

***The full PowerPoint presentation with embedded video is available to Break|Throughs subscribers.***

I have to begin with a confession. A couple of days ago I called my Mom to check up on her and tell her we were leaving for PROMAX. She knows I've been coming to PROMAX and BDA for years. But she said, "What is it that you do there again?" And I realized, after 25 years in the promo business my Mom still doesn't understand what I do for a living.

Now I can live with that. My mother came from the generation that invented TV. They were the original early adopters. But now I've found that my 10-year twins, who were weaned on TiVo, don't understand what I do either. In fact, out there in the real world, all those people milling around Times Square, very few of them understand our art, or is it our science, or is it our craft? Hey, we don't even understand what we do.

I think most people divide the television world into shows and commercials. And we're neither one of those. After the thousands, no, millions of hours of on-air promotion that we've poured into people's homes, they still don't get it.

Why is that? It's 'cause we're the stuff **in between**. We're the shock absorbers, the packing material, the grease that keeps the machine alive. The lever that moves things forward. We're the glue that holds it all together. And because we're these in betweens that fill the cracks, we often fall between the cracks.

But we actually have a higher purpose.

I've always said that the role of on-air promotion is **keeping viewers and capturing surfers**. And I still believe that's true. But I've realized that's not the "what," but the "how," the process we use to achieve our goals. What are those goals? **To increase time spent viewing?** Yes. **To have our channel included in viewer's small set of "favorites?"** Sure. **To get people to sample more often?** Of course.

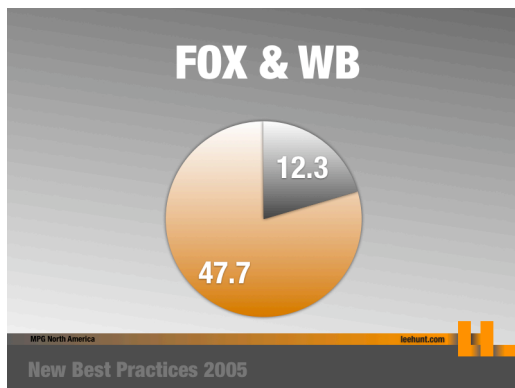


But if you think of all the parts and pieces that go into on-air promotion, all the disciplines required of **audience management**, and put them together—which is what we do everyday—you come up with something truly unique.

Our job—our real job—is to **enhance the viewer experience**. To make watching television more enjoyable. We do that with our promos, our packaging, our squeeze

credits. Our IDs, our lineups, our lower third keys. And if we do it well, we'll get viewers to increase time spent viewing. To have our channel included in their small set of "favorites." And we'll get them to sample more often. Why? Because we've used all those tools to make the television experience more enjoyable

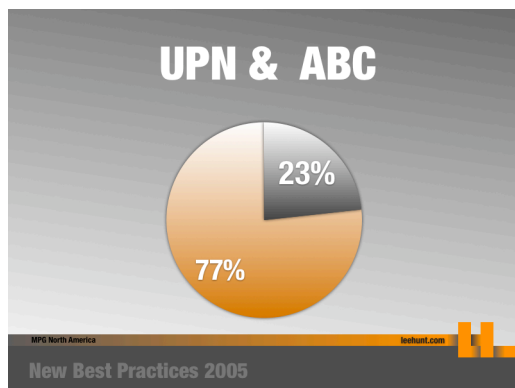
Think of it this way. People turn on their TV sets to be entertained. The programming is the entertainment. It's what they come for. It's the only thing they come for. Our job is to enhance that experience. And that's a challenge.



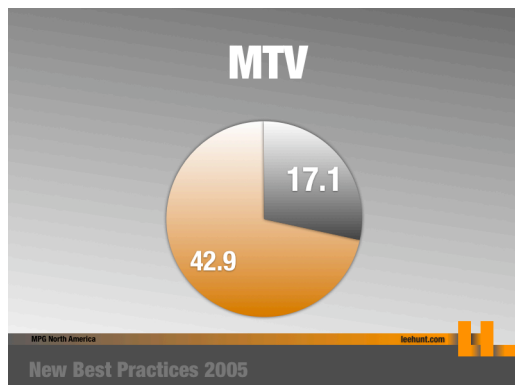
According to a snapshot study by MPG North America—and I want to emphasize this is a snapshot because this stuff is continually changing—last January **FOX and the WB** each had **12.3 non-program prime-time minutes**. A little more than 12 minutes per hour of paid commercial time, direct response time, network promo time, and PSAs.

**NBC** was next at 12.4 minutes.

**CBS** was in third place with 12.5



**UPN and ABC** ran the most non-program prime-time minutes of any broadcast network. 14 minutes an hour. **That's 23% of an hour!**



On the cable side, at the high end, **VH1** had 16.6 minutes of non-program material, and **MTV** had the most, averaging 17.1 minutes, more than **28% of the hour!**

**History Channel, USA and Discovery Channel** each increased their non-program material 2 minutes per hour from 2001.



Since our viewers come for this (the orange), and there seems to be more and more of this (the gray), our job is to make all of this—make getting through it, or even past it, as positive as possible. And since we are included in that gray area, we can either be part of the problem or part of the solution.

