THE RIVAL NETWORKS

A STANDALONE 2-PLAYER VERSION
OF THE NETWORKS BY GIL HOVA

Welcome to the TV business!

You are the owner of a new television network. All you have are three awful public access shows, a small amount of cash, and endless ambition. Plus, it looks like there is another new TV network in town, and boy, do they look like competition...

Whose network will get the most Viewers and win the game?

Rulebook

COMPONENTS

27 SHOW CARDS

- 6 Pilot Season Show cards
- 6 Season 1 cards
- 6 Season 2 cards
- 6 Season 3 cards
- 3 Season Finale cards

The Show cards for the different Seasons can be told apart by their backs.

27 AD CARDS

42 STAR CARDS

5 TIME SLOT BOARDS

- 8PM, 9PM and 10PM Time Slots
- Green Room and Reruns

2 VIEWER HOUSES

Carefully assemble before the first game.

A FEW CARDBOARD TOKENS

- 70 Viewer chips (50 white 1-Viewer, 20 red 3-Viewer chips)
- 10 Ratings chips (5 white 1-Ratings, 5 black 3-Ratings points chips)

6 WOODEN RATINGS POINTS DISCS

16 NETWORK CARDS

18 AWARDS CARDS

- 6 Season 1 cards
- 6 Season 2 cards
- 6 Season 3 cards

9 EXECUTIVES CARDS

only used for the Executives variant.

OVERVIEW

You are a fledgling TV network trying to win the most Viewers over an evening of television. Unfortunately, your opponent is one as well! Which of you will become the most popular network?

In this game, you'll take turns improving your Network's most important prime Time Slots. On your turn, you'll develop a Show, and sign a Star and an Ad. Shows and Stars will give you Ratings Points, which turn into Viewers. Ads will allow you to buy Network cards that grant useful special powers.

One Viewer. Have the most of these and win.

Which Network will get the most Viewers and win the game?

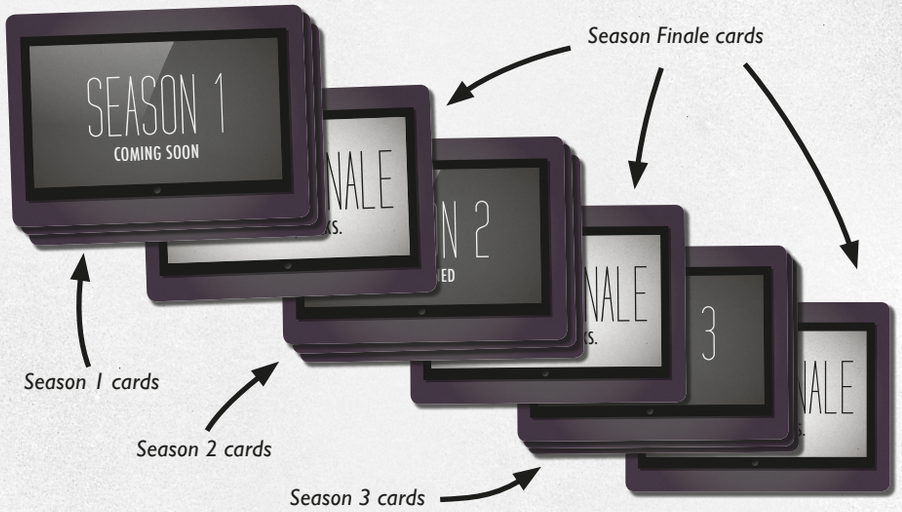
The Rival Networks is a standalone 2-player version of *The Networks*. You do not need to have played *The Networks* to play this game.

SETUP

1 Each player chooses a color and takes the **Viewer House** of that color.

2 Place the five **Time Slot boards** in a row between the two players. Rotate them so that the yellow edges face the yellow player, and the blue edges face the blue player. Place the Green Room on one end of this row, the three Time Slots in the middle, and the Reruns on the other end. Place a blue and a yellow **Ratings Points disc** on the zero space of each of the three Time Slots. Make sure the Ratings Points discs have their +20 sides face-down.

3 Shuffle the six **Pilot Season Show cards** and deal one face-up to either side of each Time Slot, so that each player has a random Show at 8PM, 9PM, and 10PM. Any Show cards in this position are considered to be in your Lineup.



