

# 2007-08 SEASON WRAP

## For the networks, season didn't rate

*Strike, DVRs drove numbers to record lows*

By James Hibberd

LOS ANGELES — It will go down as one of the strangest and most difficult periods in broadcast television history: The 2007-08 season, where a perfect storm of a WGA strike, rocketing DVR penetration and the rapid expansion of the video marketplace resulted in the lowest-rated season on record.

Before the strike even hit, the season launched with worrisome news: Hit shows were returning down an average of about 8% in the ratings from the previous year. Yet as the weeks ticked by, some networks still had positive stories to tell. Fox was gaining traction in the fall and ABC's new shows were finding fans.

"The season got off to a very good start, but what ended up happening was like a car that started picking up speed and then ran into a wall," said Bill Carroll, director of programming at Katz Television Group.

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As the season rolled over into 2008, NBC countered the strike with a surge of reality programming. "The Biggest Loser: Couples," a celebrity edition

of "The Apprentice" and the debut of "American Gladiators" initially proved effective counter-strike programming.

And once the walkout concluded, there were more upbeat headlines as CBS enjoyed record ratings for the return of its Monday night comedy block. The numbers suggested that, just maybe, things weren't so bad after all.

But then as full schedules returned to the air, viewers held back. Such returning hit dramas as ABC's "Grey's Anatomy" and CBS' "CSI: Crime Scene Investigation" hit record lows, with programs with serialized elements being hit especially hard.

Only once networks entered the May sweep did the damage of the strike and fractured viewing become clear:

Networks were down double digits during the sweep despite running at full steam on most nights. Even major fare like Fox's "American Idol" were showing clear erosion, with the reality hit down about 10%.

With DVR penetration at 24% (compared with 15% last year), the story improves slightly when looking at the full season and factoring seven days of viewing per show. But not by much.

"The most difficult network

*continued on page 11*



Fox "American Idol"



ABC "Desperate Housewives"



NBC "Heroes"



CBS "Survivor: China"



CW "America's Next Top Model"

### NETWORK SEASON RANKINGS

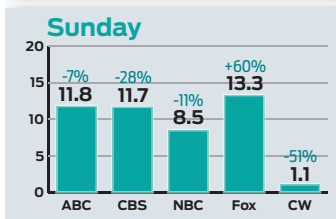
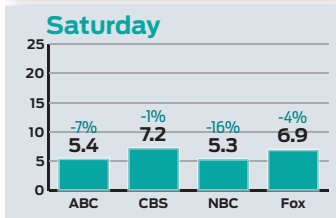
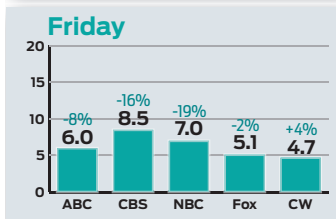
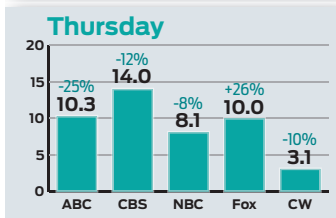
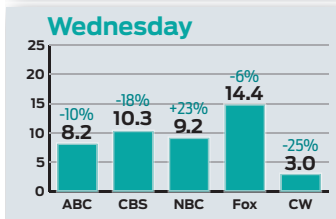
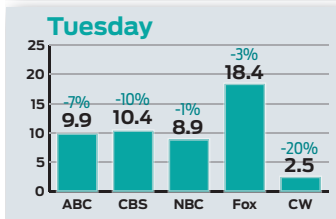
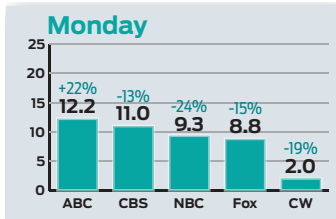
Network	Rating/share	% change from 2006-07	Network	Total viewers (in millions)	% change from 2006-07
<b>Adults 18-49</b>			Fox	11.2	+7
Fox	4.2/11	+2	CBS	10.5	-16
ABC	3.0/8	-14	ABC	9.2	-7
CBS	3.0/8	-19	NBC	8.1	-9
NBC	2.8/8	-10	CW	2.6	-19
<b>Adults 18-34</b>			All data reflects "most current" ratings — Live+7 through availability and Live+SD for the final week of the season		
CW	1.1/3	-27			