This session is all about being the latter.  
**About break through ideas that**

**enhance our viewer's television experience.**

Many of you know I have 9 DVR tuners in my studio. Two TiVos, 4 Time Warner PVR tuners, and 3 PC based DVR tuners on a souped-up system called Sage TV. Every night 3 of those DVRs are programmed to record primetime on three different channels, rotating among the top 100 television networks.

Now a couple of weeks ago, I noticed my DVRs weren't recording correctly. Wrong shows, wrong channels, but the right times. I couldn't figure it out. So I turned on the old standby, the TV Guide Channel. I wrote down every channel in my 100 channel extended basic cable package from Time Warner. Then I went through and checked every channel against the TV Guide line up. Half of them were wrong! How could this be?

So I called up Time Warner and explained my situation. The CSR listened to me and then said, "Yes, you're right, every channel above 50 is wrong." But I can mail you a correct printed line-up."

"You mean, the TV Guide Channel, that everyone counts on to know what's on tonight is wrong?" "Yes, in your area, but only half wrong." And then, and I love this. She said, "Actually, all you have to do is look at the guide, pick your show, look at the channel number, if it's above 50, subtract 8, and most of the time you will get to the right channel."

That is not enhancing the viewer experience. I want to note that this was not TV Guide's fault, it is all Time Warner. And the point is that we have to be vigilant about the things we do control. Because so much of it we can't control. We can't control Time Warner. Ask Ted Turner. But we can control our own air.

Luckily, I know how to remap my DVR lineup to create my own personal EPG.

Everyday, I scan through my now correct recordings looking for breakthrough ideas. **Innovative practices that are or will change the way we do our jobs. Brilliant strategies. Inspired tactics. Exceptional creative. Skillful production.** And every quarter I compile the best of those ideas onto a DVD. There are samples of them scattered around the ballroom today. PROMAX suggested we bring handouts. Those are mine.

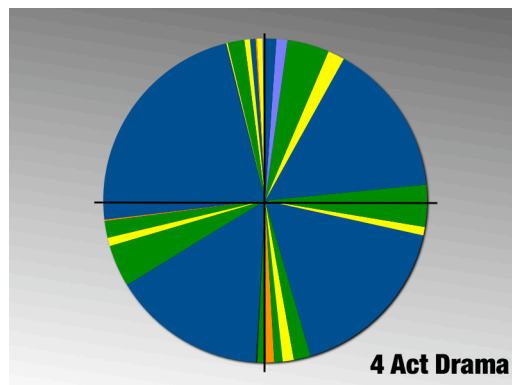
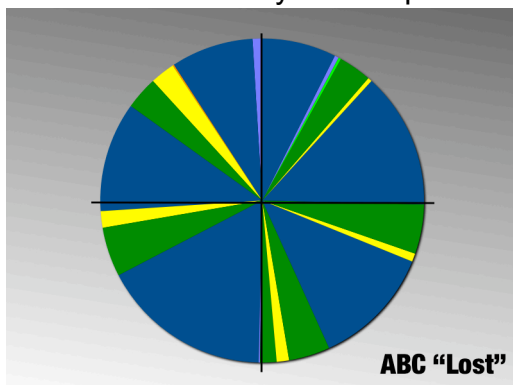
Well, today I've looked back at the last four quarters—essentially through **10,000 breaks**— and pulled the best of these breakthrough ideas. The ideas that I believe deserve to become the **New Best Practices** of our business.

The biggest breakthrough was one that seemed to sneak up on everyone. It is a change that began more than a year ago, and nobody seemed to notice it for a while.

You may remember at the end of 2003 ABC announced it was moving from a 4 act drama hour to a 5 act drama hour. It got a lot of trade press, but primarily because people were concerned about how it would affect the ability of writers and directors to tell a good story. I remember reading about it in the trades and wondering how it would affect break structure, but not one ever seemed to mention it.

By now you know I am passionate about vertical flow, particularly accelerated flow. But what ABC has done, I believe, leap frogs anything any network has tried to date. Because it's not just about end credits, it's about holistically structuring the entire promo hour. Here's an hour from *Lost*.

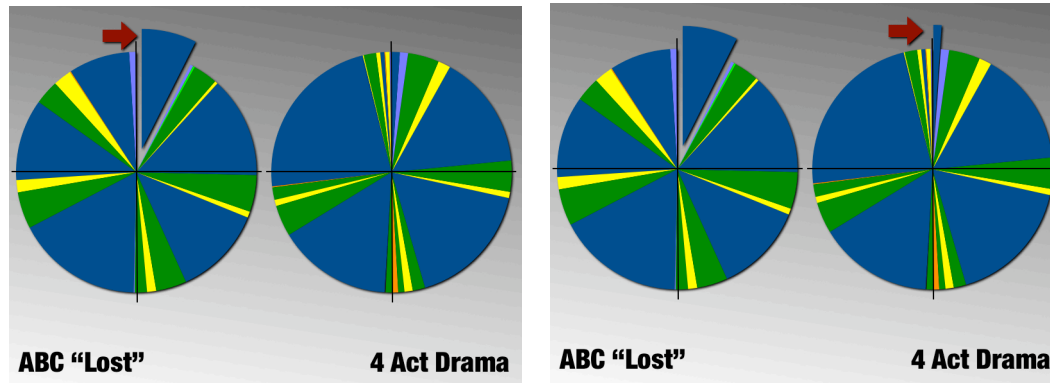
The blue is content. The light blue is credits and packaging. The green is commercials. The yellow is promos.