4 Create the Show Deck: Separate the **Show cards** by their backsides into Season 1, 2, and 3 decks, and the **Season Finale cards**. Shuffle each of the Season decks separately. Add a Season Finale card to the bottom of each of these decks and stack them on top of each other, with Season 3 at the bottom, Season 2 in the middle, and Season 1 on top.

5 Place the Show Deck within reach of both players and draw the top three cards face-up into an area that we'll call the Show Display. Leave room for a Show discard pile.

6 Shuffle the two **Starter Star cards** and deal one face-up to either side of the Green Room. The player with the #1 Star will go first.

7 Place the four **Mega-Star cards** in a face-down pile off to the side.

8 Shuffle the **remaining Star cards** into a face-down Star deck. Shuffle the **Ad cards** into a face-down Ad deck. Reveal the top three cards from each deck into two side-by-side columns in an area that we'll call the Star/Ad Display. Each Star should be directly next to an Ad. Leave room for discard piles, one each for Stars and Ads.

9 Shuffle the **Network cards** and place them within reach of both players. Draw the top three Network cards and place them in a row next to the deck that we'll call the Network card Display.

10 Separate the **Awards cards** by Season, shuffle them separately and draw one for Season 1, one for Season 2, and one for Season 3. Place them in a row within view of both players, with the Season 1 and 2 Awards cards face-up and the Season 3 Awards card face-down. Return the remaining Awards cards to the box; you will not use them this game.

11 Place all the **Viewer and Ratings Points chips** in a pile within reach of both players.

BAM! You are ready to start.

Setup changes for the **Intern Variant**, see page 21: Leave all Ad (step 8) and Network (step 9) cards in the box.

Setup changes for the **Executives Variant**, see page 21: As the last step of setup, shuffle the nine **Executives cards** and deal two to each player. Both players choose one of them face-down and discard the other. Both players reveal their chosen Executive simultaneously. Return all remaining Executives to the game box; you will not use them this game. When not using this variant, simply leave the Executive cards in the box.

GAMEPLAY

The player with the #1 Starter Star goes first. Players alternate turns from there. At some point, a player will take a Season Finale card, ending the current Season. After Season Finale Scoring and Cleanup, the other player will start the next Season. At the end of the third Season, the player with the most Viewer chips wins.

RATINGS POINTS AND VIEWER CHIPS

Shows in your Lineup will give you Ratings Points (▮▮▮) which in turn will gain you Viewers (👁). Viewers are represented by Viewer chips. Keep Viewer chips in front of your bank as you gain them, and only insert them at the end of your turn, or at the end of a Season, in the case of Season Finale scoring, to better keep track.

During the game, you may never count the number of Viewer chips in your or your opponent's bank.

TURN

On your turn, perform the following three actions in this order:

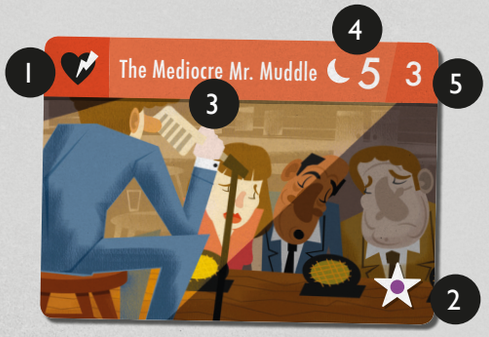
Develop a Show

Sign a Star and an Ad

Optional: **attach Stars to a Show**

In addition, at any point on your turn, and as many times as you want and are able to, you may **buy or play** **Network cards**.

At the end of your turn, you refill the open displays and insert your Viewer chips into your bank.



A SHOW CARD

1 *Genre (here: Drama)*
2 *Genre Bonus*
3 *Name and Artwork*
4 *Ratings Points in correct Time Slot (here: 5 Viewers if at 10PM)*
5 *Ratings points in wrong Time Slot. (here: 3 Viewers if at 8PM or 9PM)*

DEVELOP A SHOW

First, you **must** develop a Show. Take one of the three Show cards from the Show Display and place it in your Lineup (one of your three Time Slots) or your Rerun Area.

You may not draw a Show from the top of the Show deck; you must take one of the three Show cards from the Show Display.

If you develop the third Show of the same Genre, you get a Genre Bonus, explained further below. If the Season Finale card is in the Show Display, you may take it instead of a regular Show, and will trigger the Season Finale, also explained further below.