Source: Nielsen EDI, Sept. 24-May 21

# 2007-08 SEASON WRAP

## NIGHTLY BREAKDOWN

Viewers (in millions)



## An otherwise forgettable season

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television season ever," said John Rash, senior vp at Campbell Mithun. "Every network needs to work so that it doesn't get worse for next year. Almost all are betting the dizzying decline in ratings was the result of the writers strike and not a more fundamental shift away from broadcast."

Wrapping up the season, reality-fueled Fox won by a wide margin based on most current

*"The most difficult network television season ever."*

— John Rash, Campbell Mithun senior vp

returns (11 million average viewers, 4.2 adults 18-49 rating/11 share). Fox managed a 5% increase among adults 18-49 this season, partly thanks to airing the Super Bowl, and is expected to win among every major demographic.

Fox is followed by CBS (10.5 million, 3.0/8), down 19% in the demo; ABC (9.2 million, 3.0/8) is down 14%; NBC (8.1 million, 2.8/8) is down 10%; and the CW network (2.6 million, 1.1/3) is down 15%.

Part of the issue is that broadcast viewers are going to cable. Nielsen audience levels show there's just as many viewers watching television programming as last year, if not a little more, and that ad-supported cable is enjoying double-digit overall gains.

The odd, downbeat year made renewing shows especially difficult. A 2.0 rating was the new 3.0 this season; several shows are returning when in previous years that performance would have earned them the heave-ho. ABC's "Oprah's Big Give" (11.2 million, 3.9) was the highest-ranking show that doesn't have a return planned, though ABC has said that production company Harpo elected not to have a second run.

Of the outright canceled shows, NBC's "Bionic Woman" averaged the highest (9.8 million,

4.0). Network-swapping comedy "Scrubs" (6.3 million, 3.3) finished the season with a higher rating than fellow NBC comedy companions "30 Rock" (6.4 million, 3.1) and "My Name Is Earl" (7.3 million, 3.1).

Although "Idol" fell in the ratings this season (Tuesday: 28.8 million, 11.2), it still finished as the top show and managed a finale that matched last year's conclusion (31.7 million, 11.4).

Moreover, Fox put the "Idol" lead-in power to good use, driving two reality shows into the top 10 shows for the season — freshman series "The Moment of Truth" and the in-season run of "Hell's Kitchen" (11.9 million, 5.5).

Other shows were pushed back until next fall without a spring run — including such freshman series as NBC's "Chuck" (8.7 million, 3.5) and ABC's "Private Practice" (10.8 million, 4.0). NBC's "Heroes" (13.1 million, 6.2) was the highest-rated show in the demo that the strike pushed all the way until next season.

The push-backs are on the front line of questions about the lasting impact of the current season. With several second-chance shows populating the fall schedule rather than new offerings, TV historian Tim Brooks said the most significant impact of the current season may still be to come.

