

**WTTW  
and  
TVTV  
present**

FAST FORWARD

Six One-Hour Event Programs

CO-PRODUCED BY

WTTW & TVTV

**FAST FORWARD**



### INTRODUCTION

Within the last year, low-cost portable video equipment (porta-paks) has become broadcastable. TVTV's recent production, "The Lord of the Universe," was the first national broadcast of a porta-pak production. It proved that porta-paks have arrived as a professional tool. Many broadcasters are now interested in the new technology, but primarily for economic reasons.

This is a mistake. Porta-paks should not be used as a cheap substitute for what's already being done, and often done well, on conventional TV. Instead, they demand their own style of production. TVTV and other alternate video producers have been working to develop this style since porta-paks became available five years ago. We are now ready to take the next major step in the development of this work: a documentary series based on portable video.

A series approach is imperative because ad hoc experimentation and distribution make it impossible to build an audience for new video journalism. Moreover, guaranteed distribution can help set standards of professionalism for all porta-pak producers.

This proposal is a plan for six, event-related, one-hour documentaries. The advantage of this plan to TVTV is that it will guarantee us the resources to anticipate and cover national events without having to fundraise for each one. The advantage to WTTW is that it will allow the station to acquire porta-pak know-how by having its personnel work with TVTV in all phases of the productions.

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### THE PLAN

The general name for the series will be FAST FORWARD. The project will attempt to find and cover six events over a year's time using portable video technology. Topics of coverage, called Targets, will be mutually agreed upon by WTTW and TVTV. Targets will include both fast-breaking events, like the kidnapping of Patricia Hearst, and pre-scheduled ones like the Guru Maharaji's "Millenium '73."

TVTV will maintain a FAST FORWARD unit which will provide continuous intelligence on potential Targets through both a network of personal contacts and research of print media. The FAST FORWARD unit will also maintain the logistical capability to swing into action within 24 hours of a fast-breaking event. Selected porta-pak producers from around the country will be put on retainer to be in readiness for a potential Target event.

In addition to capitalizing on the cost and style of portable video production, FAST FORWARD will also take advantage of its speed and attempt to have finished programs on the air as quickly as possible after the wrap-up of an event.

FAST FORWARD will look for events which lend themselves to TVTV's style of coverage--candid and casual, with collage editing--and which we feel are either overlooked or miscovered by conventional television.

TVTV will be responsible for pre-production planning, and production. WTTW will provide post-production facilities, dubbing, and distribution.

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### TARGETS

FAST FORWARD will cover two kinds of events: fast-breaking and pre-scheduled. An example of the first type is the Hearst kidnapping where portable video could have been used for both incisive investigative reporting and to capture the carnival aspect of the story:

While various "Action" News Teams waited passively on the Hearst's doorstep for the big shot they never got--Patty coming home--portable video crews could have prowled the neighborhood where the SLA was holed up, tapped contacts in Berkeley, and even had confidential access to one of the mediators between the SLA and the Hearsts (a TVTV contact). Then, FAST FORWARD could have been on-location in L.A. to cover the coverage of the shoot-out.

While ultimately successful, "The Lord of the Universe" could have benefitted from a FAST FORWARD plan as well. Although TVTV knew about the event six months in advance, it wasn't until three weeks beforehand that initial funding came through and final monies weren't available until afterwards. As a result, some needed people weren't available on such short notice and there wasn't quite enough time to do pre-event intelligence and taping.

FAST FORWARD eliminates these drawbacks and for the very reason that the plan exists it is impossible to specify this soon what exactly will be covered. The best procedure, however, is to begin now with seed funding to do intelligence work through research, personal contacts, and porta-pak stringers around the country who are in touch with local problems and events.

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In the meantime, the type of events that might be considered potential Targets are:

\*THE OPENING OF THE ALASKA PIPELINE: Oil towns are the last frontier and oil workers the last pioneers. Thus, the opening of the Alaska pipeline will have an exuberance and significance analagous to the laying of the Golden Spike a hundred years ago.

\*AN ISSUE TRIAL: Occassionally, a court case represents major cultural as well as legal issues. This fall, a New Hampshire hippie will go on trial for sabotaging a nuclear power plant by chopping down a construction tower, an act which he readily confessed to. The image of a lone individual stopping ecological destruction could have national impact.

\*THE COAL WAR: In a few months coal miners will go on strike for better wages. Their perhaps violent struggle will be the country's most visible and aggressive rasistance to inflation.

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## PRODUCERS

FAST FORWARD will be co-produced by WTTW and TVTV. TVTV was formed in the spring of 1972 by members of some of the original experimental video groups who wanted to prove that portapak could be used professionally.

Our first project was coverage of the 1972 political conventions. Finished documentaries about each convention were shown nationally on cable-TV, Westinghouse Broadcasting's five stations, and KQED in San Francisco, in addition to WTTW. The programs were the first electronic broadcast of half-inch videotape.

Since the conventions, TVTV has continued to develop its style. "The Lord of the Universe," co-produced with the TV Lab at WNET/13, represents both an evolution of style and technology and was the first national broadcast of half-inch tape.

Our other work during the past year includes short features on Rolling Stone Magazine and "The Seven Laws of Money," along with a 60-minute documentary on TV advertising called "ADLAND" which was edited at WTTW. In each of our projects, we attempt to experiment with the latest developments in video technology.

TVTV is committed to pursuing new video journalism as an experimental form. Members of our core group include a former filmmaker, an ex-print journalist, a music producer, a former fellow of the Brookings Institution, a conventional television producer, and founders of two of the original experimental video groups, Raindance (New York) and Media Access Center (California).

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## Per Program BUDGET

### Production Personnel

Set-up and pre-production (One month/4 People @ \$175/wk)....\$2100  
 Production (one month, 19 People @ \$175/ wk).....13,300  
 Post-production (one month, 5 people @ \$175/wk).....3500  
\$18,900

### Expenses--Out of Pocket

Travel.....\$6500  
 Direct TVTV Costs.....2500  
\$9,000

### Equipment and Supplies

Hardware Rental.....\$4,000  
 Videotape.....1,300  
 Maintenance and Repairs.....1,000  
\$ 6,300

TVTV SUBTOTAL.....\$33,700

10% contingency \$ 3,400

Total TVTV per-show cost component.....\$37, 100

### ESTIMATED WTTW Post-Production Expenses

Editing and Dubbing Personnel.....\$5,000  
 Equipment Rental.....1,800  
10% contingency 700

Total WTTW Component.....\$7,500

TOTAL PER-PROGRAM COST.....\$44,600

# FAST FORWARD