PLACING THE NEW SHOW IN YOUR LINEUP

Freely choose which Time Slot you want to place your new Show in. It will replace the previous Show in that Time Slot.

First, **cancel the previous Show** in that Time Slot: move it into your Reruns, on your side of the Rerun board. Make sure to keep the Genres of your other Reruns visible, if you have any. Discard any Stars that were on the canceled Show, return Mega-Stars to the Mega-Star deck, and place your Starter Star face-down in your Reruns (it may act as a tie breaker on the final score of the game). If there were Ratings Points chips on the canceled Show, return them to supply.

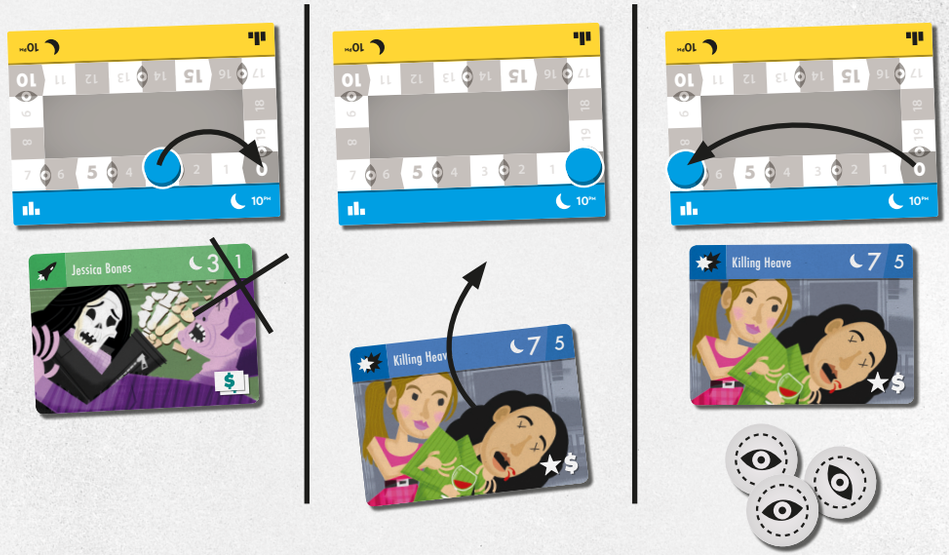
Reset your Rating Points disc for that Time Slot to zero and, if necessary, flip it so the +20 side is face-down.

Then, **place your new Show** in the now vacant Time Slot and immediately **score Ratings Points** (▟) for it: If the Show is in its correct Time Slot, score the larger Ratings Points number on its card. Otherwise, score the smaller number. For each Ratings Point you score, move your Ratings Points disc one space along the Ratings Points track on that Time Slot.

For every Viewer icon (👁) you pass on the Ratings Points track, take a Viewer chip and place it by your bank.

Example: You develop the Show "Jessica Bones." First, you cancel "What's In My Pockets?", and place that Show to your Reruns, then you place "The Good Mace" into the now vacant 9PM Time Slot. Since it is in its correct Time Slot, you get three Ratings Points, which gives you one Viewer. You take a Viewer chip and put it in front of your bank.

Note that if you replace a Show that had already given you Viewer chips in the past, you'll reset your Ratings Points for that Time Slot to zero, and will re-score any Viewer icons you pass again.



Example: You replace "Jessica Bones" with "Killing Heave." You move "Jessica Bones" to your Reruns, and your 9PM Time Slot drops to zero Ratings Points. Then, as "Killing Heave" is placed in the correct Time Slot, it scores you seven Ratings Points, which gives you three Viewers. You take three Viewer chips and put them in front of your bank.

PLACING THE NEW SHOW IN YOUR RERUNS

You may place your new Show directly into your Reruns **instead** of your Lineup. However, as you will not get to score any Viewer Icons on any Time Slot track, this Show will not score you any Viewers.