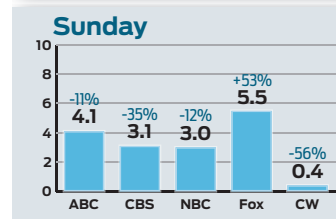
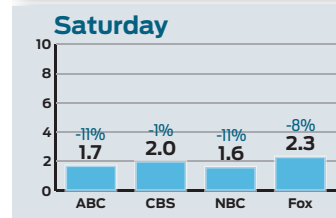
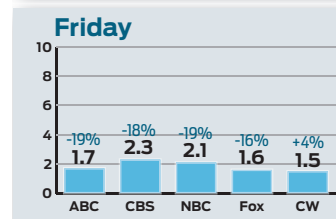
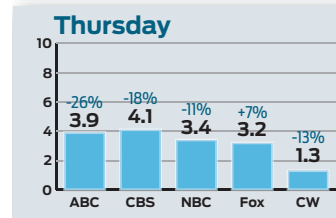
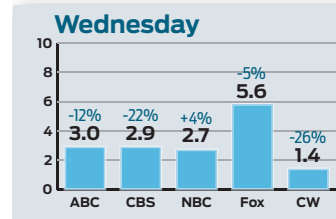
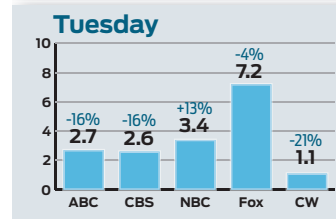
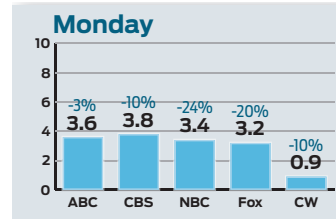
"This fall will be the leanest season of new programs, perhaps ever," Brooks said. "Networks are reducing their chances for a comeback or stabilization by not putting more on the shelf. What broadcast really needs is the next 'House,' the next 'Idol.'"

Another factor is whether viewers will return to last year's truncated freshman crop. Will audiences watch shows they barely remember?

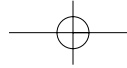
"The shows will create a challenge for networks to reintroduce them to the public without the abundant free media that usually accompanies new programs," Rash said. "This is uncharted territory." **THR**

## NIGHTLY BREAKDOWN

Adults 18-49

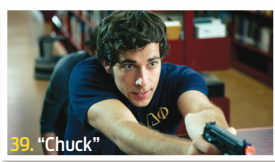
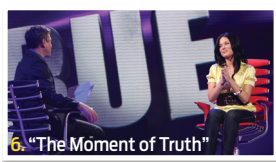






# 2007-08 SEASON WRAP

## SERIES



New series

Returning series

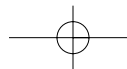
Unscripted series

Newsmagazine

Sports program

Rank	Series	Network	Adults 18-49 rating/share	Viewers (in millions)
1	American Idol (Tues.)	Fox	11.2/28	28.8
2	American Idol (Wed.)	Fox	10.7/26	27.8
3	Desperate Housewives	ABC	7.0/16	18.2
4	House	Fox	6.7/16	16.7
5	Grey's Anatomy	ABC	6.4/15	15.6
6	The Moment of Truth	Fox	6.2/14	14.7
6	Heroes	NBC	6.2/14	13.1
8	NBC Sunday Night Football	NBC	6.1/15	15.5
9	Lost	ABC	5.6/14	13.0
10	Hell's Kitchen	Fox	5.5/13	11.8
10	Dancing W/the Stars (fall/Mon.)	ABC	5.5/13	21.7
12	Survivor: China	CBS	5.1/14	15.2
13	CSI	CBS	4.9/12	16.9
13	Dancing W/the Stars (fall/Tues.)	ABC	4.9/11	19.6
15	Dancing W/the Stars (spring/Mon.)	ABC	4.8/13	19.6
15	Two and a Half Men	CBS	4.8/11	13.6
17	Survivor: Micronesia	CBS	4.6/13	13.6
17	Extreme Makeover: Home Ed.	ABC	4.6/11	13.1
19	Terminator: Sarah Connor	Fox	4.5/11	10.8
20	Dancing W/the Stars (spring/Tues.)	ABC	4.4/11	18.0
21	The Office	NBC	4.2/10	8.0
21	Brothers & Sisters	ABC	4.2/10	11.1
21	CSI: Miami	CBS	4.2/11	13.8
24	Law & Order: SVU	NBC	4.1/11	11.5
25	Bionic Woman	NBC	4.0/10	9.8
25	Rules of Engagement	CBS	4.0/9	10.9
25	Family Guy	Fox	4.0/9	7.9
25	Private Practice	ABC	4.0/10	10.8
25	The Apprentice 7	NBC	4.0/10	9.8
30	Samantha Who?	ABC	3.9/9	11.8
30	Oprah's Big Give	ABC	3.9/9	11.2
30	The Amazing Race	CBS	3.9/9	11.8
33	The Simpsons	Fox	3.8/10	7.9
33	Old Christine	CBS	3.8/9	10.4
35	American Gladiators	NBC	3.7/9	8.9
35	The Bachelor	ABC	3.7/9	9.7
35	ER	NBC	3.7/9	9.1
35	The Biggest Loser: Couples	NBC	3.7/9	9.0
39	Medium	NBC	3.5/9	10.4
39	Chuck	NBC	3.5/9	8.7
39	Prison Break	Fox	3.5/9	8.1

