

**Acquisitions Survey Results**  
**February – March 2002**  
*(28 respondents)*

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1. Full NPS 25  
PDP 3

**2. What percentage of your total program budget is not your NPS Program Service Assessment?** (what percentage is spent on Plus, APT Exchange, Syndication Offers, SIP, Premium Service, PRG, BBC, CPT, EPS, or other acquisitions?)

0 – 10 % 6  
10 – 20 % 11  
20 – 30 % 6  
30 – 40 % 4  
40 – 50 % 1  
> 50% 1

**3. Fundraising programs come out of whose budget?**

Programming 23  
Development 2  
Other 1

Other: “We don’t use SIP.” “We don’t pledge.”

“SIP paid for Development, other acquisition pledge programs.”

**4. Acquisition budget 4-year trend**

Down 10% 9  
Down 25% 1  
Down 30% 0  
Down 40% 0  
Down 50% 1  
**Unchanged** 10  
Up 10% 3  
Up 25% 0  
Up 30% 0  
Up 40% 0  
Up 50% 0  
No response 1

## 5. Motivation behind acquisition decisions?

Members	2.2
Target audience	2.0
Mission	1.7
Ratings	1.7
Underwriting	1.1
Bolster audience	1.3
High-Definition	0.3

## 6. Which genres?

Comedy	2.1
Music	1.5
Documentary	1.4
History	1.3
Drama	1.3
Travel	1.0
Science	0.7
Nature	0.7
Movies	0.8
Kids	0.3
High Definition	0.2

*Other: BritComs (2); NBR (1); local independent productions (1); business and market news (1).*

## 7. Acquisition sources

APT	2.5
BBC	2.5
APT Premium	1.1
Exec Prog Service	1.0
DLT	0.5
CPM	0.7
Independent	0.6
Instructional	0.5
PRG	0.3
Corinth	0.3

*Other: OETA (1)*

## 8. Confer with colleagues

Weekly	2
Every other week	1
Monthly	1
Couple times/year	22

## 9. What about multicasting? What are your plans? Ride and repeat? Acquisitions?

- Will program & will ride
- Yes, I'm sure I'll have a need for acquisitions, just no money to buy any...
- Repeat blocks at first, then perhaps get into acquisitions.
- We'll utilize pass-through services on at least two of the four channels.
- Repeat blocks.
- Too early to tell since we go HD in summer 2003.
- No greater need for acquisitions.
- We don't anticipate having additional acquisition dollars so we will take what we have and multicast some times (like during ITV time) and ride PBSKids at others. Primetime we do not anticipate multicasting.
- Greater need does not translate into more \$\$.
- No, ride the pass thru
- Not determined at this date.
- Due to \$ will be riding and repeating blocks.
- more ITV/telecourses etc
- Ride feeds & repeat blocks
- with current financial picture, we'll rely on PBS feeds
- Ride PBS Kids at first . Not likely to need more acquisitions...as the budget won't be there for them.
- repeat blocks initially
- Won't program at first. Need for acquisitions will take a year plus.
- Additional programming possibly
- Repeat blocks as well as PBS Kids, You, etc.
- Repeat blocks.
- Pass through first/later it will be difficult to gather acquisitions for four channels on same budget

- For the time being, we're just passing through.
- Repeat blocks

**10. How far in advance do you schedule?**

- 6 months
- I like to have it figured for 6 mos. to a year...
- by the month.
- Sat. Britcoms are scheduled 2-3 months in advance.  
With 2 years contracts for most, we are set for most of the year.
- 2 months.
- Two months
- The only things schedule more than a month or so out is the ITV schedule and it is planned each summer for the entire following school year.
- Acquisitions are considered months ahead.
- 3 months
- Month and a half ahead
- 3-4 months out
- As far as the "rights" available
- 2-3 months out
- 6 months to 1 year
- 2 – 3 months
- Two to three months
- 6 months
- Six to eight weeks
- Six months
- 3 to 4 months
- 3-6 months
- 2-3 months
- Keep it very current; purchase as needed.

## 11. How far into the fiscal year have you spent your acquisition budget?

- Halfway through
- First day
- Almost immediately – I don't have much to begin with.
- First day, then I grovel the other 364 days.
- Usually maintain budget throughout fiscal year, then spend any remainder on next FY acquisitions early.
- Again with a two year contract, we are set for most of the year. By beginning of fiscal year, I know what I need to acquire. Leave monies available to acquire NBR and other necessary programming.
- Depends on the year.
- About 10 months
- Within the first six months it will pretty much be completely spent or at least earmarked.
- I have to spread it out to last all year.
- End of fiscal year
- It depends upon the year and the offers. Right now I'm about 3/4 spent.
- Throughout the year.
- Usually in the first half.
- All the way.
- 75%
- I am spending the budget until the bitter end.
- 10 months
- 7 months
- It's just about gone for this year.
- I spread it out to always have some dollars available
- As money gets tighter, I am very frugal about spending. In past years I would have spent all money by 10th month of budget cycle.
- 9-10 months
- 6-8 months