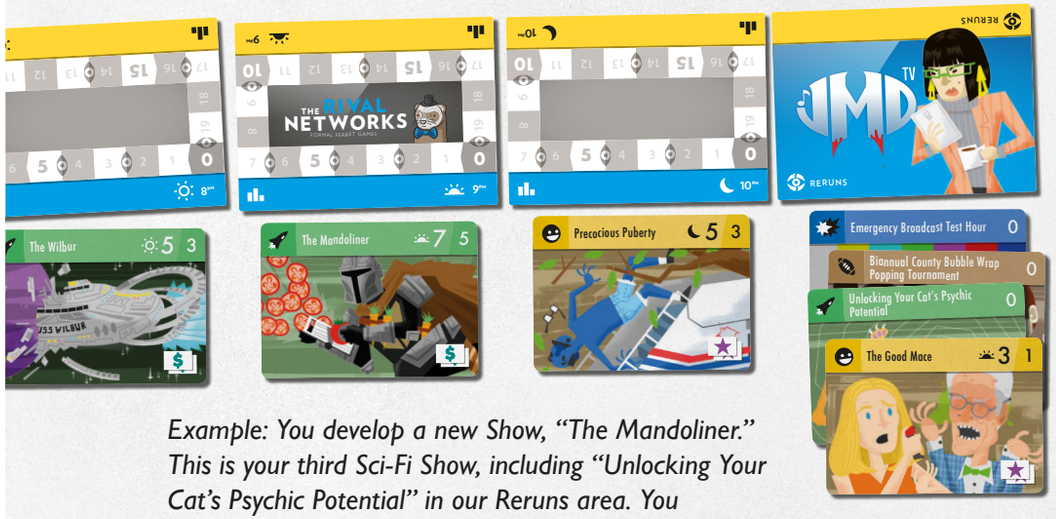
Placing the new Show in your Rerun Area is rarely a good play, especially early in the game. But hey, you are old enough to run a TV station, so we are not gonna tell you where to put your Shows...

If you ever reach or exceed 20 Ratings Points in a given Time Slot, keep track of the fact by flipping the Ratings Points disc for that Time Slot to its side that reads "+20."

GENRE BONUSES

If the Show you developed this turn is **at least** your third Show of its Genre, **including all Shows in your Lineup and Reruns**, you immediately get the Genre Bonus for that Genre. All Genre Bonuses are explained on the opposite page. Note that Documentaries and Game Shows are not included in the base game.

That means that if you develop the fourth Show of a Genre, you'll score its Genre Bonus a second time.



Example: You develop a new Show, "The Mandoliner." This is your third Sci-Fi Show, including "Unlocking Your Cat's Psychic Potential" in our Reruns area. You immediately get the Sci-Fi Genre Bonus and place two Ad cards from the Ads deck into your Green Room. You could earn your next Genre Bonus by getting another Sci-Fi Show, another Sitcom Show, or two more Action or Sports Shows.

When you add Ratings Points to a Show through a Genre Bonus, take the corresponding Ratings Points chips and place them on your Show. The Ratings Points chips are only used to keep track of Genre Bonuses in case a Ratings Points disc gets bumped.

Action
Draw the top Star and top Ad from their respective decks. Place them face-up in your Green Room.

Drama
Add a Mega-Star to your Green Room. There are 4 Mega-Stars, but they are functionally identical.

Reality
Add 1 Ratings Point to all your current Shows. Score any Viewer icons you pass.

Sci-Fi
Draw the top 2 Ads from the Ad deck. Place them face-up in your Green Room.

Sitcom
Draw the top 2 Stars from the Star deck. Place them face-up in your Green Room.

Sports
Add 3 Ratings Points to any one of your Shows. You may choose this Sports Show. Score any Viewer icons you pass.

Documentaries
Draw a card from the Network cards deck. Place it face-up in front of you.

Game Shows
Gain 2 Viewers.

SIGN A STAR AND AN AD

After developing a Show, you must sign one Star and one Ad. Take a **pair of one Star and one Ad card** from the Star/Ad Display and place both into your Green Room, on your side of the Green Room board.

You must take the Star and Ad cards from the same row.

If you don't want any of the face-up pairs, you may instead draw from the top card from both the Star and Ad decks.

For example, if this was the current Star/Ad Display, you may take the Star/Ad pair from the bottom row (1), the middle row (2), the top row (3), or you may draw the top card from the face-down Star and Ad decks (4).

STAR OR AD DECK EMPTY?

If at any point of time the **Ad deck** runs out, reshuffle all discarded Ad cards into a new face-down Ad deck.