Let's compare it to an hour of drama from another broadcast network.

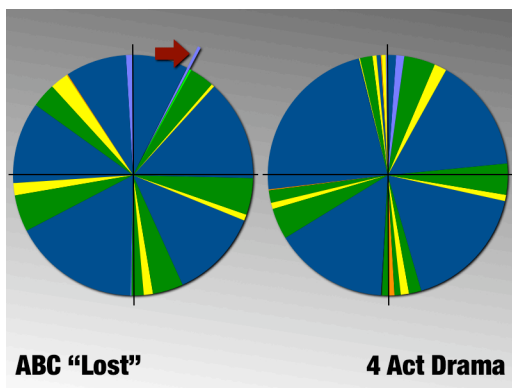
Just toggling back and forth you can see significant differences. Let's look at them side-by-side.

Starting at the beginning, Lost uses a long opening act to draw viewers in.



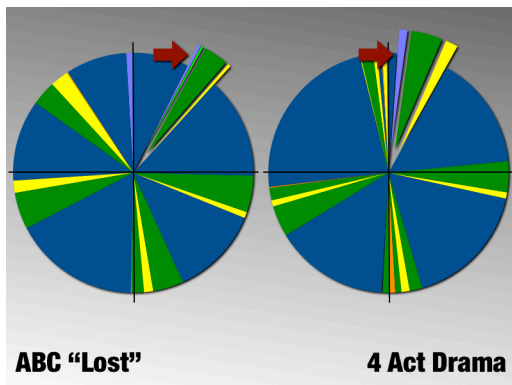
This show uses a short 40-second burst of drama to get viewers engaged.

Both are effective. To me that's an editorial choice. But what happens next is critical.

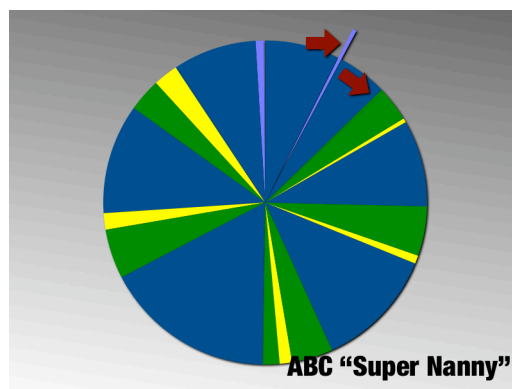


Lost goes into a short 15-second show open. Why is that significant? We know that after several episodes returning viewers often "memorize" show opens. They become so familiar with the open that they use the time to surf other program choices, looking to kill time until the action resumes or checking to see if there's something "better" on a competing channel.

Most dramas have opens like this that run about 45 seconds. Some are good. Some are OK. They certainly don't seem to be built to withstand the rigors of over saturation. Think about it. In the commercial and promo world, we know there's a certain point where too much frequency creates a negative impact, why would it be any different for show opens?



Plus, look at this. Both shows go direct from show open to commercial break. As a viewer, it doesn't take me long to figure out I've got a good 5 minutes before the story continues. Plenty of time to do some surfing.



Now I've also noticed ABC on occasion goes from show open back to content, scooting the break a little deeper into the content.

#### **VIDEO: ABC My Wife & Kids open**

And if you ever saw ABC's My Wife and Kids, you'd notice there is no break for a show open. All the opening credits are keyed over the storyline. There is never any impetus to leave. It continues on like this for around 7 minutes before the first break.

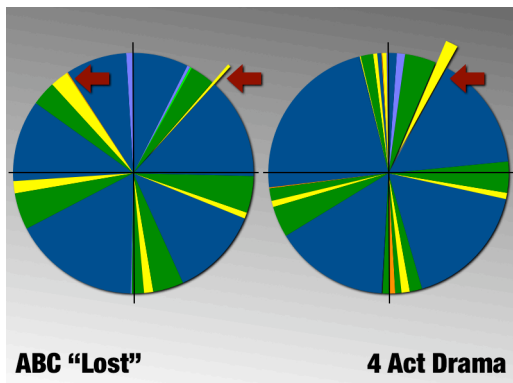
Not that ABC always follows this rule. In my opinion the open for Desperate Housewives is ripe for burn out.

#### **VIDEO: ABC Desperate Housewives open**

It's very clever... and I could watch it over and over. But over and over and over and over and over and over and over? Give me the remote.

But even when Lost does go to commercial break following the show open, look at the promo structure.

