

SEATTLE CHANNEL 2008 Annual Report

SUMMARY

In 2008, SEATTLE CHANNEL continued its award winning practice of putting video to work to build and strengthen community. SEATTLE CHANNEL presents programs on cable television (Channel 21 on Comcast and Broadstripe) and via the Internet to help residents connect with their city. Programming includes series and special features highlighting the diverse civic and cultural landscape of the Pacific Northwest's premier city as well as comprehensive coverage of the City of Seattle's government. SEATTLE CHANNEL's web site (www.seattlechannel.org) offers streaming video worldwide, and includes an archive featuring video on demand of all programs. The station is a Government Access Channel granted to the City of Seattle per Federal law for the purpose of cablecasting government television programs. It is administered by the Seattle Channel unit of the City of Seattle's Department of Information Technology.

Highlights for the year include:

- SEATTLE CHANNEL successfully led the design and building of the media briefing room at the City's new Emergency Operations Center.
- For the second year in a row, SEATTLE CHANNEL was honored to win the first prize in the prestigious Excellence in Government Programming Award from the National Association of Telecommunications Officers and Advisors (NATOA).
- In the last year, SEATTLE CHANNEL continued its commitment to the most thorough coverage of Seattle's local government of any television outlet.
- SEATTLE CHANNEL got ready for high definition television (HDTV) by improving picture quality, by becoming compatible with current broadcast equipment standards, and providing the necessary platform for the transition to HDTV.
- Traffic at SEATTLE CHANNEL website increased by 50 percent in 2008, measured in monthly page views, compared with the same period in 2007.
- SEATTLE CHANNEL's website won first place for Best Government Access Website from the NATOA.
- In 2008, SEATTLE CHANNEL moved from the Real Networks Player to Adobe Flash as a tool to stream television and other video. By doing so, SEATTLE CHANNEL switched to an international standard for creating and storing video that will enable people using our website to use video player software from several vendors to view our award-winning programming.
- SEATTLE CHANNEL produced weekly episodes of several popular TV series, including *CityStream*, *City Inside/Out* with C.R. Douglas and *Seattle Voices* with Eric Liu.
- SEATTLE CHANNEL successfully launched three new programs—*Art Zone In Studio* with Nancy Guppy, *Seattle News Now* and *City Inside/Out: Council Edition*. Two of them won awards during their first season.

- SEATTLE CHANNEL produced a four-part series highlighting Seattle Sister Cities.
- SEATTLE CHANNEL won two Emmy awards from the Northwest Chapter of the National Academy of Television Arts & Sciences for Community Stories.

SEATTLE CHANNEL PRODUCTIONS

SEATTLE CHANNEL completed over 1,100 productions in 2008. Highlights include:

- Nearly 100 events with Mayor Greg Nickels including 8 ASK THE MAYORs, Mayor's Arts Awards, Mayors Small Business Awards and Press Conferences.
- Nearly 400 Council programs, almost all live, including all Committee meetings and Public Hearings presented live on Cable 21 and streaming at seattlechannel.org, and also available via the web anytime as video-on-demand.
- Launched *Art Zone in Studio* with Nancy Guppy, a half-hour weekly program featuring interviews with artists and performers, reviews and previews of current offerings, and lots of surprises. A new episode premieres every Thursday night at 8:00 p.m. and brings together a local and diverse group of artists and celebrates Seattle thriving arts scene.
- Launched *City Inside/Out: Council Edition*, a monthly program with three Councilmembers that takes questions from our customers on timely public affairs.
- Went global with a four-part series highlighting four of Seattle Sister Cities: Nantes, France; Christchurch, New Zealand; Perugia, Italy; and Reykjavik, Iceland. These on-location programs documented the City of Seattle's innovative development of relationships with cities around the world.
- Launched *Seattle News Now*, a weekly summary that allows residents to receive a brief wrap up of the most significant news related to Seattle City government.
- More than 270 new episodes in SEATTLE CHANNEL's weekly and monthly series line-up including:
 - 39 episodes of *City Inside/Out* with C.R. Douglas, the public affairs show that brings you thoughtful, in-depth reports and discussions about important local issues every week. Memorable show topics included youth violence, historic landmarks, the Seattle Fault Line, the local economic recession, assisted suicide, the Mercer Mess, and a streetcar network. Guests included *NBC's* Tom Brokaw, Seattle Public Schools' Superintendent Maria Goodloe-Johnson, Washington Policy Center's Paul Guppy, *The Seattle Times'* Executive Editor David Boardman, Washington State Attorney General Rob McKenna, Seattle City Council President Richard Conlin, Urban League President James Kelly, Big Brothers/Big Sisters of Puget Sound President/CEO Tina Podlodowski and many more.

