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Media Giants: Who owns what?

Six Companies Dominate U.S. Radio Market

One year after the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) ruled in favor of unrestricted media ownership in the United States, a federal appeals court reversed the FCC rule change in June 2004. U.S. Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit in Philadelphia prevents further deregulation of media ownership for now. The court ruled to block new FCC guidelines in September 2003, three months after FCC deregulated media ownership rules.

FCC chairman Michael Powell says the court's decision is deeply troubling, as it "hampers the flexibility of the agency [FCC] to protect the American public."

Media giants pursue strategies of owning clusters of newspapers, radio, and television stations in the same market to increase potential revenue. The FCC raised the limits of the audience any single company may reach from 35 to 45 percent, but Congress dropped the percentage back to 39 as a compromise; however, the percentages are not enforced.

In a world where information is driven by user choice, either through clicking a link or by tuning into radio (online or through a radio box,) the future of newspapers looks grim in comparison.

Newspaper subscriptions

continue to drop, and one way for newspaper companies to expand their reach is through investing in other avenues of revenue -- sports, special interest publications, or interactive agencies. Another way is to consolidate resources and markets -- such is the case with Advance Publications who now owns both American City Business Journals and the Conde Nast magazines.

Clear Channel Communications Inc., owned 173 radio stations in 1997. In 2004 Clear Channel owns 1,207 radio stations or 1,400 worldwide.

Radio stations in the United States have seen greater consolidation than newspapers or television in the past 10 years. Clear Channel Communications, Cumulus Media Inc., Disney, Emmis, Entercom Communications, and Viacom combined own 18 percent of all radio stations in the United States. However, measuring by the number of stations (1,982) alone misleads. Audience share for the these stations now covers the possible market share. Radio audience percentages have fallen off slightly in the past decade, however 93 percent of citizens in the U.S. claim to listen to radio at least once per day. Arbitron shows that of 287 (possible) radio markets, the top six media companies

together account for reaching 100 percent of the listening audience in 2004.

Does radio ownership matter to listeners? Perhaps not. Anyone with a computer can now listen to music online for free -- and customize music to personal taste without commercial advertisements. The answer is truly personal, and as diverse as the music or talk shows each listener favors. However, if you as a radio broadcaster wish to enter the market as a station owner, you stand no chance buying into the market share dominated by six media giants.

The following breakdown shows the heavyweights, along with their alternative investments (if applicable) as of mid-year 2004.

Clear Channel Communications

Clear Channel Communications owns Outdoor Advertising, Katz Media Group, Premiere Radio Network, New Music Network, and SFX Sports Group.

Clear Channel owns and operates 39 television stations in the United States with more than one television station in Eugene, OR, Harrisburg, PA, Jacksonville, FL, Little Rock, AR, Memphis, TN, Mobile, AL, Monterey, CA, San Antonio, TX, Tulsa, OK, Wichita, KS.

Clear Channel leads in radio broadcast station ownership with 1,207 stations reaching 201 out of 287 markets in the United States.

Cox Communications

Cox Communications is best known for its cable, internet services, and telephony services. Cox also owns Val-Pak, 74 radio stations, 9 Television stations, and 43 newspapers in the United States.

Cumulus Media Inc.

At present, Cumulus Media Inc. is only invested in radio stations, reaching nearly 70 of 287 possible markets on 250 stations in the United States.

Disney

Disney is an example of media expansion. Founded first as movie production and theme park company, Disney now publishes books, magazines, and financial and medical services information. Disney owns ABC network with 10 television stations and 66 radio stations in the United States.

Partnering with Hearst Corporation and General Electric (GE,) Disney invests in 12 cable stations, 13 broadcast channels outside the USA, and Disney is part owner of German, French, Spanish, Scandinavian, and Japanese television stations.

Disney owns film companies; Buena Vista, Touchstone, Walt Disney, Hollywood Pictures, Caravan Pictures, Miramax Films.

Disney is a financial partner with Sid R. Bass in crude petroleum and natural gas production.

Along with its own internet portal, Disney owns ABC.com, Oscar.com, Mr. Showbiz, all Disney related sites, Family.com, ESPN.com, NBA.com, NASCAR.com, and toysmart.com.

Interactive games and music for Disney come through Buena Vista Music Group, Hollywood Records, Lyric Street Records, Mammoth Records, and Walt Disney Records.

Disney also owns Anaheim Sports Inc. and the Mighty Ducks of Anaheim; 15 resorts and theme parks, and is a partial investor with TiVo.

Emmis Communications Group

Emmis Communications Group currently owns and operates 23 radio stations in the United States and owns monthly magazines including the Atlanta, and Texas Monthly publications.