If at any point of time the **Star deck** runs out, first count the number of discarded Star cards. If there are fewer than 10, both players must simultaneously discard one Star card currently on a Show. This will not affect either players' Rating Points, but it may affect the Awards they may qualify for at the end of the Season.

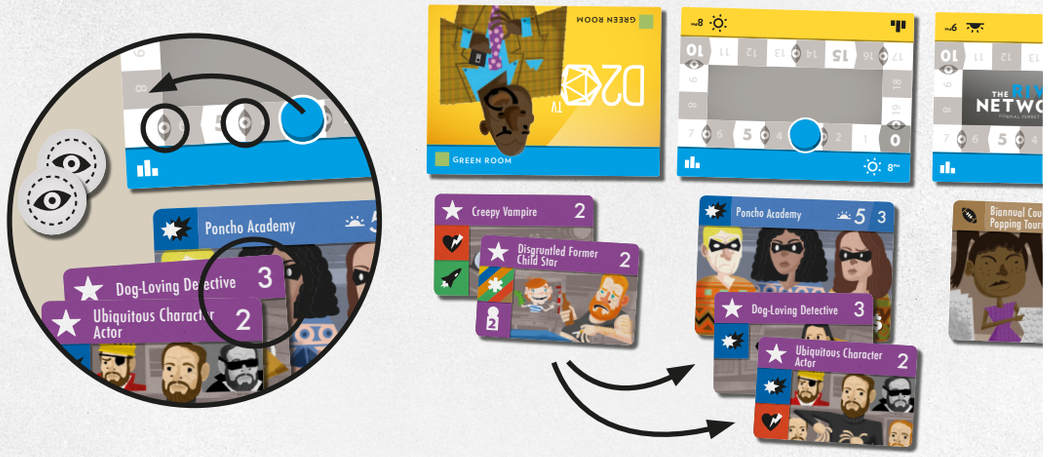
Repeat the discard process until there are at least 10 discarded Stars, then reshuffle all discarded Stars into a new face-down Star deck.

ATTACH STARS TO ONE SHOW

After signing a Star and an Ad, you **may** attach as many Stars from your Green Room as you want to a **single one** of your Shows.

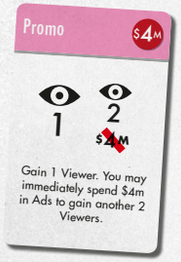
You may only attach Stars if at least one of their Genre icons matches the Show's Genre icon. Note that the Starter and Mega Stars always match any Genre.

After attaching Stars, score their total Ratings Points. For each Ratings Point you score, move your Ratings Points disc one space along the Ratings Points track on that Time Slot. For every Viewer icon (👁) you pass, take a Viewer chip and place it by your bank.



Example: From the four Stars in your Green Room, you attach "Dog Loving Detective" and "Ubiquitous Character Actor" to your Action Show "Poncho Academy". Both Stars have Action icons, so they can work on this Show. "Poncho Academy" was at three Ratings Points before, and the two Stars add a total of five Ratings Points. You move your Ratings Points disk to eight, passing two Viewer icons, so you gain two Viewer chips. You could have also attached "Disgruntled Former Child Star", who may be on any Show, but you decided to keep him in your Green Room. "Creepy Vampire" does not have an Action icon, so you could not attach him to that Show.

BUY A NETWORK CARD



At any point on your turn, you may buy a Network card from the Network card Display. The cost of each Network card is shown in its top right corner. Discard Ads of the corresponding value from your Green Room and place the Network card you bought face-up in front of you.

The value of each Ad card is shown in its top right corner. There are two basic types of Ads:

An Ad with a Time Slot symbol (, , or) is worth its higher value, $3*M* or $4*M*, if you have the most **Ratings Points** in the Time Slot depicted. If you are tied or are trailing in that Time Slot, you only get the lower value, $2*M* or $1*M*.

An Ad with a symbol is worth $2*M* on its own. If you discard a pair of Ads with this symbol, the two Ads combined are worth $5*M*. You may discard multiple pairs for $5*M* per pair.

If you discard Ads worth more than the cost of the Network card you are buying, you get no change. However, if you overpay for one Network card, you may apply the unused amount towards the next Network card you buy on the same turn.

You may buy as many of the cards in the Network card Display as you want and can afford on a turn. However, the Network card Display will not refresh until the end of your turn.

