



C-SPAN Launches New C-SPAN Digital Bus and C-SPAN Local Content Vehicle

Localizing C-SPAN's "Washington Your Way" Experience

(June 8, 2010) – C-SPAN today inaugurates two new vehicles: “The C-SPAN Digital Bus” and the C-SPAN LCV (Local Content Vehicle).

Digital Bus:

Partnering with cable affiliates in communities across America, C-SPAN’s new 45’ customized Prevost coach will engage visitors of all ages through interactive multimedia. Digital Bus visitors will experience C-SPAN’s unique public affairs content across high-tech platforms such as HD-TV, the Internet, and radio, encouraging customers to follow “Washington, your way.” Hands-on demonstrations will feature the C-SPAN Video Library and the network’s social media offerings and there are special resources for civics teachers and their students.

The C-SPAN Bus program originated in 1993 as a novel affiliate marketing concept which brought C-SPAN into schools and communities nationwide. Within two years, the Bus’s popularity caused C-SPAN’s Board to approve a second travelling C-SPAN Bus. The big yellow C-SPAN Buses soon became iconic representatives of C-SPAN and the cable industry as the public affairs network partnered with local systems to welcome tens of thousands of students, teachers, and citizens in all 50 states to discuss C-SPAN's programming and free teaching resources.

After launching in Washington, DC this week, the new Digital Bus heads to Chicago for its first official tour, partnering with Comcast for the annual *Chicago Tribune* Printers Row book festival. The two original C-SPAN Buses will retire from service this month, after travelling more than a million miles, including an overseas trip to Hawaii and an overland trip to Alaska.

Why a new bus for C-SPAN? “The C-SPAN Digital Bus opens an exciting new chapter in our network’s community-based cable partnerships,” said C-SPAN co-president Susan Swain. “We knew it was time for more than an oil change and our Board agreed that C-SPAN needed a new vehicle showcasing cutting edge technologies to update our community outreach. The new C-SPAN Digital Bus reflects the latest in media and educational technologies.” Swain added, “We promise that when this Bus comes to town, it will be noticed. It’s got a ‘wow’ factor, inside and out.”

Local Content Vehicle:

Joining the Digital Bus is another new C-SPAN vehicle, the local content vehicle (LCV), a mobile production platform. The LCV will be staffed by videojournalists who will identify and produce programming from local communities around the country for the C-SPAN Networks - television,

radio, and online. The LCV videojournalists will use state-of-the-art and emerging technologies to produce streamlined content that brings perspectives on public policy beyond those offered solely in the nation's capital.

The LCV, a Ford Transit Connect, will initially be involved in C-SPAN's coverage of the 2010 elections. It will also travel to historical sites, non-fiction book events for BookTV, and locations where breaking news is occurring. Meantime, the videojournalist at the wheel will engage local communities by speaking at civic clubs and events, discussing with the local media why the LCV is visiting, and recording interviews with citizens as C-SPAN hears from people outside the Beltway about those public affairs issues most important to them.

"The experimental local content vehicle is C-SPAN's first off-site entry into the fast-changing environment of media technologies," Swain said. "In many ways, this is a pilot vehicle for C-SPAN, combining cutting-edge media techniques, editorial programming, and connecting the American people one-on-one with C-SPAN. Hopefully, if successful, it will be the first of many C-SPAN multi-tasking local content vehicles traveling around the country reporting from and engaging with local communities."

The LCV initiative is being directed by C-SPAN journalist Mark Farkas, a veteran features producer with the cable public affairs network. Last year Farkas produced C-SPAN's original feature documentary on the Supreme Court and was an editor for this year's companion book. In addition to similar projects on the U.S. Capitol and the White House, Farkas was executive producer for C-SPAN's 1999-2000 Peabody Award winning series "American Presidents: Life Portraits" and 1994's "Lincoln-Douglas Debates." He has also shot and produced video journalist programs from places as varied as the campaign trails of the United States to the war zones in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Fact about the new C-SPAN Digital Bus

- A new 45-foot Prevost coach.
- Custom built by Creative Mobile Interiors (CMI) of Grove City, Ohio.
- Environmentally-friendly features: renewable and reusable materials used whenever and wherever possible including LED lighting, and sustainable design materials, such as bamboo. The Prevost coach's engine technology also meets strict EPA environmental standards.

What's onboard

The C-SPAN Digital Bus is designed to provide interactive, self-guided multimedia tours demonstrating C-SPAN's programming via varied distribution platforms:

- TV monitors demonstrate our main product – the C-SPAN Cable TV networks in both SD and HD.
- Computer kiosks demonstrate C-SPAN many web offerings, video library resources.
- Laptops and mobile apps demonstrate C-SPAN's social media presence and radio offerings.
- SMARTBoard technology for small-group presentations and workshops.

- Webcams and other TV production capabilities.

Bus history

- C-SPAN began the Bus program in 1993 as an affiliate and education relations tool and to gather public affairs programming from across the country. The first bus launched in November 1993, the second in 1996.
- C-SPAN is retiring the original two buses, now 15 and 16 years old, respectively. Over those years, together they have been driven over a million miles.
- The two buses traveled to all 50 states and visited thousands of venues over the program's 16-plus year history – talking with students, teachers, and the general public about our resources and coverage of public affairs.
- The two original buses have been called by various names/tours: C-SPAN School Bus (the longest incarnation – lasting from 1993 to 2007), Book TV Bus (2005-2007), Campaign 2008 Bus (2007-2008), C-SPAN Civics Bus (2009-2010).

About C-SPAN: C-SPAN was created by America's cable companies in 1979 as a public service and programs three public affairs television networks (C-SPAN, C-SPAN2 and C-SPAN3); C-SPAN Radio, a Washington, D.C. public affairs FM radio station also distributed by XM Satellite Radio; and a video-rich website which hosts the C-SPAN Video Library. Visit www.c-span.org.