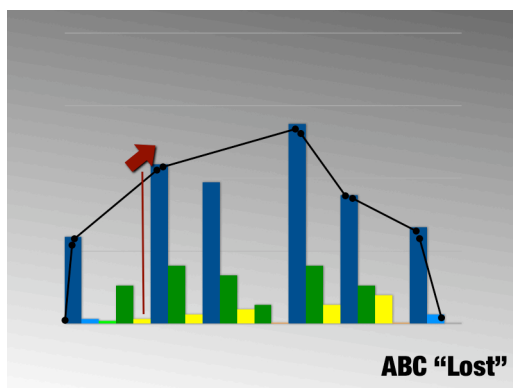
Okay, they don't have their promos in the first position. That's a battle still to be won. But notice how little promo time they use.



Particularly compared to this hour.

ABC reduced the promo time at the beginning of the show and stacked it towards the back of the break. Why? Now I talked to Mike Benson, and he told me this is not a fixed strategy, but think about it.

If they're smart, ABC's focusing a lot of their promotion on the upcoming couple of hours or at least days. But as a viewer at the beginning of the show, I'm just getting involved in the storyline of this show.

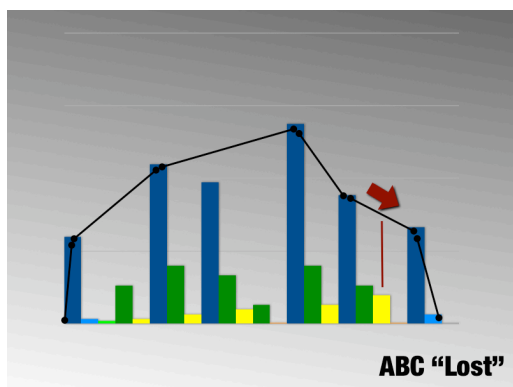


Let's flip this from a pie chart to a bar graph.

The show coincidentally charts out to a nice story arc—beginning, rising action, climax, falling action, and end.

At the beginning of the show, I'm still climbing the story arc. Psychologically, I'm not ready to start thinking about other shows or what comes next. I'm still trying

to get involved in this story. So I'm probably not open to the promo messages.

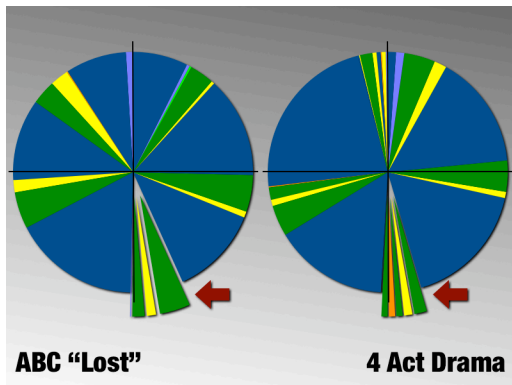


Now once I start coming down the backside of the story arc, I'll be much more open to messages about what's coming next or later. And that's where they're loading their promos. We'll talk more about that in a minute.

Nothing that unique about the next break. Except they need to move their promos to first position.

But this third break has a problem.





Both of the dramas are breaking at the bottom of the hour. That's a no-no. Look, we know viewers surf during breaks. We can discourage some of that, but not all. When we drop a break at the bottom of the hour, we're giving our competitors with shows starting at the half hour an opportunity to steal our viewers away.

I guess I should add that enhancing the viewing experience means enhancing it for

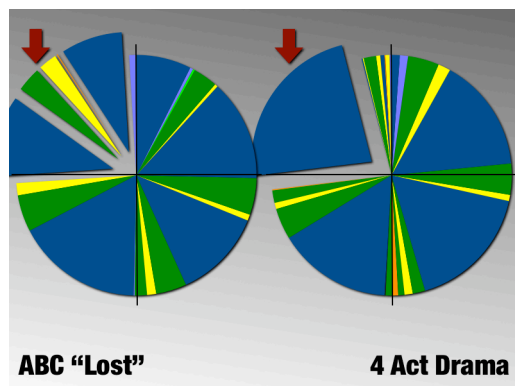
our channel, not our competitors.

So it's always better to shift this break to just before the half hour (making sure the tail end doesn't sweep across the bottom of the clock), or right after the break.

Of course, that's not always possible. I'd never advocate sacrificing the timing of a good story just to fit a break. But if the opportunity is there, to reformat syndicated shows, movies, setting guidelines for new shows, take it. After all, that's what ABC did.

Now this fourth break is unremarkable. I think there are a couple of mistakes here, but that's another session.

Here's where we get to the revolutionary stuff.



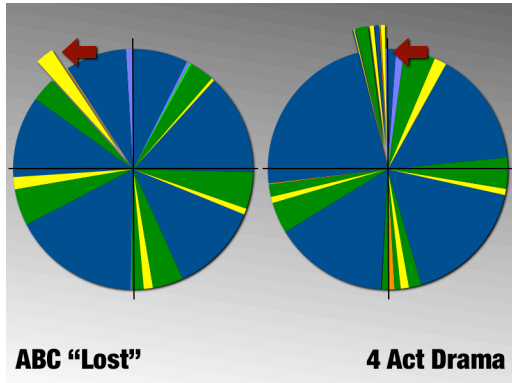
ABC takes what would ostensibly be the final act, splits it in two and drops in the break.