Note that unlike Stars, Ads will never go on your Shows; they stay in your Green Room until you discard them!

PLAY A NETWORK CARD

At any point on your turn, you may play a Network card in front of you. Follow the instructions on the card, and then rotate it 90 degrees. You may only use each Network card once in the game, but its cost may still be important for some Awards.

You may only play a Network card on your turn, unless its text says otherwise. You may play as many Network cards as you want and are able to on a turn.

When you add Ratings Points to a Show, remember to mark them using the Ratings Points chips, also see *Genre Bonuses*, page 12.

END OF YOUR TURN

Once you have developed a Show, signed a Star and an Ad, and done everything else you want and may do on your turn, clean up:

- Refill the **Star/Ad Display** from the Star and Ad decks, so that there are three pairs of face-up Stars and Ads. If you signed a Star and an Ad from the top of the deck, you won't need to redraw. If you run out of Star or Ad cards, see *Star or Ad Deck Empty?*, page 14.
- Refill the **Network card Display** from the Network deck so that there are three face-up Network cards, in case you bought any during your turn.
- Draw a new Show face-up into the **Show Display**. Skip this if a Season Finale card is already face-up in the Show Display.
- Take all **Viewer chips** you placed by your bank and insert them into your bank. You may first exchange each three 1-Viewer chips for one 3-Viewer chips if you'd like.

SEASON FINALE

There are three Season Finale cards in the Show deck. They have distinct backs, so it will be clear to both players when they come up. You are allowed to look at the backs of the remaining cards in the Show deck to check when the next Season Finale will come out.

Once the Season Finale card is available in the Show Disply, you **may** take it on your turn **instead** of developing a Show. If you do so, you still finish your turn regularly, so you still must sign a Star and an Ad, and may place Stars on a Show and buy and play Network cards. However, after the end of your turn, the current Season ends. First, do Season Finale scoring, then Season Finale cleanup.

SEASON FINALE SCORING

First score Time Slots, then Awards. Place all Viewer chips you gain next to your bank and insert them at the end of scoring.

TIME SLOTS

The player leading in more Time Slots scores one Viewer for **each** of the Time Slots they lead in. The other player draws **one** Star from the Star deck and places it face-up in their Green Room,

The trailing player will always draw a single Star, regardless of how many Time Slots they are trailing in, and even in Season 3. If both players lead in an equal number of Time Slots, no one scores Viewers or draws Stars.

AWARDS

Score the Awards card for your current Season. On each Awards card, there are three Awards. If you meet the requirement on the left side in an Award row, you gain the reward on the right side, Viewer and/or Stars.

If only a single player meets the requirement for an Award, only they score the reward. If both meet the requirement, they **both** score the reward. See page 22 for additional details on some Awards.

If you get a Star from a Award, draw one Star from the Star deck and place it face-up in your Green Room.

Example: At the end of Season 1, Blue is leading in two Time Slots (9PM and 10PM). The 8PM Time Slot is tied.

Blue leads in more Time Slots, so they score one Viewer for each of the two Time Slots they lead in for a total of two Viewers. Red draws one Star from the top of the Star deck.

Blue leads in the 9PM Time Slot, so they score 1 Viewer for the first Award. Both players have exactly one Drama Show in their Lineups, to both players score one Viewer each for the second Award. Red leads in zero Time Slots, so they score the third Award for that Season and draws another Star from the Star deck.

SEASON FINALE CLEANUP

After scoring Season 1 and 2, prepare for the next Season. After scoring Season 3, instead proceed to *End of Game*, below.

- **Discard** all remaining cards in the Star/Ad Display, the Show Display, and the Network card Display. Draw new cards into them as you did during Setup, so that they have three Shows, Stars, Ads, and Network cards. All three Shows in the Show Display should now be from the Season about to start.
- Discard the Awards card for the Season that just ended.
- At the end of Season 1, reveal the Awards card for Season 3, to allow planning for it.
- The player with the Season Finale card discards it. The other player begins the next Season.

END OF GAME

Count all Stars and Ads in your Green Room, including any Stars you may have drawn during Season 3 Finale Scoring. The player with the most combined Stars and Ads in their Green Room scores 1 Viewer.

Then, both players open up their banks and count their Viewer chips. The player with the most Viewers wins.

