



## Two-Way Cable-TV Makes Debut, Introduced By Warner Division

Columbus, Ohio, became the first market in the world to participate in a totally new communications-marketing medium. This is a two-way medium which allows people at home to participate extensively with programming brought to them via Warner Cable-TV.

Interview with J. Ronald Castell, vice president  
Warner Cable's Qube

Warner Cable Corporation, a subsidiary of Warner Communications, Inc., has developed a major new cable television service involving innovative multi-channel programming and sophisticated two-way communications between subscriber homes and computer-equipped studio facilities. The 30-channel service made its official debut December 1, 1977 to approximately 100,000 homes served by Warner's existing cable television system in Columbus, Ohio.

This is John Hicks for Direct Marketing magazine speaking to J. Ronald

Castell, vice president of marketing for Warner Cable TV's new Qube division. Qube is the result of a three-year technical and programming development project designed to realize cable television's realistic potential and the closely related opportunity for rapid cable expansion in urban centers throughout the US. But let Ron Castell tell us about Qube, will you Ron?

A. Our concept with Qube John is based on offering a new form of service making it available to homes. This service will beneficially affect a

subscriber's lifestyle, his well-being, his entertainment habits, his tastes. We accomplish this by placing in the home a limited capability computer terminal that is two-way in nature. This offers the subscriber a wide menu of entertainment on 30 channels with a two-way response mechanism allowing the subscriber to respond to us and at the same time to program material which appears on these channels.

**Q. How many people do you hope to have linked to your system?**

A. Currently, there are approximately 27,000 subscribers on Warner's cable system. There is a potential of 100,000 in the Columbus area. Obviously we hope to increase our penetration, adding subscribers besides those converted from the previous cable system.

**Q. Before the advent of Qube the 27,000 subscribers received the normal commercial television channels, right?**

A. The basic cable package included the local member affiliates, an educational station, plus four imported from Cleveland, Cincinnati, Indianapolis and the University Educational Station from Athens, Ohio.

**Q. What other channels are available with the advent of the new system?**

A. We're adding 20 additional channels. There will be 10 channels of pay television. Usually, cable television stations offer a package in which the subscriber pays a certain amount per month and gets to see the entire card. With the Qube system, subscribers pay for each station viewed when selecting a pay television program.

There will be one channel devoted to first run movies. If the subscriber wants to watch that movie, he pays. If he does not want to watch it, he doesn't.

**Q. This sounds pretty technical and complicated, doesn't it?**

A. Well, Warner's technical equipment is a computerized, interactive cable communications system including a unique small home console (terminal device) which is connected to the subscriber's television set. This has been developed by Warner engineers in collaboration with Pioneer Electronic Corporation of Tokyo, Japan, a major manufacturer of high quality electronic products.

Warner's new service will offer a wide variety of programs and services, including special interest and local programming, utilizing the two-way communications capability. By pressing buttons on the console, subscribers