Rank	Series	Network	Adults 18-49 rating/share	Viewer (in millions)
39	Without a Trace	CBS	3.5/9	13.3
43	The Biggest Loser 4	NBC	3.4/9	8.2
43	Criminal Minds	CBS	3.4/8	12.7
43	Pushing Daisies	ABC	3.4/10	9.5
46	Here Come the Newlyweds	ABC	3.3/9	8.1
46	CSI: NY	CBS	3.3/9	11.7
46	Scrubs	NBC	3.3/8	6.3
46	How I Met Your Mother	CBS	3.3/9	8.2
46	The Big Bang Theory	CBS	3.3/8	8.3
46	King of the Hill	Fox	3.3/8	6.8
52	Law & Order	NBC	3.2/8	10.7
52	American Dad	Fox	3.2/7	6.6
52	Bones	Fox	3.2/9	9.2
52	Big Shots	ABC	3.2/8	7.7
56	My Name Is Earl	NBC	3.1/9	7.3
56	The Unit	CBS	3.1/7	11.2
56	30 Rock	NBC	3.1/8	6.4
56	Ugly Betty	ABC	3.1/8	9.3
60	Life	NBC	3.0/8	8.1
60	NCIS	CBS	3.0/8	14.4
60	Dirty Sexy Money	ABC	3.0/8	8.1
63	Lipstick Jungle	NBC	2.9/8	7.0
63	New Amsterdam	Fox	2.9/7	8.9
63	Don't Forget the Lyrics	Fox	2.9/7	8.3
63	Kitchen Nightmares	Fox	2.9/7	6.2
63	The Bachelor: London Calling	ABC	2.9/7	7.8
68	Deal or No Deal	NBC	2.8/8	10.6
68	Journeyman	NBC	2.8/7	7.1
68	Eli Stone	ABC	2.8/8	8.1
68	Supernanny	ABC	2.8/7	7.0
72	Cold Case	CBS	2.7/6	11.1
72	Dance War: Bruno vs. Carrie Ann	ABC	2.7/7	10.2
74	60 Minutes	CBS	2.6/7	12.9
74	Boston Legal	ABC	2.6/7	9.6
74	Smarter Than a 5th Grader?	Fox	2.6/7	9.1
74	Las Vegas	NBC	2.6/8	8.5
78	America's Next Top Model 3	CW	2.5/7	5.1
78	Cavemen	ABC	2.5/7	6.6
78	Kid Nation	CBS	2.5/7	7.8
81	Big Brother	CBS	2.4/6	6.6
81	Am. Funniest Home Videos	ABC	2.4/7	6.8



