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Music Video
PROGRAMMING

Programmers Argue Merit Of Label-Backed Video Shows

This week's column was prepared by Chris Morris, Eileen Fitzpatrick, and Brett Atwood.

MAJOR THREAT? Should regional programmers be threatened by a new wave of music video shows backed by such major music companies as Columbia Records and EMI Music Distribution?

That question was tackled during the "Labels As Programmers" panel Nov. 9 at the Billboard Music Video Conference in San Francisco. The gathering focused on recent efforts by music companies to bring their videos directly to viewers by producing their own clip shows.

Columbia promotion manager **Dave Ross** screened a reel of his show, "Dave's Super Tasty Video," which he produces and hosts for public- and leased-access airing in Minneapolis.

Ross noted that the connection between Columbia and his show is not made explicit to viewers: "I let my videos do the talking... If the kids know it's coming from a major label and it's corporate, they may tune it out. Perception equals reality."

George Saadi, director of artist development at EMI Music Distribution, ran a reel for "The Street Buzz," a half-hour show spotlighting EMI label acts (*Billboard*, Sept. 14). Saadi described the program as "a hybrid of an infomercial and a specialty show."

Audience members wondered

to the television screen, according to speakers at the Intel-sponsored "Cyberlunch," held Nov. 8 at the Billboard Music Video Conference.

Attendees were shown a presentation of current and future technologies that will facilitate the exposure of music videos on computer screens, including Intel's Interest and video streaming.

However, there are technical limitations. A lack of improvements in bandwidth is making the World Wide Web the "World Wide Wait," according to **Avram Miller**, VP of corporate business development at Intel.

"Only 20% of [U.S.] homes will have the high-speed delivery systems by the end of the century...

And without it, downloading music or fully rendered 3D graphics will be available only to a few."

Miller says that the primary Internet delivery system will be the 28.8-baud modem and that content providers should focus on "hybrid" programming that utilizes hard-drive space, DVD-ROM, and satellite delivery systems to get rich graphics and sound to computer users. On a more optimistic note, Miller quoted a report by the U.S. Statistical Yearbook that says that by 2005, consumers will spend more time on

their personal computers than in front of the TV.

Columbia's **Ghuneim**, who demonstrated Intel-developed video streaming of music videos at the



by Brett Atwood

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they can," one said.

"We don't have the resources to get that subversive," said panelist **Mark Ghuneim**, VP of online and emerging technologies at Columbia. Ghuneim, who spent many years in the Columbia video department, then added his pledge to support local programmers.

CYBERLUNCH: The future of music video programming could be on the computer screen, in addition

to service a video for **George Clinton** and **Coolio** track "Atomic Dog '97" from the "George Clinton's Greatest Funkin' Hits" album. The letter, dated Oct. 18, states: "Tommy Boy's original consent with respect to this project pertained solely to a [side-artist] clearance for Coolio's participation... We would expect you at once to cease your unauthorized exploitation of Coolio."