If there's a tie, the player who did not start the game wins. That player will have the Starter Star #2, either on one of their Shows, or face-down in their Reruns.

EXECUTIVES VARIANT

If the standard game bores you horribly, or you are just that kind of thrill-seeking person, maybe try this exciting variant! Here, you incoporate one of the powerful and headstrong Executives, fabled personas of dubious character.

During Setup, each player receives an Executive card, as described on page 7, and will have its special power available for this game.

Unless otherwise noted on the Executive, you may only use it on your own turn. If you use an Executive power that you may use only once per Season, rotate the Executive card 90 degrees. Un-rotate it during Season Finale Cleanup so you can use it again next Season.

INTERNS VARIANT

If you find the standard game excessively demanding, or just had a rough day, maybe try this relaxed variant! Here, you completely ignore the need to sign Ads for your station and just hope that your investors will not notice how you are not really making money...

During Setup, leave all Ad and Network cards in the box, as described on page 6.

During the game, ignore the Genre Bonuses printed on the Show cards. Instead, all Genre Bonuses let you draw 2 random Stars from the Star deck into your Green Room, just like the Sitcom Genre Bonus in the standard game.

APPENDIX: CARD NOTES AND CLARIFICATIONS

If any card powers contradict the general rules, follow the individual card power instead.

NETWORK CARDS

Cult Classic: This is one of the few Network Cards that you don't play on your turn. Play it at the end of the Season instead.

Documentary: If you are tied in a Timeslot, you do not lead in it.

Guest Stars: You may discard Stars with wild icons for this card.

Infomercial: It's okay to play this card, discard zero Ads, and draw one random Star.

Internet Sensation: You may put the Star from this card on any Show in your Lineup. You may put it on a Show different from the one that you attached Stars from your Green Room to this turn.

Mass Popularity: This card counts Shows in your Lineup and your Reruns.

Network Defection: You may put the Star from this card on any Show in your Lineup. You may put it on a Show different from the one that you attached Stars from your Green Room to this turn.

Ratings Dominance: If you are tied in a Timeslot, you do not lead in it.

Showrunner: Any Genre Bonus you get from this card does not count towards Awards that give bonuses for Genre Bonuses.

Spinoff: Stars you "save" with this card go back to your Green Room. You may immediately put them on a new Show if you wish, as long as that's the Show you're attaching Stars to from your Green Room this turn.

EXECUTIVES

Cheapo: This power lets you play the same Network Card twice in the same game. You may even play the same Network Card twice in the same turn, if you wish.

Flix: You may put the Star from this power on any Show in your Lineup. You may put it on a Show different from the one that you attached Stars from your Green Room to this turn.

Gorilla: You may put the Star from this power on any Show in your Lineup. You may put it on a Show different from the one that you attached Stars from your Green Room to this turn.

Rich: If you spend two Ads with the symbol, they're worth $7M combined instead of $5M.

Specialist: Place the Stars and Ads you draw into your Green Room.

Starryeye: You may put the Star from this power on any Show in your Lineup. You may put it on a Show different from the one that you attached Stars from your Green Room to this turn.

AWARDS

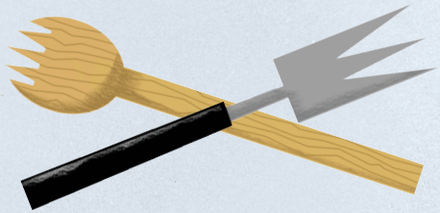
Have a higher total value of acquired Network cards: This counts all Network cards you have acquired, both unplayed and played.

Have more Ratings Points in [Genre] Stars on your Shows: Add up the Ratings Points of all Stars with the Genre icon indicated. They must be on a Show in your Lineup to count for this Award, but they do not need to be on a Show of the given Genre to count.

Have the Show with the most Ratings Points (+2 Ratings Points to [Genre]): Any Show of the indicated Genre is considered to be worth two extra Ratings Points for this Award only. Do not move these two extra Ratings Points on the Time Slot card!

Have two Shows of the same Genre in your Lineup: Your Lineup consists only of the three Shows in your Time Slots.

Win 0 Time Slots: You have lost and/or tied all 3 Time Slots.



CREDITS

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For more information on this and other great games, go to http://**formalferretgames.com**

GAME LOG

Date	Player #1	Score	Player #2
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