## **12. What to do/say if the Boss wants to cut your acquisition budget?**

- Remind him that he wanted me to buy a particular program but there was no \$\$\$ left.
- Talk him out of it.
- Our acquisitions are linked to pledge, as one goes so does the other...
- Limit acquisitions to those programs that we know for sure are winners for our station—NBR, Lawrence Welk
- Cutting the acquisition budget directly affects what viewers see on the air and potentially has the most devastating affect of any station cut.
- Through the years, our budget has not increased or grown. To avoid "minimization," we've stretched our acquisitions and tried to pay them over two fiscal periods whenever possible.
- Programming doesn't cost money, PROGRAMMING MAKES MONEY....
- (I don't have a plan.)
- This already happened!
- No real control, but the "what do we do now" conversation usually works well.
- Cut back on buys and get more plays
- Take a closer look at PDP % selected
- I regularly report to him on most viewed programs and strongly highlight the acquisitions - which are always close to the top! I also share viewer letters and comments
- most of which are concerning local productions and acquisitions.
- No plan at this time.
- Payment scheduling across fiscal years & not purchasing a lot of "extras," staying with the "must-have" programs.
- Our acquisitions are few, and attractive to underwriters or core to our mission/audience, so they've not been heavily targeted yet.
- Start pulling out viewer letters/membership forms...and arguing that member's favorite programs are a bad place to start cutting.

- Show the ratings.
- Explain that our highest consistent ratings (other than Antiques Roadshow) come from acquisitions (particularly Britcoms). Ratings and loyalty lead to support. Support keeps us going. Why throw that away?
- Raise additional dollars in pledge and underwriting
- Convince both the financial and Membership Directors that people give us money because "It's the programming, stupid."
- Acquisition programming is the most watched & pledged on our station.
- Our acquisitions add value to the schedule..many of them would not be dropped
- Budget cuts rarely happen in acquisitions at my station. My GM tries his best to protect programming from cuts.
- Acquisition money has been the target for the past couple of years. At this time, an acquisition needs to help make money (brit coms - we pledge) (drama - promise to disgruntle members and major donors) (films - program special events) (NBR - member driven) (Larry Welk - pledge around this program) These I can get through the budget process because I can directly link them back to raising money.
- Buying less one-offs or reducing other programming expenses to minimize the reduction (i.e. travel...)

**13. If a local philanthropist admired your work and sent you a check that amounted to 25% of your program budget, what would you buy?**

- I would most likely invest in more local productions. Otherwise, more dramas & docs.
- Britcoms.
  
- More mission-driven programs.
  
- With the 25%, I'd buy the basic necessities such as NBR, Lawrence Welk, etc. Then use the other acquisition monies to buy Britcoms and other programming as necessary.
  
- Don't know but I sure would shop around.
  
- More Brit Coms or Red Green, Ballykissangel
  
- Traffic software! But if you meant I had to spend it on programming it would be on programs earmarked for pledge.
  
- Long running drama series, more Britcoms, movies (if any good ones are available).
  
- Comedies and drama / movies
  
- Documentaries by local producers, music shows
  
- Get a good "mystery" strand back into the schedule. I'd check out costs of scheduling a "viewer favorites" channel schedule, AND I'd re-up some "oldies but goodies" for a regular Sunday afternoon block - everything from THE GOOD NEIGHBORS to ALL CREATURES GREAT & SMALL, to the original FORSYTE SAGA. Oh - that would be fun!! Any contacts for the dough?? ;-)
  
- Since this is never likely to happen, I don't know
  
- Use for local docs.
  
- Britcoms.
  
- More Mystery!-like programs, more BBC comedies, try to invest in our local productions which have been very successful pledgers
  
- Mystery, informative and compelling documentaries that are balanced and guide the viewer through the storyline
  
- Movies, movies, movies. More British comedies. Biographies and celebrity profiles. Maybe vintage TV programs.
  
- Two British comedies.

- Quality drama, high end music specials, educational.
- Comedies, a real second station schedule
- High end drama
- Early retirement...no, wait....difficult to say
- 1.) What are his/her interest areas; 2.)- See acquisition priorities above.
- More drama series, more British comedies, more one-off documentaries
- Brit Coms. Programs that are relevant to my market.