- 44 episodes of *CityStream*, a weekly magazine show that finds out what fuels Seattle's limitless vibrancy and keeps abreast of how the city is growing and changing in the 21st century. This year featured engaging topics and people such as the Dalai Lama, the Northwest African American Museum, the Seattle Men's Chorus, the Graffiti Rangers, Sunset Bowl, Bike-to-Work Day, Seattle's connections to the Republic of Georgia, JP Patches, farmers' markets, the Ventures, Comicon, autism, and King Street Station.
- 39 episodes of *Art Zone In Studio* with Nancy Guppy, a program with fresh highlights from local arts, entertainment and cultural happenings. This year's episodes and guests included actor Chiwetel Ejiofor, the Pacific Northwest Ballet, comedian Paula Poundstone, author Lauren Weedman, artist Gloria Bornstein, writer/performer Kevin Kling, Richard Hugo House, cellist Joshua Roman, film critic Robert Horton, On the Boards, singer/songwriter Suzie Grey, dancer Ezra Davidson, Seattle Art Museum and Seattle Children's Theatre.
- 32 episodes of *Seattle Voices* hosted by Eric Liu who engages in one-on-one conversations with some of the most interesting, provocative and inspiring people in Seattle. This year's guests included Seattle Art Museum's Mimi Gates, Seattle Storm co-owner and civic activist Anne Levinson, Powerful Schools' Tre Maxie, civil rights activist Oscar Eason, Seattle Opera's Speight Jenkins Jr., State Rep. Phyllis Gutierrez Kenney, former State Supreme Court Justice Bobbe Bridge and Cornish College of the Arts President Sergei Tschernisch.
- 12 episodes of *Book Lust* where America's favorite librarian and best-selling author Nancy Pearl sits down each month with top writers from around the country for conversations about books and the process and art of writing. This year, Nancy interviewed authors Nassim Assefi, Bharti Kirchner, Ann Patchett, Justina Chen Headley, Judy Schachner, Molly Gloss, Geraldine Brooks, Susan Rich, Dr. Susan Linn, Brian Hall, Lee Child and Gina Nahai.
- 8 episodes of the *Local Music Show*, a half-hour program showcasing local artists and their music videos, hosted by John Richards, a disc jockey on public radio station KEXP, and taped at live music venues around the city. Featured artists this year included: Kerry Zettel of See Me River, Sera Cahoone, Feral Children, Sub Pop Records co-founder Jonathan Poneman, and Kurt Bloch.
- Coverage of more than 70 important community discussions and lectures with partners such as Allied Arts, CityClub, Elliott Bay Books, Downtown Republican Club, Central District Forum, Town Hall Seattle, the City Neighborhood Council and University Bookstore. These discussions and lectures featured speakers such as Green for All Initiative's Van Jones, U.S. Housing and Urban Development Secretary Steve Preston, entrepreneur Nick Hanauer, Costco's Jim Sinegal, civic activist Tim Eyman, molecular biologist John Medina, Evergreen Freedom Foundation's Bob Williams and author Paul Loeb.

