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From: Kevin Foley [kfoley@kefmedia.com]
Sent: Monday, December 18, 2006 3:46 PM
To: KJMWEB
Cc: dtaylor@tateweb; Robert McDowell
Subject: The CMD & VNRs

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Federal Communications Commission
Office of the Secretary

Dear Chairman Martin:

As you consider video news releases, I also hope you will consider the source of the complaints about them. The Center for Media and Democracy continues to fallaciously charge that what we do is somehow dishonest and that stations airing our content are violating FCC rules. Neither accusation is true.

Yet, it appears this radically left wing anti-corporate group is enjoying themselves (see below) at the expense of companies like mine and, indirectly, the Commission, which the CMD believes it has "won over" on this matter.

Companies like mine perform a perfectly legal and useful service, disseminating to TV newscasters information from America's corporations, not-for-profits, charities, associations, the U.S. government, including the armed services, and many other groups. Television newscasters are free to air what we offer - or not. If they do, it is because they editorially judge the content to be useful and informative to their viewers.

The National Association of Broadcast Communicators, to which my company belongs, has filed considerable information on this matter with the Commission and I hope you and your fellow Commissioners will give it due consideration.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Kevin Foley
President
KEF Media Associates, Inc.



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To ensure the integrity of this year's awards, CMD staff donned disguises to guarantee the anonymity (sic) of each member of the Falsies research team.

Silver Falsie: Front Group for Fake News

In April 2006, the Center for Media and Democracy issued "Fake TV News: Widespread and Undisclosed," a report that documented television stations' use of public relations videos designed to look like real reporting. Dozens of TV stations across the United States aired pre-packaged video news releases (VNRs) or canned satellite media tour (SMT) interviews, and failed to tell viewers that a company had funded the segment. Subsequently, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) launched an investigation of these incidents.

The PR firms that make their living off of VNRs and SMTs were not amused, and responded by creating the National Association of Broadcast Communicators. This authoritative-sounding group wins second billing in this year's Falsies Awards, for defending such systematic deception of news audiences while claiming to support "the FCC's efforts to ensure compliance with the sponsorship identification requirements."

These silver-tongued communicators share their Silver Falsie with the Radio-Television News Directors Association, a broadcasters' group that smeared the April report as "inaccurate, misleading and unreliable," and attempted to wrap fake news in the First Amendment. The association claimed that the FCC investigation "already has had a chilling effect on the dissemination of newsworthy information to the public."

Funny, but we didn't notice any chill while compiling our follow-up report, "Still Not the News: Stations Overwhelmingly Fail to Disclose VNRs." Of the 140 VNR broadcasts documented between the two reports, TV stations offered clear disclosure of the videos' nature and source *only twice*. There's something very wrong with this picture.

Golden Falsie: The ABCs of History

The most false of Falsies goes to the **American Broadcasting Corporation**. ABC used the fifth anniversary of the September 2001 terrorist attacks on the United States as an opportunity to rewrite history, broadcasting "The Path to 9/11," a six-hour "docudrama" written and produced by conservative filmmakers. The made-for-TV blockbuster placed the lion's share of the blame for the attacks on alleged failures of the Clinton administration. None other than Rush Limbaugh talked up the movie, noting that its screenwriter, Cyrus Nowrasteh, was a personal friend.