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ORLANDO BUSINESS JOURNAL

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New TV station features locally-produced shows

Orlando Business Journal - by [Richard Bilbao](#)

Correction at bottom of article

Local HDTV Inc., which launched its WHDO-TV community TV station in mid-July with three scheduled programs, now plans to offer a full high-definition, 24-hour schedule starting in late September.

Three weeks ago, WHDO (on analog channel 38 and digital channel 42) began cycling a two-hour teaser of community programs created by local firms, and a line-up of other programs expected to air.

Digital TV of Orlando LLC, a subsidiary of Jackson, Mich.-based Local HDTV, will run the station, which will serve Central Florida, Tampa and Daytona Beach. The station expects to reach up to 800,000 households.

Currently, the station -- Local HDTV's first -- has five employees and will add eight more before year-end.

Local HDTV, which bought two TV licenses last November in Orlando and Charleston, S.C., for \$1 million, now has licenses for a total of four stations and expects to launch the other three stations next year in Charleston; Palm Springs, Calif.; and Ann Arbor, Mich.

The new Orlando station will provide local programming, said John Salov, owner and president of Local HDTV, who declined to share the station's start-up costs or its advertising rates. "There is so much going on [in Orlando], we can go in-depth into all the things that make the community great."

The low-powered station likely will have lower advertising rates due to its smaller audience, which would benefit small businesses that typically can't afford to advertise on TV, said Todd Persons, vice chairman with Orlando-based public relations firm Massey Communications Inc., who is not involved with the TV station.

WHDO-TV will be the first Central Florida station to target the local community with programming created by local businesses. As a result, other stations likely will ramp up their creativity to match that audience and advertiser base, said Wagner Bucci, president for Orlando Area Advertising Federation Inc., a local branch of the Washington, D.C.-based advertising trade association, American Advertising Federation. "There is always room for people to come into this marketplace," he said.

WHDO-TV's programming will include high school and university sports events, theater productions, competitions and school debates. The station currently is negotiating with Stetson University in DeLand and local high schools to determine what it will broadcast.



Jim Carchidi

Joe Chaplinski, general manager of WHDO, with

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The station also will feature programs created by Central Floridians, such as One Stroke, an educational painting show hosted by Donna Dewberry, owner of Clermont-based Dewberry Designs Inc., a painting retailer.

In addition, Robert Vincent "Vince" Sims, owner of Sorrento-based Sims Landscaping Co., has created America's Garden Rebel, one of the first programs now showing on WHDO. Sims already hosts the America's Garden Rebel radio show, which airs on AM 580 WHBO weekly. "The show is a half-hour to an hour with tips, tricks and tonics [for gardening], and my particular [landscape] growing methods," Sims said.

Companies airing a program on WHDO will receive advertising time on the station and be paid with a share of the profits from a program's sponsor. The station will pay for production costs, said Joe Chaplinski, general manager of WHDO-TV. "And if [the program becomes] nationally syndicated, we'll have it run in other markets."

Doing so, Chaplinski said, will help the programs evolve into bigger shows nationwide. "Just like Vince with his plants, we are planting the seed and watering it."

WHDO-TV

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Correction:

An earlier version of this story contained some incorrect information. WHDO-TV plans to offer a full high-definition, 24-hour schedule starting in late September that will feature community programs produced by the station. WHDO-TV expects to reach more than 800,000 Central Florida households.

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