

Shopping channels to offer sexy items

NEW ORLEANS (AP) — Looking for that perfect negligee for her? Satin underpants for him? Massage oil for both of you? Cable television's next generation of home shopping is looking for you.

The fledgling Adam & Eve Channel and Cupid Network Television are using cable's telemarketing style to sell sexy garments, books, videos, unguents, oils, games and toys. And very discreetly, of course.

"We are very much in the mainstream," said Offer Assis, president of the Cupid network, who was drumming up business at the 43rd annual National Cable Television Association in New Orleans.

Cupid's format is like any home shopping channel. At the left of the TV screen is the item's ordering number, description ("Teddette, lace with Venice edge and garters, Black, Red, White, S, M, L") and price. Underneath are the 800 telephone number and credit card options.

Of course, there's a live model or two, in the studio, demonstrating how the goods look in the flesh.

"It's aiming at the married couple, those people who after five, 10 years of marriage are losing the spark," Assis said. "We think sex is nice, and the

better you have sex at home, the more chance there is to keep your marriage alive."

Between 15-minute commercial blocks, Cupid has two-minute "erotic vignettes" of attractive people engaged in grown-up behavior, but nothing hard-core. Bare bosoms and bottoms are as explicit as Cupid gets.

Cupid is talking with five major cable systems and expects about 3 million subscribers to start.

Adam & Eve Channel, which began Feb. 1 and has 1.9 million cable subscribers, takes a different tack. It puts 15 minutes of sexy merchandising between 75-minute adult films with the hard-core elements edited out.

The advertising has high-gloss production values and looks more like music video than home shopping.

Adam & Eve uses adult film stars as its models and presenters, and plans live programming along the lines of its *Pajama Party Live* special, which featured a dozen starlets with telephones in varying states of undress.

"Guys would call in and talk to the girls on the air," Oakley said.

They'd suggest activities for the performers, who acted out the suggestions.

Candidates make media pact



NATIONAL

WASHINGTON (AP) — The two major party candidates for Oregon governor, trying to keep the mud out of the campaign, have agreed to give the news media the first look at their advertising.

Republican Denny Smith said Monday that he has accepted Democrat John Kitzhaber's proposal to give the news media copies of all print and broadcast advertising at least 24 hours before it is used.

Smith also said he would join Kitzhaber in agreeing to forgo attacks on each other's character and personality.

Lauren Moughon, Kitzhaber's spokeswoman, said Smith's response was a "positive sign" that the fall campaign wouldn't be marked by the same kind of attack ads that have dominated so many election seasons.

"There is certainly plenty in John's record that we'll be happy to stand by," Moughon said, "and plenty in Denny Smith's record that we'll hold him to that we won't have to resort to personal attacks."

In the hard-fought Republican primary race

between Smith and Craig Berkman, both campaigns gave the news media previews of their TV and radio advertising.

For example, Berkman gave reporters an early look at the ad in which he attacked Smith for printing a guide to topless bars, for his involvement with failed savings and loans and for suggesting that Columbia River water be diverted to California.

Smith spokesman Chuck Deister said the early-look agreement between Smith and Kitzhaber formalizes Smith's earlier policy of showing ads to the news media.

Moughon said that by releasing their advertising in advance, the candidates would be forced to defend the fairness of an ad before it starts influencing voters.

James Lemert, a journalism professor at the University who studies political advertising, said the agreement could produce a cleaner campaign.

"The last thing that a political campaign wants to do is have the tactics of their ads called into question" before they even have a chance to air, Lemert said. He added that he had never heard of any candidates reaching such a pact.

Mission to assess health problems in Africa

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Clinton is sending a high-level mission to East Africa for an assessment of the humanitarian disaster in that region, where drought and other factors threaten the lives of about 20 million people, officials said Tuesday.

The heads of several private voluntary organizations will accompany J. Brian Atwood, administrator of the Agency for International Development, on visits to Eritrea, Ethiopia and Kenya, beginning Thursday.

Afterward, the mission will

travel to Rome, Geneva and Brussels to coordinate strategy with international relief officials and the European Union.

According to AID, more than 19.4 million people are threatened with starvation or starvation-related diseases and health problems in a 10-country area in the greater Horn of Africa. The drought conditions are being aggravated by wars and ethnic strife.

AID figures show that of the 19.4 million, 11.4 are affected by drought. About 60 percent of the

drought victims are Ethiopians.

Besides Eritrea, Ethiopia and Kenya, the affected area also encompasses Sudan, Somalia, Djibouti, Uganda, Tanzania, Rwanda and Burundi. The delegation's first stop will be Eritrea.

It is not clear whether the administration plans to seek new money from Congress to help ease the crisis.

"There has to be new money because there's not enough to go around," said Ken Hackett, executive director of Catholic Relief Service, who is part of the delegation.

I.S.A. ELECTIONS

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