **501**
Chapter Flashback, **504**

Chapter 12 **Directive Functions, 507**
Program Directors, **507**
Sales Managers, **518**
General Managers, **522**
News Directors, **526**
Entertainment Producers, **532**
Creative Directors, **537**
Account Executives and Managers, **542**
Media Services Executives, **546**
Owners, **549**
Chapter Flashback, **556**

Chapter 13 **Evaluative and Analytical Functions, 559**
Regulators, **559**
Communications Attorneys, **568**
Lobbyists and Other Influence Wielders, **572**
Political and Public Relations Communicators, **576**
Critics and Commentators, **581**
Brokers and Financial Analysts, **585**
Business Development Executives, **591**
Consultants and Standards Officials, **594**
Librarians and Teachers, **602**
Chapter Flashback, **613**

Section Four: Sneak Preview

Chapter 14 **Entering the New Millennium, 619**
Video Thrusts, **619**
Audio Opportunities, **624**
New Media Confusions and Complexities, **626**
Structural Skirmish Points, **634**
Our Global Profession, **637**
Chapter Flashback, **640**

<i>Chapter 15</i>	Cueing up Your Career, 643
	Getting on Deck, 643
	“Managing the New Technologies” by Gene F. Jankowski, 646
	“Back to the Basics” by Frederick Jacobs, 651
	“The Art of Advertising” by George Lois, 655
	A Final Out-Cue, 658
	Chapter Flashback, 659
<i>Appendixes,</i>	661
	Important Electronic Media Associations, 661
	Major Unions Active in the Electronic Media, 663
<i>Notes,</i>	665
<i>Index,</i>	677

List of Professional Profiles

- John Kompas**, President, Kompas/Biel and Associates, Inc. 52
- Rick Sykes**, Senior Vice President, Hermanoff and Associates 100
- Philip Sgriccia**, Editor/Owner, Trapline Productions 110
- John Dimling**, President, Nielsen Media Research 115
- Ed Cohen**, Director of Research, Clear Channel Communications, Inc. 120
- Denise Gallant**, Advanced Systems Planner, The Chyron Group 127
- Paul Boscarino**, Station Manager, WOOD/EZ-105.7 277
- Danielle Claman**, Vice President, Drama Series Development, Fox Network 328
- Judy Stone**, Executive Director, Alabama Public Television 362
- Mimi Levich**, Executive Producer, News Division, Voice of America 373
- Jeffrey Kimble**, Special Services Director, INTELSAT Global Broadcast and Special Services 382
- Patty Williamson**, Air Personality, WLDR-Sunny 102 398
- Phil Tower**, Talk Show Host, WYCE 404
- Valerie Voss**, Senior Meteorologist and Weather Department Manager, CNN 409
- Allison Payne**, News Anchor, WGN-TV 412
- Dick Orkin**, Executive Producer, and **Christine Coyle**, Creative Director, Radio Ranch 416
- Lynne Grasz**, Executive Director, BDA International 424
- Peter Michael Goetz**, Television, Film, and Stage Actor 432
- Kevin Campbell**, Manager, Multimedia Technologies, Corporate Communications, Dow Corning Corporation 439
- Michael Anderson**, National Sales Representative, FirstCom/Music House 444
- Charles Nairn**, Audio Engineer and President, Com Tec, Inc. 454
- Pattie Wayne-Brinkman**, Freelance Cinematographer/videographer 462
- Robin Lin Duvall**, Senior Video Editor, Amway Corporation 470
- James Gartner**, Commercial Director, Gibson/Lefebvre/Gartner 474
- Jay Campbell**, Regional Sales Manager, WFLZ-FM 482
- Gary Lico**, President and Chief Executive Officer, Cable Ready Corporation 493
- Kris Kelly**, Sales Promotion Supervisor, WKBD-TV 497
- Ron Herman**, Senior Vice President, Mort Crim Communications, Inc. 502
- Jon Bengtson**, Program and Operations Manager, WEYI-TV 512
- Wayne Hindmarsh**, Director of Advertising Sales, Continental Cablevision/Michigan 519
- William Shearer**, Vice President and General Manager, KGFI 522
- Tim Pollard**, Operations Manager, CNN Washington 530
- John Danylkiw**, Executive Producer, Heartstar Productions, Ltd. 534
- Gerald Downey**, Creative Director and CEO, AdPub 537
- Tiffany Archer**, Account Executive, Liggett•Stashower, Inc. 543
- W. Lawrence Patrick**, President, Patrick Communications 549
- Rachelle Chong**, FCC Commissioner 562
- Alan Campbell**, Attorney and Partner, Irwin, Campbell and Crowe 569
- Gerald Udwin**, President, The Udwin Group 573
- Stephen Serkaian**, President, Kolt and Serkaian Communications, Inc. 577

David Bianculli, TV Critic, *New York Post* 581

Gary Stevens, President, Gary Stevens and Company Media Brokerage 586

Mary Kukowski, Media Securities Analyst, Dillon Reed 589

Tim Moore, President, Audience Development Group 596

Matthew Margo, Vice President, Program Practices, CBS 599

Susan Hill, Vice President, Library and Information Center, National Association of Broadcasters 603

Jay Rouman, High School Media Production Teacher, Mount Pleasant Vocational Center 606

Louis Day, Media Professor, Louisiana State University 610

Dave Antil, Vice President, Production and Development, Highway One Media 628

Tim Jackson, Senior Manager, Technical Operations, Discovery Networks International 638

Section One **The Big Picture**