Most dramas have a long final act. Which makes for very exciting viewing. But at 10 minutes or more, it probably also creates a real need for a bathroom break, and unintentionally creates a viewer retention problem.

And notice again that ABC has beefed up its promo load here. Perfectly logical. I'm approaching the climax of my story; my brain is probably more inclined to listen to what ABC has in store for me next, or later, in the next few days. And because the final climax is so close, it's more likely I'm going to stick around for the break, or at least make sure I get back in plenty of time not to miss the climax. Either way, its more likely you'll get more viewers watching this promo

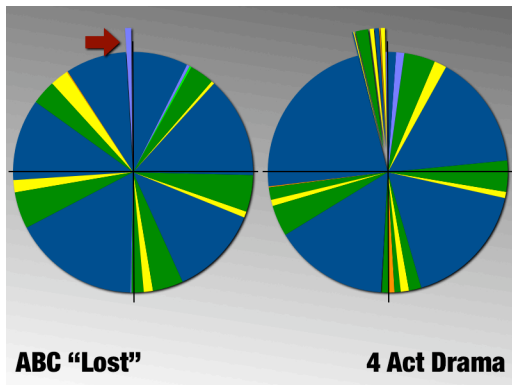


break than any other. If they'd only put those promos in first position, I'd be tempted to call this nirvana.



Over at our competing drama, the story arc has completed. And all I'm left with is a cluttered pod. My story has finished, and there's really no reason to stick around. Sure maybe they can tempt me with a promise of scenes from next week if I sit through a pod of commercials. And at the end of those commercials, they'll try and suck me through with some accelerated flow tactics over squeeze credits. But that's closing the barn doors after the

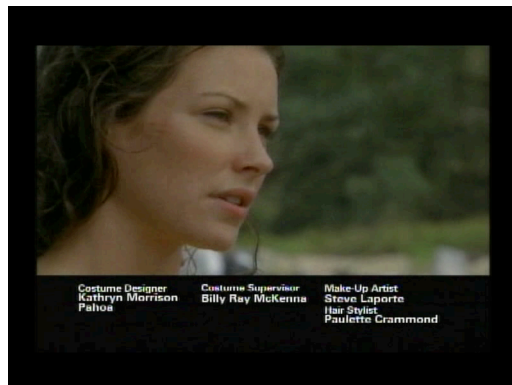
viewer has left the couch, or something like that.



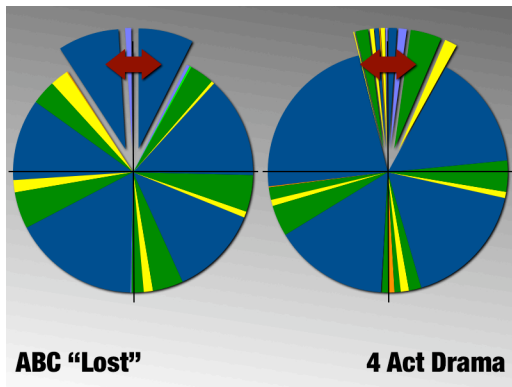
ABC on the other hand, finishes its storyline, gives me a chance to catch my breath, then gives me what you could either call more content or a "super affinity episodic"—scenes from next week's episode.

#### VIDEO: ABC Lost end break

We go through the squeeze; bridge the production credit with a voice over and voila cold open to the next show. Very smooth.



And note how subtle the squeeze credits are: simple white type over a black background. No distracting graphics package. No confusing screen geometry with strangely shaped video windows and overlaying banners. I think I'd have thrown a nice ABC logo in the corner, but hey I'm not complaining here.



If you step back, and look at the long-term impact, ABC is teaching its viewers that the best time to be at ABC is the top of the hour. That's when you're pretty much guaranteed to get what you turned on your TV for: content. And guess when most people turn on their TVs? At the top of the hour. Whereas, most other nets are teaching us that the top of the hour is the place to avoid, unless you like a lot of clutter and not much content.

ABC is enhancing the viewer experience. I think it qualifies as a **new best practice**, because I think you're looking at the future of program formats. In the same way that NBC revolutionized primetime with squeeze credits, I believe ABC has revolutionized vertical flow. It works for the show, the advertiser and most importantly, the viewer.

Let's stick with **squeeze credits and accelerated flow** for a couple of minutes. Why am I so obsessed with them? Because I'm lazy. Accelerated flow is the low hanging fruit. It's the easiest way we have to keep our viewers and capture surfers. It's the area where we have the most control and the best-proven ability to radically—and I'll define radically as anything that can increase viewership by 10%—the best-proven ability to radically enhance the viewing experience.

Ever since NBC introduced squeezed credits in the late 90's, networks have been experimenting with new and different ways to handle their squeezes. Vertically. Horizontally. Boxes left, boxes right. Credits up. Credits down. On the x-axis, the y-axis, the z-axis. I'm amazed at all the formats people use. You'd think there was no wrong way to do it. But I don't believe that's true.