# 2007-08 SEASON WRAP

**New series**

**Returning series**

**Unscripted series**

**Newsmagazine**

**Sports program**

Rank	Series	Network	Adults 18-49 rating/share	Viewer (in millions)
81	Ghost Whisperer	CBS	2.4/8	8.7
81	Cashmere Mafia	ABC	2.4/6	6.1
81	Jericho	CBS	2.4/6	7.1
81	Numbers	CBS	2.4/7	9.2
81	Cane	CBS	2.4/6	8.9
81	Shark	CBS	2.4/6	10.3
81	Phenomenon	NBC	2.4/7	6.7
90	Wife Swap	ABC	2.3/6	6.2
90	Unhitched	Fox	2.3/5	4.7
90	Back to You	Fox	2.3/7	6.5

Rank	Series	Network	Adults 18-49 rating/share	Viewer (in millions)
90	'Til Death	Fox	2.3/6	6.1
94	Welcome to the Captain	CBS	2.2/6	6.4
94	Friday Night Lights	NBC	2.2/6	6.2
94	AMW: American Fights Back	Fox	2.2/6	6.2
94	October Road	ABC	2.2/5	5.3
98	Cops	Fox	2.1/7	6.1
98	Moonlight	CBS	2.1/6	7.5
98	The Singing Bee	NBC	2.1/6	6.5
98	Saturday Night Football	ABC	2.1/7	6.2
98	America's Next Top Model 4	CW	2.1/6	4.2
98	1 vs. 100	NBC	2.1/6	8.0
104	My Dad Is Better Than Your Dad	NBC	2.0/5	6.2
104	Notes From the Underbelly	ABC	2.0/5	5.1
104	Women's Murder Club	ABC	2.0/6	8.8
104	Carpoolers	ABC	2.0/5	5.3
108	20/20	ABC	1.9/6	6.5
108	K-ville	Fox	1.9/4	5.5
110	Dateline NBC	NBC	1.8/6	6.5
111	48 Hours Mystery	CBS	1.7/5	6.5
111	Men in Trees	ABC	1.7/5	6.2
113	According to Jim	ABC	1.6/4	4.7
113	Smallville	CW	1.6/4	3.8
115	Beauty and the Geek 2	CW	1.5/4	3.0
115	Secret Talents of Stars	CBS	1.5/4	4.7
115	Canterbury's Law	Fox	1.5/4	6.2
115	Amnesia	NBC	1.5/5	5.1
119	Friday Night SmackDown!	CW	1.4/5	4.6
119	Power of 10	CBS	1.4/4	5.3
119	Just for Laughs	ABC	1.4/4	4.9
122	One Tree Hill	CW	1.3/3	3.0
123	The Next Great American Band	Fox	1.2/4	2.9
123	The Return of Jezebel James	Fox	1.2/4	3.3
123	Viva Laughlin	CBS	1.2/3	6.5
126	Supernatural	CW	1.1/3	2.7
126	Reaper	CW	1.1/3	2.4
126	Duel	ABC	1.1/3	3.8
129	Gossip Girl	CW	1.0/2	2.1
130	Farmer Wants a Wife	CW	0.9/2	2.1
130	The Game	CW	0.9/2	1.9
130	Pussycat Dolls: Girlicious	CW	0.9/2	1.9
130	Beauty and the Geek 3	CW	0.9/2	1.9
134	Crowned	CW	0.8/2	1.9
135	Everybody Hates Chris	CW	0.7/2	1.7
135	Girlfriends	CW	0.7/2	1.6
137	Aliens in America	CW	0.5/1	1.2
138	Life Is Wild	CW	0.4/1	1.1
139	CW Now	CW	0.3/1	0.7
139	Online Nation	CW	0.3/1	0.7

## SEASON TOP 10

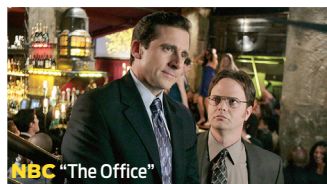
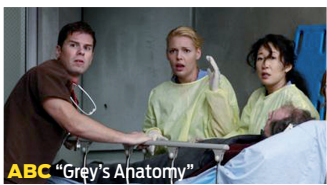


