



**Training Proposal for:  
Comcast SportsNet Bay Area Holdings, Inc.  
Agreement Number: ET09-0419**

Panel Meeting of: **January 23, 2009**

ETP Regional Office: **San Francisco Bay Area**

Analyst: D. Woodside

**PROJECT PROFILE**

Contract Type: Priority/Retrainee Job Creation      Industry Sector(s): Multimedia/Entertainment

Counties Served: San Francisco, Sacramento      Repeat Contractor:  Yes  No

Union(s):  Yes  No      Priority Industry:  Yes  No

No. Employees in CA: 5,000      No. Employees Worldwide: 90,000

Turnover Rate %	Manager/Supervisor %
3%	15%

**FUNDING DETAIL**

Program Costs	Substantial Contribution	Total ETP Funding	In-Kind Contribution
\$354,600	\$0	\$354,600	\$669,012

**TRAINING PLAN TABLE**

Job No.	Job Description (by Contract Type)	Type of Training	Estimated No. of Trainees	Range of Hours		Estimated Cost per Trainee	Post-Retention Wage
				Class / Lab	CBT		
1	Priority/Retrainee	Commercial Skills, Business Skills, Advanced Technology	100	24-240	0	\$3,546	\$14.18
				Weighted Avg: 197			

**Minimum Wage by County:** \$14.18 per hour for San Francisco County; \$13.69 per hour for Sacramento County.

**Health Benefits:**  Yes  No This is employer share of cost for healthcare premiums – medical, dental, vision.

**Used to meet the Post-Retention Wage?:**  Yes  No

Although the employer provides health benefits, they are not being used to meet the Post-Retention Wage.

Wage Range by Occupation	
Occupation Title	Wage Range
General Live News Production and Operations Staff	
Live Sports Production Staff	
Managers and Media Management Staff	
Broadcasting Technician	
Creative/Art Development Staff	
News Media Web Development Staff	
Avid Editors	

**INTRODUCTION**

In this proposal, Comcast SportsNet Bay Area Holdings, Inc. (CSN Bay Area) seeks funding for retraining as outlined below:

CSN Bay Area was created in 2007, following acquisition of a controlling interest in Fox SportsNet by Comcast SportsNet, a group of regional sports networks primarily owned by Comcast Corporation. The parent is a cable television company with 90,000 employees worldwide and 5,000 in California.

CSN Bay Area is a regional television network that reaches nearly four million households in Northern California and Northern Nevada. It offers over 550 live sporting events per year featuring the San Francisco Giants, Oakland Athletics, Golden State Warriors, San Jose Sharks, San Jose SaberCats, and San Jose Earthquakes. In addition, the network delivers local high school football coverage, college basketball and football action from Stanford University, University of California, Berkeley, and the Pacific 10 Conference. CSN Bay Area currently has 45 employees and plans to have 120 employees by March 2009. It is a priority

industry company (multimedia entertainment) facing competition from other service providers located out-of-state. (Title 22, California Code of Regulations, Section 4416 (d)(2))

CSN Bay Area produces television programming, but does not currently operate a studio. To supplement its existing capabilities, the company is constructing a 37,000 square foot state-of-the-art studio, a 24-hour newsroom, a high definition production facility, and office space in San Francisco. Upon completion of its studio and the training of an expanded workforce, CSN Bay Area will be able to present live, locally-produced, original high-definition sports programming daily with news, features, debate, scores, and more.

CSN Bay Area states that it will need to increase the number of its employees for its new San Francisco operation. Overall, it will retrain some of its current staff in the Bay Area; and also retrain some staff employed in Sacramento by the affiliate, Comcast SportsNet.

The company reports that the majority of its new employees will be former freelancers and part-time workers who have not previously worked in the multimedia/entertainment field. CSN Bay Area will employ these individuals full-time, and provide them with expedited technical training prior to the company's go-live production deadline of April 5, 2009, the beginning of the Major League Baseball season. On this date, CSN Bay Area will broadcast the first game of the San Francisco Giants, launch new sports-related news programming, and air other regional games and programs.

## **PROJECT DETAILS**

CSN Bay Area is requesting the Panel's assistance to implement new training programs that fall under Commercial Skills, Business Skills, and Advanced Technology (AT) as described below:

### **Commercial Skills**

CSN Bay Area will provide a range of 24-240 hours of laboratory training for approximately 87 trainees for its "Mock Broadcast" training program to be conducted from February 9, 2009 through March 31, 2009. The Mock Broadcast schedule is five days a week, 8 hours a day, for six weeks and will be taught in the new studio. Training will include, but is not limited to, all aspects of video production (basic and advanced), lighting and shooting techniques, screen writing and editing, and planning and managing multimedia production projects. There will be no actual production of televised programming during the ETP-funded laboratory training. Rehearsals will be recorded and archived, but only for editorial and technical training purposes. The trainers' time during ETP-funded laboratory training must be dedicated exclusively to the instruction of trainees. In order to ensure individualized attention while in training, the trainer to trainee ratio will be limited to 1:10 or less.

### **Business Skills**

Classroom training in Business Skills will be provided to some frontline employees as appropriate and all managers in areas such as business strategy, team building and improvement, project management, and building customer relationships with vendors and advertisers. This is an especially critical skill set because CSN Bay Area must sustain customer relationships with affiliate customers and advertising sales customers. The company's advertising sales customer network consists of a wide variety of organizations, including retailers, manufacturers and governmental entities. This training will allow the company to improve its market share and create a solid revenue stream as CSN Bay Area grows and expands its programming.

