
NETWORK BY NETWORK: WHO NEEDS WHAT?

Each broadcast network has different strengths and weaknesses, as well as overall programming strategies.

At the start of every season, most talk revolves around the success potential of new series. Even during the season, unless there is some major news (new judges on **American Idol**, Charlie Sheen issues with **Two and a Half Men**), most of the talk is still about new series performance or what's in development for next season.

Network standings, however, seldom hinge on new series performance. It's the returning shows that count most. This certainly makes sense, since there are many more returning than new shows. When a new show flops it's usually replaced by something that does better. When a returning show declines, it typically continues slipping until it's canceled – and then it's often replaced by something that does worse. The following section will include a look at the performance of both new and returning series on each network.



For several years, ABC has been successful going after women of all ages. Six of the top 10 broadcast network series among women 18-49 are on ABC – **Dancing With the Stars** (both nights), **Grey's Anatomy**, **Modern Family**, **Desperate Housewives**, and **The Bachelor**.

Many of the network's other reasonably successful series, including **Private Practice**, **Brothers & Sisters**, **Cougar Town**, and even **Castle**, also have decidedly female audience skews.

As some of ABC's strongest female shows started to decline, however, the network has struggled in its attempts to broaden its dramas to more of a dual audience. Last season's highly touted **Flash Forward** was canceled,