### Teens

Series	Net	Rating/ share
1 American Idol (Wed)	Fox	8.6/26
2 American Idol (Tues)	Fox	8.3/26
3 The Moment of Truth	Fox	4.8/16
4 House	Fox	4.3/14
5 Family Guy	Fox	4.1/12
6 Desperate Housewives	ABC	3.5/11
6 Heroes	NBC	3.5/11
8 American Dad	Fox	3.4/10
9 The Simpsons	Fox	3.3/11
10 Ext. Makeover: Home Ed.	ABC	2.9/9
10 Hell's Kitchen	Fox	2.9/10
10 King of the Hill	Fox	2.9/9

### 18-34

Series	Net	Rating/ share
1 American Idol (Tues)	Fox	9.4/26
2 American Idol (Wed)	Fox	8.9/24
3 House	Fox	6.7/17
3 Heroes	NBC	6.7/16
5 Grey's Anatomy	Fox	6.2/16
6 The Moment of Truth	Fox	6.0/17
7 NBC Sun. Night Football	CBS	5.4/15
7 Desperate Housewives	ABC	5.4/14
8 Family Guy	ABC	5.1/13
10 Lost	ABC	5.0/14



### 25-54

Series	Net	Rating /Share
1 American Idol (Tues)	Fox	12.4/28
2 American Idol (Wed)	Fox	12.0/27
3 Desperate Housewives	ABC	8.0/17
4 House	Fox	7.7/17
5 Grey's Anatomy	ABC	6.9/15
6 Dancing With the Stars	ABC	6.7/15
7 NBC Sun. Night Football	NBC	6.6/15
8 The Moment of Truth	Fox	6.4/15
8 Heroes	NBC	6.4/13
10 CSI	CBS	6.3/14

### 18-49 with \$100k+

Series	Net	Index*
1 The Office	NBC	150
2 Lost	ABC	143
3 Lipstick Jungle	NBC	141
4 30 Rock	NBC	140
5 Friday Night Lights	NBC	135
6 60 Minutes	CBS	134
7 Scrubs	NBC	132
8 The Apprentice	NBC	130
8 Grey's Anatomy	ABC	130
10 Old Christine	CBS	129
10 Dirty Sexy Money	ABC	129

\*100 is base for index of adults 18-49 with \$100k-plus incomes

## EVENTS

### TV Movies

Program	Net	Adults 18-49	Viewers (in millions)
"Knight Rider"	NBC	5.4/13	13.7
"A Raisin in the Sun"	ABC	3.7/10	13.1
"Comanche Moon Pt. 1"	CBS	3.5/8	16.5
"For One More Day"	ABC	3.3/8	12.9
"Comanche Moon Pt. 2"	CBS	2.6/6	13.2

### Major awards shows

Program	Net	Adults 18-49 (% change year-over-year)	Viewers (in millions) (% change year-over-year)
Academy Awards	ABC	10.7/26 (-25%)	32 (-21%)
Grammy Awards	CBS	6.5/16 (-23%)	17.1 (-16%)
Emmy Awards*	Fox	4.3/11 (-17%)	13 (-20%)
Golden Globes**	NBC	1.7/4 (-74%)	6 (-70%)

### Major sports broadcasts

Program	Net	Adults 18-49 (% change year-over-year)	Viewers (in millions) (% change year-over-year)
Super Bowl	Fox	37.5/77 (7%)	97.5 (5%)
NCAA Final	CBS	7.3/19 (1%)	2.0 (2%)
World Series	Fox	5.6/16 (14%)	17.1 (8%)

\* Aired Sept. 16, before the beginning of the season  
 \*\* Aired in a stripped-down format because of the WGA strike

## 2007-08 SEASON WRAP

# Smaller story to report, but battle rages on

ABC, NBC mirror losses as news race goes down to the wire; declines hit late-night, mornings

By Paul J. Gough

It so far has been a back-and-forth battle in the ratings between the top two evening newscasts, while CBS remains a distant third ... and dropping.