Now of course squeezes are just one tool of accelerated flow. Literally getting people from Show A to Show B as efficiently as possible. And just as a reminder, **accelerated flow is about reducing "psychological time."** Making the break between programs seem shorter than it really is and reducing the urge to change the channel.

In my mind it's really even simpler than that. Again, it's about **enhancing the viewing experience**. Squeezes that do that, work. Squeezes that don't, fail.

The ABC squeeze works because it recognizes that I'm not interested in the credits. I want to see content. So it makes the content as full screen as possible and uses the credits as a pedestal to support the content. My eye goes to where my interest lies, the content.

### **VIDEO: FOX Squeeze**

FOX also follows this pattern, but they've taken it a step further. They add the FOX logo to the credit bed background and use color.

### **VIDEO: TLC Squeeze**

TLC goes even farther, reducing the credits to a single line. This allows the content to be full screen. ABC and FOX have to squeeze their content. But I have to wonder if the single line of type is a little more distracting than the blocks ABC and FOX use. Psychologically, the block separates the credits from the content, whereas the TLC model weaves the two together. Plus the TLC model has the credits moving right to left, which is harder for the brain to process. It's certainly more difficult to read.

But the goal is solid. All three, ABC, FOX and TLC, strive to **enhance the viewer experience**. Both FOX and TLC do it while adding elements of their brand look and style. I think they all qualify as **New Best Practices**.

Unfortunately, too often nets try to lead with the brand and follow with the content. Here are a couple of examples, Comedy Central and Bravo.

### **VIDEO: CC Squeeze**

### **VIDEO: Bravo Squeeze**

Both are bold visual styles. You can't argue with the creativity. But you can question whether it enhances the viewing experience. Remember, I did not come to your channel to see your graphics; I came to see your shows. If your graphics improve my ability to enjoy your shows, then when I run into a situation where I must choose between two similar shows, I'm more likely to pick you over your competitors. But if your graphics detract from my ability to enjoy your shows, if your design makes it hard for me to see the picture or discern it from the rest of the background, then I'm going to leave and probably leave with a bad feeling about your brand.

Now here are squeezes from Court TV and TNT.

### **VIDEO: Court TV Squeeze**

### **VIDEO: TNT Squeeze**

Why do designers insist on making trapezoids and video windows that dip into the z-axis? When I'm at home I purposely straighten my television set so it's parallel to me.

All right, what should go in the **video window**? A promo, extra content from the show, a tease for next week's episode, a pitch to buy the video of the series? There's no easy answer here. It depends on your priorities and what you're willing to sacrifice. But we can make some assumptions. Remember, our objective is to keep the viewer on our channel and hook them into the next show. All other goals are secondary. I guess you could call that a "**Bait and not switch**" strategy.

In the ABC break, they forgo a promo, which normally I would be loath to do, but think about it. If that next week preview can get viewers to watch another hour or half hour of our channel, and we've got anywhere from two to five breaks within that time, we've at the very least doubled our chances of getting that viewer to sample other promotional messages. (Not to mention our advertisers messages.)

So what's going to keep me around?

**#1. I came for this show. Give me more show and I will stay.** But it has to be good. Too often programs drop in what I call throwaway content. It feels like an after thought, and its not particularly entertaining. I don't believe it is near as enticing a well-cut tease for next week's episode. Plus, a good tease works on two levels. It entertains and persuades the viewer to come back next week.

**#2. You want me to stay for the next show, convince me.** A "next" promo is the most powerful advertising message there is. I'm not exaggerating. If programming has done their job correctly, there is already affinity from Show A to Show B, so the promo will be immediately relevant to that audience. If you've made a good promo, you're giving them a real taste of the show. Letting them try it on for size. So if you've done that, if you've sold them, guess what, they can "buy" this experience right now. All you ask is for the purchase price is for them to sit there for a few more seconds and not touch that remote.

You're making a point of purchase sale here. Nothing can make your promo more effective than adding that single word, "Next." Or even better, "Now!"

**#3. It's a long credit bed. What else do I put in?** Here your options open up based on your promo priorities, your targets, and your promo GRPs. But a good rule of thumb is, "**what message do you think will interest them the most?**" Another "like" show? Your upcoming special event? Discovery uses their time to sell product.

**VIDEO: DSC Squeeze**

My guess is they're losing a lot of audience that way, but obviously the revenue they generate selling merchandise offsets their incremental audience loss. At least I'd hope so.

Look at the **TNT squeeze** again. There are three layers of information.

The **first layer** is the credits from the show you're watching. The **second layer** is content in the video window. Several networks **add a third layer**. A banner or snipe with a text message. Usually a "next" or "later" message. Is it effective? Or is it TMI, too much information? Maybe, there's a new piece of research about parallel processing and television viewing with banners, snipes and lower thirds that's coming out next month that may reshape our thinking about multiple messages. It will definitely be part of next quarter's Break|Throughs.

But my inclination these days is go simple and always ask two questions.

1. Does it enhance the viewing experience?
2. Will it get viewers to the next show?

If you can answer yes to both these questions, and sell something else—shows, videotapes, sweepstakes, then you've done your job plus a little more.

