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## News

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### Guest Commentary: Surveys Seek to Measure Industry's Diversity

By Benita Fitzgerald Mosley and Kathy Johnson

With the industry's paradigm shifting toward improved time management and efficiency, Women in Cable Telecommunications and the National Association for Multi-ethnicity in Communications have aligned to streamline our research survey process for WICT's PAR Initiative and NAMIC's Multi-ethnic Employment in Telecommunications surveys.

The comprehensive research conducted by our organizations has had an undeniable impact on the cable industry, helping companies attract and retain the best possible talent by highlighting progressive business practices. NAMIC and WICT will distribute separate surveys in 2008, but we have simplified the data-collection process for reporting basic employee demographic information common to both surveys by presenting the questions in a similar format.

We realize that extracting employee demographics is no small feat. However, with this new process you will have to do calculations only once, saving time and effort. Later this year, WICT and NAMIC will distribute the results of their individual surveys and create reports to further help you build upon proven diversity strategies.

Since 2003 WICT's annual PAR Initiative, in collaboration with Working Mother Media, has evolved into a comprehensive advocacy program that examines the status of women in cable based on three criteria critical to women's success: Pay equity, advancement opportunities and resources for work/life support.

After the rigorous process of collecting data through an annual survey, participating companies get their results, including a confidential scorecard that measures current performance against past performance and the industry overall. Companies are given the opportunity for a private assessment and consultation with Working Mother Media.

The WICT PAR Initiative has grown more valuable each year by helping companies set goals, measure progress and achieve results. It provides not only a report on the current landscape, but also a quantifiable history of the advances and declines in pay equity, advancement opportunities and resources for work/life support.

The PAR Initiative has showcased best practices regarding company policies and procedures that truly make a difference industrywide. While every corporate culture is different, PAR helps companies recognize and adopt effective initiatives, policies and programs culled from these best practices.

The cable industry is setting the standard for pay equity policies and other equality practices, and WICT's PAR Initiative has played a vital role in this effort.

The PAR Initiative has led to other valuable WICT programs including "Tech It Out," an advocacy effort aimed at increasing the number of women working in cable technologies; "PAR at Work," a quarterly newsletter that showcases the "Best Companies for Women in Cable" and the women working at them; and "The WICT Guide for an Equitable Workplace," aimed at corporate human resources departments looking for principles, strategies and tips to create fair and reasonable policies.

NAMIC's biennial survey, "A Look Toward Advancement: Multi-ethnic Employment in Telecommunications," provides a baseline of statistics about the state of multi-ethnic diversity in our industry. The initial study in 1999 by the Surveys Unlimited division of Horowitz Associates, updated in 2002, was the first comprehensive research study to take an in-depth look at multi-ethnic diversity in the communications industry. In 2004, NAMIC launched a partnership with DiversityInc, the premier diversity publication, to assess diverse practices in four key areas: human capital; CEO commitment; corporate communications; and supplier diversity.

These benchmarks have been used to assess existing and potential initiatives and support strategic diversity endeavors as demographics shift and our business becomes increasingly global. One key outgrowth of that seminal work was the successful launch in 2001 of the NAMIC Executive Leadership Development Program and the Leadership Seminar for managers and supervisors in partnership with UCLA's Anderson School of Management. NAMIC also has added corporate diversity and inclusion and professional development tracks to its annual NAMIC conference curriculum.

DiversityInc Benchmarking will independently administer the 2008 NAMIC survey, tabulate the results, analyze trends since the 2006 survey and enable companies to benchmark their diversity efforts against similar firms among the DiversityInc Top 50 Companies for Diversity as well as others in the cable industry. DiversityInc Benchmarking also will deploy a survey to NAMIC members to measure their attitudes and perceptions about diversity.

WICT and NAMIC research is vital to advancing awareness and understanding of the state of gender and ethnic diversity in the cable industry. By now, most of you should have received both of our surveys. We look forward to working with you in the weeks ahead. The survey data will be collected and tabulated independently by Working Mother Media and DiversityInc and, as always, all information submitted will be kept confidential.

Without your help, WICT and NAMIC couldn't provide this valuable research. We thank you for your participation in both surveys and assisting in our efforts to help the companies in our industry become employers of choice.

*Benita Fitzgerald Mosley is president-CEO of WICT; Kathy Johnson is president of NAMIC.*

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