There has been no shortage of headlines about the "CBS Evening News" and Katie Couric. But the real battle is between ABC's "World News With Charles Gibson" and "NBC Nightly News With Brian

Williams" — and the near photo-finish the two have battled to all season.

As of this week, ABC and CBS are so close to each other that it's a virtual tie in viewership and the adults 25-54 demographic — the programs have even fallen by the same percentage points so far this year.

NBC seemed to turn the tide in November when Williams appeared as the guest host of the last "Saturday Night Live" before

the WGA strike. That gave Williams, a naturally funny guy, a chance to jump out of the strict anchor role at a time when he had been feeling the heat from Gibson in the ratings.

In a busy news season highlighted by the 2008 presidential campaign, NBC is poised to finish slightly ahead of ABC in total viewers, while ABC is up slightly against NBC in adults 25-54. Even with election-related news, both are down 4% compared with a year ago in the 25-54 demo.



Brian Williams gave NBC News a boost with his appearance on the network's "SNL."

### NEWSMAKERS

Program	Net	Viewers (in millions)	Adults 25-54	% change from '06-'07 viewers/18-49
<b>Morning shows</b>				
Today	NBC	5.7	2.2/15	n.c./n.c
Good Morning America	ABC	4.8	1.7/12	-3% / flat
The Early Show	CBS	2.9	1.1/7	+3% / +22%
<b>Evening news</b>				
NBC Nightly News	NBC	8.8	2.1/8	-1% / -9%
World News Tonight	ABC	8.6	2.2/8	-1% / -4%
CBS Evening News	CBS	6.4	1.6/6	-11% / -16%

### LATE-NIGHT

Program	Net	Viewers (in millions)	Adults 18-49	% change from '06-'07 viewers/18-49
<b>Late-night shows</b>				
Tonight Show W/Jay Leno	NBC	4.8	1.4/6	-17% / -26%
Late Show W/David Letterman	CBS	3.7	1.1/5	-11% / -21%
Nightline	ABC	3.4	1.0/4	-4% / -9%
Late Night W/Conan O'Brien	NBC	1.9	0.8/4	22% / -20%
Late Late Show W/Craig Ferguson	CBS	1.7	0.6/3	-12% / -14%
Jimmy Kimmel Live	ABC	1.7	0.6/3	-4% / -14%
Last Call W/Carson Daly	NBC	1.1	0.4/3	-26% / -33%

### MORNING NEWS

In the morning, though, there's no denying that NBC's "Today" is on top.

Like in the evening, CBS' "The Early Show" is far behind its NBC and ABC competitors, but it also is showing some gains year-over-year.

### LATE-NIGHT TV

The WGA strike has made for a tough year in late-night TV.

Even with the plaudits directed at "Saturday Night Live" thanks to its buzz-worthy political humor, the late-night shows are suffering from a post-strike hangover in the form of double-digit ratings declines.

Each program was out of originals for at least two months during the strike, with the CBS shows returning with their writers in early January but still being beaten by writerless NBC fare.

For the season, "The Tonight Show With Jay Leno" still is on top by a large margin.

Newsmagazine "Nightline,"

which was not affected by the strike, fared the best in rating retention, down only about 4% in viewers from last season.

But with NBC swapping Conan O'Brien for Leno next year, it's interesting to see what's happening at 12:30 a.m. "Late Night" remains on top with 2 million viewers vs. "The Late Late Show With Craig Ferguson's" 1.7 million. But NBC's margin of victory is 150,000 viewers compared with 490,000 last year. And Ferguson won a week this season, the first time that had ever happened.

On Saturday, "SNL" remains the unquestioned leader, whether it's primetime or late-night. "SNL" averaged 5.3 million viewers this year, down 17% compared with a year ago, and a 2.2 rating, down 21% from last year. **THR**