

Johnson turns on PorchLight

Company will focus on producing family programming

By Steve Coe

Bruce Johnson, former executive vice president and general manager, Hanna-Barbera Entertainment, has formed PorchLight Entertainment. The independent production company based in Los Angeles, will produce for all media including animation and live-action programming for the family.

PorchLight's first acquisition is the "visual and multimedia" interactive rights to William Bennett's "The Book of Virtues: A Treasury of Moral Stories." The project is being produced as an animated series for TV.

Johnson will serve as president and

chief executive officer of the venture and will be joined by former Great American Communications executive vice president William Baumann, who becomes vice president and chief financial officer.

Johnson says that "the timing could not be more perfect for the launch...given the confluence of new communication and distribution technologies now on the horizon and the enormous demand for high-quality programming to serve the expanding international marketplace."

The company will look to take advantage of new technologies. "We are committed to being at the cutting

edge in the application of new technologies in entertainment for conventional

distribution as well as for new and emerging delivery systems," he says. "Our aim is to produce and distribute innovative commercial product for the entire family while helping to fill the expanding software market for a wide range of systems and platforms both here and abroad."

PorchLight is being financed by a private group of international and domestic investors. ■



Bruce Johnson

Slow going in Monte Carlo

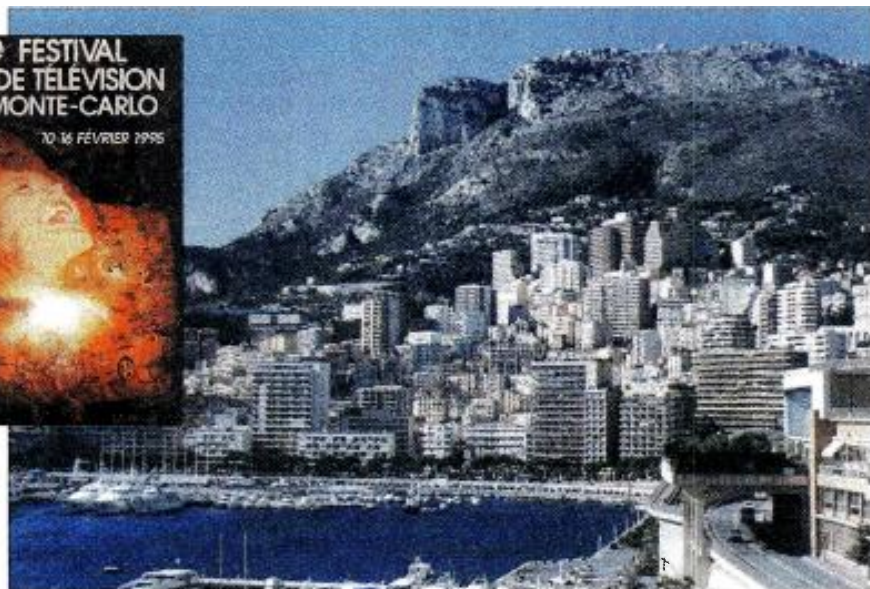
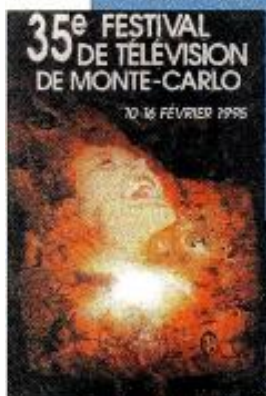
Few ground-breaking deals, but calmer pace suits some just fine

By Debra Johnson

Critics who doubted that the Monte Carlo TV festival could survive another year appear to have been proved wrong, if the participants' list is anything to judge by. This year, more than 2,000 international TV program distributors and creators turned out to peddle their wares on the third floor of the Hotel Loews; key U.S. players including 20th Century Fox, Warner Bros. and Viacom were there.

Although few ground-breaking deals were cut, buyers and sellers seemed satisfied with the four-day event, which they used as a platform to discuss deals that they hope to close at MIP-TV in Cannes.

Bert Cohen, executive vice president and chief operating officer of Worldvision Enterprises, says he is "not unhappy with the interest" shown in his company's Monte Carlo program lineup. *Texas*, a new four-hour miniseries, raised some interest among buyers, and Stephen King's four-hour thriller *The Langoliers* has



Programmers gathered in Monte Carlo last week.

been sold to virtually every key market worldwide.

Says Cohen: "We are selling 365 days of the year. These four days with their quiet ambience give us the opportunity to meet face-to-face with broadcasters and talk about what slots they need to fill."

Also at Monte Carlo:

■ On the eve of the TV market, Solomon International Enterprises and TVN Entertainment, the U.S. pioneer of pay-per-view transmission, formed TVN Solomon International (BROADCASTING & CABLE, Feb. 13). TVN owns and operates an 11-