## **Advanced Technology (AT) Training**

CSN Bay Area requests the AT reimbursement rate of \$26 per hour for trainees whose work requires knowledge of the various software applications and multimedia equipment used at the studio, in the courses listed on Exhibit B. This training will be conducted in a classroom/laboratory setting and each trainee shall receive up to 72 hours of AT training depending on past experience and new job function. The AT training will use high-end, cutting-edge applications and equipment, including new media production and programming software such as Avid iNEWS, Avid Workflow, Media Management, and Chyron On-Air Graphics. Training will also include sophisticated multimedia lighting and audio management functions, editing and production software, and computer drafting applications.

CSN Bay Area indicates that the average cost to deliver AT training exceeds ETP's hourly reimbursement. This higher-than-normal cost for training is the result of the complexity of the topics and equipment covered during the training, the salaries of in-house trainers and/or high training vendor costs, and the need to conduct training in small groups comprised of ten or fewer employees. These smaller classes will allow employees to receive more individualized attention from trainers and will allow trainers to cover a wider array of technical topics. All AT training will be provided in a traditional class/lab setting and with a 1:10 trainer to trainee ratio.

## **Commitment to Training**

Comcast SportsNet reports making a significant investment towards the launch of CSN Bay Area's new, state-of-the art high-definition television studio and new local programming. This expenditure requires an initial investment of over \$5 million in television equipment alone, and a \$9 million investment in leasehold improvements. The studio will be ready for training and testing by the start of ETP training. However, the current state of the economy has placed significant budgetary pressures on the company as it hires new workers and completes the construction of new facilities. For these reasons, the company is seeking the Panel's assistance to retrain its workers with a commitment to establish formal training on an on-going basis.

CSN Bay Area incurred approximately \$25,000 in annual training costs for its 45 employees in 2008. These training programs included general compliance training, employee safety, sexual harassment policies, applicable laws and regulations, industry best practices, ergonomics, and other business development and technical training programs. Historically, due to its small size, CSN Bay Area conducted minimal formal training. Most of its past technical training has been on-the-job. The company represents that ETP funds will not displace its existing financial commitment to training. Further, CSN Bay Area anticipates that the opportunity for enhanced classroom training made possible by ETP funds will encourage an ongoing financial commitment in employee training.

## **Request to Exceed 200-Hour Cap**

CSN Bay Area is requesting that the Panel fund training up to a maximum of 240 hours for all new employees across all occupations. General live news production and operations staff, the live sports production staff, broadcasting technicians, managers, avid editors, news media web development staff, and creative/art development staff require additional laboratory training in order to 1) become highly proficient in their specific job duties; 2) gain a working knowledge of functions that are related to their specific job duties; and 3) gain knowledge of the inner workings of the company's newsroom operations.

The higher training hours results in the higher than average retraining cost, estimated at \$3,646 per trainee. Staff recommends that the Panel modify the cap of 200 hours and fund the high

cost per trainee because these workers will gain state-of-the-art multimedia skills with average wages of \$36 per hour and work in jobs with long-term career potential.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

For the reasons set forth above, staff recommends that the Panel approve the AT reimbursement rate for all training, at up to 240 hours per trainee. Further, ETP funding will assist a local multimedia business undertake a successful expansion and create new job opportunities in a priority industry.

### **DEVELOPMENT SERVICES**

The company retained WTAS LLC in San Francisco to assist with development of this proposal for a flat fee of \$25,000.

### **ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES**

The company will also retain WTAS LLC to perform administrative services in connection with this proposal for an amount not to exceed 13% of payment earned.

### **TRAINING VENDORS**

Training vendors will be identified as retained by CSN Bay Area.

## **Exhibit B: Menu Curriculum**

### **Class/Lab Hours**

24 - 240

Trainees may receive any of the following:

### **COMMERCIAL SKILLS**

#### *Video Production*

- Live Sports News Production Training
- Live News Communication Techniques
- Shooting Techniques
- Video Production
- Lighting
- Lighting for Interviews
- Interviewing Techniques
- Planning and Managing a Video Project
- Screen Writing Techniques
- Editorial and Technical Skills
- Inter/Intra Office Information Sharing/Management
- Architectural Layout
- Sound Equipment Design
- Wire Service Ingest and Search
- Story Research
- Newsroom Communication Management
- Audio/Video Analysis

#### *Video Post Production*

- Video Technology
- Designing a Demo Reel
- Aesthetic of Editing
- Noise Reduction
- Mixing for Broadcasting Multimedia Entertainment
- Video Engineering
- Advanced Audio Editing
- Professional Voice Over Recording
- Sound Design
- Motion Graphics and Effects in Final Cut

### **BUSINESS SKILLS**

- Business Strategy
- Team Evaluation/Improvement Plans
- Crew Assignments –Project Management
- Building Advertiser and Vendor Relationships

**Class/Lab Hours**

0 - 72

**ADVANCED TECHNOLOGY**

- Avid – iNEWS
- Avid – Workflow and Media Management (including interplay, ingest and airspeeds)
- Avid – Nonlinear Editing
- High Definition Field Cameras-Recording Live Sports News
- Chyron On-air Graphics
- Switchers
- Audio Board Controls
- Lighting Controls and Direction
- Satellite Dish Control
- Pre and Post-Production Planning/Finalization