- Broadcast of *25 American Podiums*, nationally known authors reading in Seattle, including Scott McClelland, Madeleine Albright, Roger Mudd, Arianna Huffington, E.J. Dionne, Howard Fineman, Daniel Schorr, Kevin Phillips, Michael Kinsley, Fareed Zakaria and Jeremy Scahill.
- *26 Front Row* programs highlighting the best in local performance--music, dance, theatre or literary arts. Shows in 2008 included: Seattle Women's Chorus, Annex Theatre, City of Music, Rachel Ferguson, Christa Bell, Amber Flame, Wayne Horvitz, David Schmader, Traditional Dance Theater, Hossein Omoumi and Carrie Akre.
- 8 episodes of *Big Night Out*, a monthly variety show that is filmed before a live audience at Columbia City Theatre. *Big Night Out's* host Kevin Joyce welcomed performers such as: Poetry Slam Champion Roseanne McAleese, Orkestar Zirkonium, Grupo Capoeira Males, juggler extraordinaire Nikolai Pirak, Bhangra Dancers Sherni Invasion, acro-balance duet Dr. Calamari and Acrophelia, Totally Tap Kids, brilliant bass and cello duet Bottom Line Duo, comedienne Aziza Diaz, puppeteer Clay Martin and Just Fiddlin' Around.
- SEATTLE CHANNEL also produced in-depth documentaries including: *Alden Mason: Artist*, a piece chronicling the life of painter Alden Mason, from his early Skagit Valley days as a child who yearned to be an entomologist through his rise as an internationally known Seattle artist; *Alfredo Arreguín: Artist*, a documentary that captures this award-winning painter's early life in Mexico, his journey to the United States during his formative years, and his eventual coming of age as an artist in Seattle; and *John Dimitriou's Jazz Alley* takes the viewer behind the scenes at "one of the world's best nightclubs" to learn how for almost three decades, John Dimitriou has made his club into a West Coast hub for all the towering figures in the world of jazz--stars such as Dizzy Gillespie, Oscar Peterson, Betty Carter and Bill Evans.
- SEATTLE CHANNEL began providing video on demand access to the meetings of the Seattle Ethics and Elections Commission, the Alaska Way Viaduct Stakeholders meetings and the Seattle Board of Park Commissioners meetings.
- SEATTLE CHANNEL's award-winning series *Community Stories* continued production for its 2009 season of sharing stories of unique individuals and organizations making a difference in Seattle's neighborhoods.

SEATTLECHANNEL.ORG

SEATTLE CHANNEL's website continued to evolve during 2008, offering new features and services for users and attracting a rapidly expanding audience. Web highlights for 2008:

- In 2008, SEATTLE CHANNEL's web site, www.seattlechannel.org, won first place honors for Best Government Access Website from the National Association of Telecommunications Officers and Advisors (NATOA).
- In 2008, SEATTLE CHANNEL's web site converted to Adobe Flash as a tool to stream video. By doing so, the Channel switched to an international standard -- MPEG-4 (H.264/AVC) -- for creating and storing video. This enables people using our website to use video player software from several vendors to view videos of Mayoral events and City Council meetings, community programs and other shows that we air for the public every day.

Adobe Flash has other several advantages: 1) Flash will give users an enhanced multi-media experience on SeattleChannel.org; 2) Flash, like Adobe Acrobat Reader, is a virtual standard -- over 95% of computers worldwide have Flash installed; 3) Flash is easy for City employees to use -- it integrates automatically and easily with Internet Explorer; 4) Flash will simplify support that SEATTLE CHANNEL formerly had to provide for three different live video streams; and 5) the Adobe Flash Player is free and can be put on every City desktop computer.

- Traffic at SEATTLE CHANNEL's website grew by 50 percent in 2008, measured in monthly page views, compared with the same period in 2007. Here are the 2008 Web Statistics:
 - 2008 Website Page Views: 5,606,552 (2007: 3,841,717)
 - 2008 Website Sessions: 3,057,304
 - 2008 Videos Streams/Downloads: 494,824
 - Over 1,100 new videos added to the website in 2008

SEATTLE CHANNEL TECHNOLOGY UPGRADES

SEATTLE CHANNEL improved its infrastructure in 2008 to better serve cable viewers and web users. Highlights include:

- SEATTLE CHANNEL was the lead for the design and building of the media briefing room at the City's new Emergency Operations Center. The new room has a complete audio/video/lighting system for broadcasting with accommodations for a number of television news crews and their remote trucks. In the event of an emergency, SEATTLE CHANNEL has a dedicated fiber optic feed that can provide information live to local and national television stations. The Mayor inaugurated the facility with a special broadcast of his show, *Ask the Mayor*, live from the Emergency Operations Center.
- Phase one of the conversion of SEATTLE CHANNEL infrastructure to become compatible with High Definition Television (HDTV) is complete. This means improved picture quality, compatibility with current broadcast equipment standards, and providing the necessary platform for the transition to High Definition Television (HDTV).