Entercom Communications

Entercom Communications currently own and operate 91 radio stations in the United States.

Gannett

Gannett owns USA Today, USA Weekend, USA Today Sports Weekly, and the USA Today Information Network.

Gannett owns 100 daily newspapers in the USA; the Army Times, Navy Times, Navy Times Marine Corps, Air Force Times, Federal Times, Defense Times, and Military Market.

Gannett also owns:

- 16 newspapers in the United Kingdom
- 16 television stations in the USA
- Partial interests in the Cincinnati Reds, Classified Ventures Com LLC, (with competitors Knight Ridder, the New York Times Company, Times Mirror, Washington Post Co., and Tribune Co.)
- Quarter share in BrassRing Inc. (Human Resources services and software)
- Gannett partners with General Electric (GE) on Space.com and with Kight Ridder and Tribune Media on CareerBuilder.com

GE -- General Electric

General Electric holds 80 percent share of NBC Universal with 14 television centers (9 of which are in the top 10 market share) and 14 Spanish language television stations, (8 of which are in the top 10 market share)

- In Broadcast:
GE owns CNBC, MSNBC, Bravo, Mun2TV, Sci-Fi channel, Trio, and USA network.
- In Film:
Universal Pictures
- In Retail:
Universal Studios -- parks and resorts
- In Partnership:
Paxson Communications (1/3 interest)
- In Commerce:
GE builds aircraft engines, finances commercial investments, manufactures consumer products and industrial systems, as well as sells insurance, medical systems, plastics, power supplies, and transportation monitoring systems.

News Corp.

News Corp. owns FOX Broadcasting Company, 34 television stations (8 cover the USA's most populous cities) 29 alternative broadcast channels, mostly under the name of "FOX Sports."

- In Film:
20th Century FOX Studios, FOX Searchlight Pictures, FOX Television Studios
- In Print:
One newspaper in the USA, 5 newspapers in the United Kingdom, 20 newspapers in Australia, all of HarperCollins Publishing companies (23 in all) HarperCollins Children's Book Group (6 in all)
- In Sports:
Los Angeles Dodgers, National Rugby League, (partial owners) of New York Rangers and New York Knicks, Los Angeles Kings and Los Angeles Lakers
- In Music and Media:
News America New Media, Broadsystem, Festival Records, Mushroom Records, NDS, News Interactive, News Outdoor, Nursery World, Staples Center

Time Warner Inc.

Time Warner Inc. owns all Time Life Book companies (27 in all)

- On Cable:
HBO, CNN (8 CNN networks), Court TV, Time Warner Cable services, Road Runner interactive services, New York 1, Kablevision (Hungary)

- **On Film and Television:**
Warner Bros. (studios, film production and distribution,) WB Television Network, Hanna Barbera Cartoons, Telepictures Production, Witt - Thomas Productions, Castle Rock Entertainment, Warner Home Video, Warner Bros pay TV, Warner Bros Theaters, TBS Superstation, Turner Network Television, Turner South, Cartoon Network (3 channels), Turner Classic Movies, TNT, New Line Cinema, Fine Line Features, Turner Original Productions
- **In Print:**
Time Magazine (8 publications,) Fortune, Life, Sports Illustrated (3 magazines,) People (4 publications,) Entertainment Weekly (2 publications,) and 58 additional monthly or weekly publications.
- **In Music:**
Time Warner Music, Atlantic Records, Rhino, Elektra, and 49 other music production companies.
- **In Partnership:**
Joint ventures with Sony on Columbia House marketing, Music Sound Exchange, Viva, Channel V, Heartland Music,
- **Online:**
CompuServe Interactive, AOL and subsidiaries, The Knot Inc, MapQuest.com, Spinner.com, Winamp, DrKoop.com, Legend.
- **In Sports:**
Atlanta Braves
- **In Retail:**
MovieFone, iAmaze, (partial) Amazon.com, Quack.com

Viacom

Viacom owns:

- CBS -- and 16 television stations (6 of which in top 10 marketshare)
- UPN 18 television stations,
- 5 additional television stations
- **On Cable:** MTV, Nickelodeon, BET, Nick at Night, TV Land, VH1, Spike TV, Comedy Central, CMT, Showtime, The Movie Channel, Flix, Sundance Channel Owns King World Productions
- **On Radio:** Infinity Broadcasting, with 176 radio stations and Westwood One
- **On Film:** Paramount Pictures
- **In Print:** Simon & Schuster (8 publishing companies)
- **In Retail:** Owns Blockbuster video, Paramount Parks, Famous Players Theater, United Cinemas International, Famous Music

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