Now here's how everyone else does it. I put together a montage of still frame squeezes from a lot of different nets. And you can play a little game while you're watching. Can you identify the channel? I've purposely picked a frame without content that would give it away. If the design doesn't immediately telegraph the brand, you have to wonder just how successful it is.

### **VIDEO: Montage of squeezes**

Ever heard the story of the five monkeys?

You start with five monkeys in a cage. You dangle a banana on a string from the top of the cage. One monkey climbs to the top of the cage to get the banana. As he does you spray the other four monkeys with cold water. You continue this every time a monkey climbs to the top to get a banana. After a while, the monkeys figure it out and they do anything they can to keep each other from climbing to the top of the cage.

Now stop spraying the monkeys. Remove one monkey and replace it with a new monkey. He sees the banana, tries to climb to the top, but is attacked by the other monkeys. It doesn't take him long to figure out climbing to the top is not a good idea. Even though he has no idea why—no one's getting sprayed anymore. Remove and replace a second, third, and fourth monkey. The pattern continues. Finally replace the fifth and final monkey. Now no monkey has ever

been sprayed, but every time a new monkey tries to climb the cage he is attacked. Why?

As far as these monkeys know, that's the way its always been done around here.

And that brings us to **billboards**, those "added value" extras that sales departments throw in with a buy. Usually, they sit in the first position of the first break. And they tend to look something like this:

### **VIDEO: Billboard Montage**

Now I ask you, could anything be more of a turn off? We struggle to make our shows, our promos, our commercials as engaging as possible, then we throw this at our audience. A 5 second graphic background with a static logo, and a generic announce. I'm not sure you could make it more boring if you tried.

We know viewers have Pavlovian responses, and this signals to them that we're going into a break, and oh yeah, breaks are really boring, so now's the best time to hit the remote.

The first few seconds of a break should be as powerful as possible. Whether it's a commercial or a promo. (Though of course, you know it should be a promo.) Accelerated flow isn't just for end breaks. We want to grab our audience at the beginning of the break and keep them with us for as long as possible. Billboards do just the opposite.

They are not **added value**. They are **diminished value**. They actually chase people away from the upcoming commercial. Who's the monkey, here?

But I did find one billboard that gave me hope... Well, it's actually more of a production credit, but it's a good template, IF you have to make a billboard.

### **VIDEO: TLC Home Depot**

Now I know, you're not getting any production dollars to make billboards, and usually you just grab what you've got: a network graphics package, the sponsor's logo, and a few minutes out of your weekly voice over session. But how much is it costing you to regain the viewers you're chasing away with that billboard? So what's an alternative? What qualifies as a New Best Practice in this arena?

**Sponsored promos.** And every year, we're seeing more and more of them. Last year in this session we chronicled the different kinds, situmericals, promercials, reverse product placement. There are lots of different ones.

But we need to be careful we don't go overboard. We wouldn't put multiple billboards in a break; so let's make sure we don't start putting multiple sponsored promos in the break as well.

Already we're seeing a new generation of sponsored spots, weaving the sales message into the content of the promo. But they're hard to do.

Here's one from Discovery Channel's, No Opportunity Wasted.

#### **VIDEO: DSC MC**

Now to me, this doesn't work. It feels like a commercial. If you remember from last year, you can lose 20% of the audience in a commercial. But you only lose 3% of your audience in a promo.

To make this spot work it needs to feel like a promo. It needs affinity. It needs experiences. It needs proximity.

At the end of the spot all I come away with is "There are some things money can't buy for everything else there's the Discovery Channel."

But here's one from TLC that does work. I think it qualifies as a New Best Practice of sponsored promos.

#### **VIDEO: TLC Trading Spaces/Home Depot**

Is it a promo? Is it a commercial. I don't know. I don't care. It sells the show, it sells the sponsor. And more importantly, I think it entertains the viewer.

Now obviously, when you have an endemic sponsor like that it's much easier, but sometimes it's just about being creative.

Hallmark's original movie "**Just Desserts**" was sponsored by **Chips' Ahoy** cookies.

And USA's "**Clean Up with Monk Sweepstakes**", with the germaphobic detective, was sponsored by **Lysol**.

It's all a matter of finding synchronicity.

#### **VIDEO: WB Kmart**

But how far can you go? Last fall MTV introduced a new series with this eye-catching spot.



### **VIDEO: MTV Made**

A few months later, I saw this “sponsored” promo for the show.

### **VIDEO: MTV Made Navy**

“I want to find out about ordinance disposal.” Hmm. Not sure about that one. And sponsored promos can also create confusion. I got a call from a client about a spot that he was absolutely sure was a promo for a new reality show with a sponsorship tag on the end.

### **VIDEO: Geico Small Room**

Now part of the confusion is that as TV networks, we’re not just selling shows, we’re selling everything!

### **VIDEO: Sales montage (WB, ESPN, DSC)**

The point of all this is that we, as promo people, have a responsibility to help our advertisers connect to our audience—even when they are us. We are those “in between,” the bridges that transition viewers from content that they came for and non-content that they didn’t come for, but pays the bill.