- SEATTLE CHANNEL's studio control room has been upgraded with digital switching and monitoring equipment, which enables production in a wide screen format and improves picture quality.
- SEATTLE CHANNEL is now recording all City Council meetings directly to computer hard drives or to DVDs. This upgrade to the latest technology has resulted in a reduction of both of cost and storage space from the previous method of VHS recordings. SEATTLE CHANNEL is also distributing DVDs of all Council meetings to the Office of the City Clerk to help them fulfill their archival mission.

SEATTLE CHANNEL FINANCIAL SYSTEM UPGRADES

- In order to better utilize and track the precious public dollars that SEATTLE CHANNEL is entrusted with, this year the station's staff created a project cost tracking system to better assess costs by program, series and genre to increase the station's ability to insure appropriate distribution of resources.

SEATTLE CHANNEL AWARDS

SEATTLE CHANNEL received numerous honors from peer organizations in 2008, including:

- SEATTLE CHANNEL won two Emmy Awards at the 45th Annual Northwest Regional Emmy Awards:
 - First place in the Human Interest -- Program Feature/Segment category for its *Community Stories* piece about the wheelchair dancer Charlene Curtiss. The *Community Stories* team for the winning segment was: Andy Spletzer, Producer; Ian Devier, Producer/Videographer/Editor; Shannon Gee, Senior Producer
 - First Place in the Craft Specialty --Musical Composition/Arrangement category, *Community Stories* won for its Theme Music, composed by Stephen Thomas Cavitt
- 2008 Hugo Television Awards
 - SEATTLE CHANNEL won a Silver Plaque from the Hugo Television Awards for Main Title Sequence for the Local Music Show
- 2008 National Association of Telecommunications Officers and Advisors (NATOA) Government Programming Awards:
 - First Place: Excellence in Government Programming--For the second year in a row, SEATTLE CHANNEL won the most prestigious award in municipal television, "Excellence in Government Programming (Operating Budget over \$500,000)." The award was made by the National Association of Telecommunications Officers and Advisors (NATOA) at their annual awards ceremony in Atlanta, Georgia in October. This award recognizes the important work being done by SEATTLE CHANNEL providing our residents with timely, accurate and often entertaining information about their government and their communities.
- In addition to first place in the overall excellence category, SEATTLE CHANNEL also won sixteen other 2008 NATOA awards:
 - Public Affairs

Honorable Mention: "City Inside/Out: Council Edition with C.R. Douglas"

- Children/Young Adult

First Place: "West Side Story and Seattle Police"

- Documentary – Profile

Third Place: "Verve"

- Interview/Talk Show

Second Place: "Art Zone In Studio with Nancy Guppy"

Third Place: "City Inside/Out with C.R. Douglas"

- Performing Arts

Honorable Mention: "BIG NIGHT OUT with Kevin Joyce"

- Promotion of a City/County

First Place: "Art Zone Featurette"

- Public Health

Second Place: "Community Stories: Partners in MS"

- Public Safety

Third Place: "City Inside/Out with C.R. Douglas"

- Municipal Channel Promotion

First Place: "Art Zone Promo for Cable"

Second Place: "CityStream Promo for Cable"

Third Place: "City Inside/Out Promo for Cable"

- Event/Program Promotion

Second Place: "Bumbershoot PreFunk Promo"

- News Series

First Place: "City Inside/Out with C.R. Douglas"

Honorable Mention: "Seattle News NOW with Megan Erb"

- Election Coverage

First Place: "City Inside/Out with C.R. Douglas"

- Government Access Station Web Site

First Place: "SEATTLE CHANNEL's seattlechannel.org"

In summary, 2008 was another year of solid achievements at SEATTLE CHANNEL. Currently Seattle enjoys a worldwide reputation as a vibrant, diverse and dynamic city known for innovations in aviation, software, e-commerce, coffee, arts and the

environment. We continue to work hard to make Seattle known for its innovative approach to government television as well.