

[Sign In / Register](#)

Orlando Business Journal - August 30, 2010
[/orlando/stories/2010/08/30/story5.html?b=1283140800%5E3853151](http://orlando/stories/2010/08/30/story5.html?b=1283140800%5E3853151)

ORLANDO BUSINESS JOURNAL

Friday, August 27, 2010

Orlando media group's TV show going national with PBS deal

Orlando Business Journal - by [Melanie Stawicki Azam](#) Staff Writer

Editor's note: This monthly feature tracks former newsmakers to see what they're up to now. Suggestions for this feature can be sent to Editor Cindy Barth at cbarth@bizjournals.com. Marc Middleton made a bold move in late 2005 when he quit his anchor job at WESH News Channel 2 after working there more than 15 years.

The 58-year-old Altamonte Springs resident said he realized broadcast journalism was becoming less about storytelling and more about short, event-driven sound bites.

And that drove him to create The **Bolder Media Group** that year, focusing on a market mostly ignored by media: people age 50 and older.

That decision now is paying off for The Bolder Media Group, whose *The Growing Bolder TV Show*, which has aired in Orlando for the past two years, is going national this fall. That's thanks to a new deal inked with American Public Television, the major distributor of content for PBS affiliates nationwide.

It took about a year to finalize the deal, which involved 150 out of 225 affiliates affirming they wanted the new show. "It's a huge piece for us — it's pivotal," said Middleton, Bolder Media Group's CEO.

His firm now can seek national sponsors for the show, which will have a vastly larger viewer base. That, in turn, could mean more money coming in for more productions. Plans also include hiring freelance production teams in the new national markets to produce stories or shoot video for stories.

The 30-minute weekly TV show will begin its first national feed Sept. 3. So far, 137 stations plan to air the show in markets that include Los Angeles, San Francisco, Denver, Indianapolis, San Antonio, Phoenix, Cincinnati and Las Vegas.

Jose Fajardo, CEO of WMFE-TV/FM Orlando said being picked up by American Public Television is "a big deal, because it gives national exposure."

Today, The Bolder Media Group includes a website — GrowingBolder.com — *The Growing Bolder Radio Show*, which can be heard on 90.7 FM (NPR) in Orlando, as well as *The Growing Bolder TV Show*, which airs weekly on WMFE-TV (PBS) in Central Florida and WEDU-TV (PBS) in Tampa. With a motto of "It's not about age, it's about attitude," Growing Bolder focuses on telling stories about ordinary people, most age 50 or older, doing extraordinary things.

WMFE-TV airs the show locally on Channel 24 on Sundays at 11:30 a.m. and on Encore, one of its digital channels. The station doesn't have audience numbers, because it doesn't subscribe to the Nielsen Co.'s TV ratings, but Fajardo said it has gotten good feedback. "It's a unique show, very well done."

The Growing Bolder Radio Show, which WMFE has been broadcasting since mid-2009, airs at 3 p.m. Saturday and 7 a.m. Sunday.

Since Middleton founded Bolder Media Group, a number of former WESH staff members have joined it. For example, Bill Shafer, 52, who spent 26 years at WESH in news and sports, left in 2006 to join the firm as executive vice president.

The Bolder Media Group has six full-time and three part-time employees working out of a Maitland office.

The Bolder Media Group also does production and media work, including custom video content and turnkey social networking platforms, for health care and fitness clients such as Jewett Orthopaedic Clinic and Gold's Gym.

For Middleton and Shafer, the career change was an opportunity to do what they got into television to do: tell meaningful stories.

Sometimes, the most popular stories are the simplest, such as one they did about Rachel Veitch, a 91-year-old Orlando resident still driving a 1964 Mercury Comet with more than 570,000 miles on it. The story got 6.5 million views on the GrowingBolder.com website and led to Veitch being interviewed on the Today Show and the Tonight Show with Jay Leno.

Meanwhile, Middleton said his group is developing ideas for other shows. His ultimate goal: a global media network with TV, Internet, radio and publishing arms. "Have we made it? We're moving in the right direction."

Whatever happened to ... Marc Middleton

Age: 58



Marc Middleton, left, and Bill Shafer

[View Larger](#)