

## 'Chi's Very Own' promo line sums up image

**F**or the past six years or so, WGN-TV has been promoting itself as "Chicago's Very Own" and, having found a tagline that perfectly sums up its image and its goals, the station's execs have no plans to change it.

The independent seized upon that promotional identity in 1983, recalls James Ellis, vice president for creative services at Tribune Broadcasting Co.

The theme was developed by WGN and its ad agency, Eisaman, Johns & Laws, Chicago. Until that point, the agency had not worked with a "positioning" theme, only with passing lines for the fall season and so on, sources at the agency recall.

Other veterans remember that the only other truly major promo theme line used by WGN-TV was "WGN is Chicago," which for a time was used by both the TV and radio stations—and is still being utilized by the radio station.

During its four decades, WGN-TV seemed to like emphasizing variations on two themes, the numeral 9 as in Channel 9 and the globe, due to WGN's call letters having their origin in "World's Greatest Newspaper." The number 9 still figures in WGN's graphics

but not the globe symbol.

In the late '50s, as color TV began to bloom, WGN used the line "TV's most colorful station."

Today, Pam Pearson, Channel 9's director of creative services, uses the "Chicago's Very Own" theme in on-air promos, station IDs and radio spots. Graphics during the past year have included the station's anniversary, for instance in the ID showing the numeral 9 and the copy, "Forty years WGN-TV & Chicago."

"Chicago's Very Own" also has been adopted by WGN's news department as the title of a locally oriented profile series. That Sunday morning program, says news director Paul Davis, focuses on fascinating people and places in the city.

There are no plans to change the theme away from "Chicago's Very Own" for the foreseeable future, with various station people citing the old cliché, "If it ain't broke, don't fix it."

EJ&L's research "has shown the public has embraced it," says Pearson.

*Chicago's Very Own*

As Dennis FitzSimons, WGN-TV's vice president and general manager, phrases it, "I don't see that changing. There's such confusion registered [among viewers] whenever stations change slogans. If there's any rule, it's, 'If you've got a good one, ride it.'" □



**James Ellis**, as vice president for creative services at Tribune Broadcasting Co., Chicago, oversees and coordinates group activity for the owned stations. Ellis, who joined the company in August 1982, also heads Tribune Creative Services Group, based in Atlanta. This unit supplies nationally syndicated on-air, graphic and radio promotional materials in cooperation with various distribution partners. Prior to Tribune, he was vice president for promotion and advertising at Frank N. Magid Associates, among the nation's larger media research and consultation firms. Earlier in his career he was promotion manager with Taft Broadcasting Co.'s WKRC-TV and creative director at James A. Jacobs Advertising, both in Cincinnati. Since 1985, Ellis has been on the Broadcast Promotion and Marketing Executives' board of directors.

**"I'm just wild about Harry" was the lively theme of a WGN-TV promotional campaign for the Cubs' 1988 season, starring veteran sportscaster Harry Caray, c.**