If we can do that while focusing on enhancing the viewer experience, like some of the spots we’ve seen, we’ll win, our channels will win and our advertisers will win. How far can it go? How about ESPN’s side by sides? Advertisements that don’t interrupt the content, they share it.

### **ESPN Side-by-Side**

Certainly a breakthrough. But I think we’ll have to wait a little longer before we know if it’s a **New Best Practice**.

A continuing Best Practice for 2005 has been the rise of trailer-like promos. Way back in 1999, I did a session called “The Perfect Storm.” In it I talked about how new technology, particularly DVRs would revolutionize on-air promotion. I predicted a renaissance of creativity as we moved from assembly line promotion to creating spots on the order of movie trailers.

Secretly, I wondered if the industry was up to that challenge. I worried that we were so caught up in producing quantity that we might not be able to make the switch to quality. Now I’m not talking about brand image campaigns, but real-honest-to-goodness on-air promotion of television shows.

Well, obviously my fears were unfounded and this last year I think we've seen the first taste of what I truly hope will be a great new trend in our business—high end, well crafted, beautifully written and wonderfully executed program promos. From program generics right down to 60 second mid season episodics.

**VIDEO: CBS Numbers**

**VIDEO: FX Shield**

I'm always been reluctant to pick on a single network—positively or negatively. But I continue to be impressed by the brand consistency of TNT. When they first “backed into” the position of, “We Know Drama,” I had my doubts. But they paved the way for general entertainment channels to adopt strong, easy to understand “niches.” They broke new ground, and it wasn't a flash in the pan. They are persistently consistent—strategically, tactically and creatively. And as we all know, that's hard to do. But I see it screening their work quarter after quarter. Whether it's ad sales initiatives, contest spots, even a HiDef ID, they never forget, and never let their audience forget, that they know drama.

**VIDEO: TNT Ray**

**VIDEO: TNT Dramatic Contest**

**VIDEO: TNT HD**

We're running out of time here, so let's pick up the pace. Here are a bunch of breakthroughs that just don't qualify for a particular category.

We know countdowns create a sense of anticipation, urgency. Showtime originated them. FOX has been using them off and on for a while. Comedy Central has dropped some in. But here's a fascinating one from National Geographic Channel.

**VIDEO: Nat Geo Countdown**

As a viewer, I'm used to commercial after commercial after commercial. This spot tells me I only have to wait through one spot before my show begins. And you know what I probably will.

And finally a lineup that has achieved self-awareness!

**VIDEO: AMC Billboard**

Simple, smart, follows the Amazon “sales” pattern, and tells me this is a network that actually thinks about its viewers when putting together a schedule.

This one stopped me dead in my tracks. We see fewer and fewer PSAs on the air these days, so when you come across one like this, it really pops.

## VIDEO: Anti-smoking PSA

We're all aware of the ratings war between The Today Show and Good Morning America. Maybe it is about dueling divas at sunrise, or maybe it's about using every trick in the book. Here's a spot that ran in ABC's #1 show, Desperate Housewives.

## VIDEO: ABC GMA Desperate Housewives Secret Scene

Got me "Good to Go."

Time for a little PROMAX plug. Some of you may know I have a book Fundamentals of Television Advertising and Promotion. Unfortunately, it's only available in Russian and Armenian. Long story. Well, this summer I'll be completing a new book, Keeping Viewers Capturing Surfers—in English—that be published by PROMAX later this year.

OK. How about some **TiVo proof creative**? Forrester Research estimates that DVR users spend **60% of their TV time watching shows they've time delayed** and that they **skip 92% of the ads** under those conditions. 92%!

About **three-quarters** of DVR users watch some ads at least sometimes, with **movie ads and promos** scoring highest. Overall though, ad exposure (**drops 54%**) among DVR users.

So given that, how do you make TiVo proof creative? Well I have no scientific evidence, but anecdotally, I have some theories.

My souped-up DVR scans at 30x normal speed, far beyond the capability of most DVRs. And yet there are still ads that catch my eye, and get me to rewind. So I've been noting what elements get me to pay attention. I like to call it **stop, drop and roll back creative**. I've got a whole list, but #1 is visual surprises, even at warp speed viewing. Here are my favorite TiVo-proof promos. Spots that get you to stop and rewind.

## VIDEO: FX Over There

## VIDEO: TLC Zapper

## VIDEO: Travel Channel Poker

OK, let's close with the **bug collection**. A random assortment of "obnoxious" from the last 4 quarters. This year we had many to choose from, the fall collection, winter collection, spring collection and that perennial favorite, the

summer collection. So I've taken the most interesting of all the collections to create the 2005 Bug Collection.

**VIDEO: 2005 Bug Montage.**

OK. There are DVD handouts on the seats, and the transcript for this session will be on my website when you get home next week. Just go to **[www.leehunt.com](http://www.leehunt.com)**. And if you have any questions, email me at **[lee@leehunt.com](mailto:lee@leehunt.com)**. I love to talk about this stuff.

Thanks for coming. Have a great summer.