#### **14. What are your three best acquisitions?**

- As Time Goes By, APT Premium service, Fawlty Towers
- Lord of the Dance, Graham/Shea package, Keeping Up Appearances
- Welk; Brit Coms (As time Goes; Keeping Up; Last of the Summer Wine)
- Nightly Business Report, Lawrence Welk and Britcoms
- As Time Goes By, Keeping Up Appearances and Are You Being Served. Also had great success with National Geographic specials. Also had success with Lawrence Welk.
- National Geographics, Keeping Up Appearances, Welk
- Keeping Up Appearances; Darling Buds of May; Janus British Classics (film package)
- Blue Suede Shoes: A Rockabilly Session with Carl Perkins & Friends, Lawrence Welk and Nightly Business Report -- if you're speaking on return for our investment.
- Upstairs, Downstairs; most Britcoms; and All Creatures Great and Small; several music specials.
- Keeping Up Appearances, As Time Goes By, Movies
- KEEPING UP APPEARANCES; KEEPING UP APPEARANCES; KEEPING UP APPEARANCES! Honest - OK - two others - ALL CREATURES GREAT AND SMALL and AS TIME GOES BY. See - the oldies are the best and as you can see - I 'm an old programmer!
- BritComs, BritComs, BritComs.
- Brit-coms in general, Ed Sullivan, Hearts of Glass (pledge)
- Lawrence Welk, Market to Market, NBR
- Ballykissangel, Keeping Up Appearances, Red Green
- Too early to tell.
- Comedies (Britcoms and Red Green Show...ratings and pledge), BBC 30-minute Antiques Roadshow (BIG undewriting contract around it), general APT Premium Service programs (has paid off in long run).
- Keeping Up Appearances; Antiques Roadshow U.K.; and National Geographic

- Keeping Up Appearances, Austin City Limits, Lawrence Welk
- Welk; Ballykissangel; Rhythm of Life
- Are You Being Served? Ballykissangel; World Class Trains
- Lawrence Welk; Red Green; Keeping Up Appearances; (I'll add High Lonesome for a fourth!)
- Keeping Up Appearances; Thousand Pieces of Gold; The 3 Tenors
- BritComs; Ballykissangel; All Creatures Great Small
- British Comedy (any title); World of National Geographic

## 15. What are your three worst acquisitions?

- SIP, Dr. Who, Yes, Prime Minister
- Moody Blues at Royal Albert Hall (didn't make any money in pledge) and Nightly Business Report (never makes money during pledge, hardly any underwriters, and too expensive to buy out of the goodness of my heart)
- Premium service; the last two SIP seasons
- Judy, Frank and Dean, Mariachi USA
- Can't think of any
- Not telling
- Is God A Number; Murder Most Horrid; Mochila al Hombro; Doctor Who
- Again, if you're speaking on return for our investment it would be BritComs, ITV programs, and SIP (and I'm really not joking there!). I want to be able to cherry pick SIP programs!
- Millennium specials -- too short of a run; and most of the APT premium service titles.
- Haven't been any
- Shelly - one funny program in 26 episodes - General Practice - no one liked it.
- Dramas.
- I've erased them from my mind.
- Blenko Retro
- Too early to tell.
- The Industry (comedy from APT...NO viewers!), Piece of Cake (drama from APT...NO viewers!), some WWII docs (tough time finding a good spot for them sometimes).
- Scott Entertainment Movie Package
- Barbara ???
- Shades; PRG's International Dispatch; Bargain Hunt
- Lime Rock

- Classical Musical Package
- Fury; Harry Potter
- I don't buy bad programming.

**15. The one or two (*okay, three*) most important things I've learned about acquisitions**

- Everything is negotiable, talk to "satisfied customers," before purchasing ... did I mention that everything is negotiable?
- They can be expensive and hard to prove their worth, dealing with the producers can be a trip, never a sure thing...
- Only purchase them when I know there will be an audience for them
- 1) You can certainly go out and buy a bunch of programming but committing a time slot can be troublesome.
- 2) In addition, lots of in-house production of promos for some of this material. Without promotion, it's difficult to find that audience.
- 3) Nice thing about Britcoms, the audience always seems to be able to find it without promotion.
- Do your research before you buy.
- Don't really need them for Saturday prime time.
- They can make you or break you and you won't find out which it is until you're at the point of no return! Just because people beg you to air it doesn't mean they'll pledge it.
- Plan ahead, know what/where I'm going to use it, and keep my own likes/dislikes out of the decision.
- Work with trusted people and products.
- (1) Never buy a series after seeing only one episode as learned when purchasing Shelly.
- (2) Never take the first price offered.
- (3) Viewers appreciate you listening to their suggestions and back it up with their support.
- (4) Sometimes there really isn't anything out there to purchase - and sometimes there will be more than you acquire - the market always changes.
- Don't buy impulsively. Trust my gut, not my brain. Talk to colleagues

- Buy known winners, save some budget for the end of the fiscal year...
- Source is important. It is important to see as much of piece as possible before buying. Prior performance in other markets.
- 1. Don't act on impulse...only purchase if you KNOW you have a place to schedule it.  
2. Prices can be negotiable.  
3. Buy programs for your known audience...don't try to attract tough demos.
- Make sure that it fits your audience and that you get what has been promised
- The Account Rep is important - calls things to my attention - sometimes seems to work with me when financial times are tough. The personal relationship helps.
- 1) Better to have one good series than 100 oto's  
2) Acquisitions are a member benefit. It's what they want.
- Have patience.....negotiate.....don't be afraid to pass on an offer.
- Decide with your head, not your heart. Don't buy something till you know where you are going to schedule it.
- You'll never have enough money to do things the way you would like. One time only specials are tough because we lack the promotional budget to support these.
- Beware of hype.