
Central TV star names face axe

Posted by johnfranklyn - 2008/10/01 14:11

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By Anna Blackaby, Media & Marketing Editor

Some of the biggest names in regional news could disappear from our screens as ITV axes 61 jobs and presses ahead with its plans to merge news programmes in the West and East Midlands.

Staff across ITV Central's Birmingham and Nottingham bases, including Central Tonight anchors Bob Warman and Joanne Malin, learnt of the cuts in a meeting on Tuesday.

Ms Malin signed off a report on the job cuts on Central Tonight with the words "interesting times ahead, that's all I'm going to say."

The broadcaster's announcement comes a week after TV regulator Ofcom gave its approval to ITV's plans to merge most of its news coverage in the East and West Midlands, creating one programme serving an area spanning from Herefordshire to the East Coast.

The plans would see identical daytime and evening news programmes in both the East and West Midlands with just six minutes of guaranteed local coverage in the evening bulletin.

Birmingham Press Club chairman John Lamb said: "It's always sad when people are losing their jobs no matter what the sector they work in and it's extremely disappointing to see this happen.

"It's particularly indicative of what's happening in the regional media picture in newspapers, radio and now in TV - the whole industry is being downsized in every sector."

The job cuts in the Midlands are part of a wider cull at the broadcaster which will see a total of 1,000 posts going over the rest of 2008 and the first two months of 2009, 430 of those in ITV News.

ITV said while it was seeking volunteers, it could not rule out compulsory redundancies.

ITV chief operating officer John Cresswell said: "We are committed to a self-help, self-funding, solution to securing ITV's future.

"In order to sustain our investment in UK content, we have to keep on top of our cost base."

ITV first announced its intention to deliver £40 million of annual savings as part of the ITV Turnaround Strategy in September 2007.

Earlier this year the company also indicated that, in the face of "challenging market conditions", it intended to make further cost savings of £35 million across the company by 2010.

Unions said any attempt to force through the job cuts would be met with "strong resistance" and hit out at Ofcom for giving ITV the go-ahead for its plans.

NUJ National Broadcasting Organiser Paul McLaughlin said: "Viewers will doubtless be asking how a regulator required by parliament to maintain and strengthen public service broadcasting is allowing this to happen."

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Re:Central TV star names face axe

Posted by ajcobbler - 2008/10/01 14:42

No more interviews with bimbos' who would rather talk to penguins with false noses than those who know a story in greater depth.No more meeting with more of the same when doing a road safety piece and finding the interviewer wanted a facile statement with no substance despite travelling miles to do the interview.

No more shaggy dog stories or those about firemen trying to rescue a cat on Montfort bridge,or dribbling interviews with "Old Jockey",aged two hundred and seven,who has lived in the same spot for over the same period and consequently is mad and totally boring.

No more cheesy grins as she pouts the first half of the sentence and he smirks before doing the second half while she grins uneasily waiting to come in and then they both share the moment like a couple of bad actors. How I have prayed that they have it off there and then right in front of us. That would have boosted the ratings. Thank God there will be less of them.

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Re:Central TV star names face axe

Posted by georgeashcroft - 2008/10/01 16:43

When I think back to the Central News of old, it is all very sad.

I don't know quite where some of the post-90's newsreaders have come from but Central News was on top of the game when it was presented by Bob Warman & Michelle Newman, with Bob Hall or Phil Mephram on sport.

I hate sport, and practically everything I know about it came from Central News, whilst there were no better presenters than Bob Warman & Michelle Newman in the whole of the country, nevermind the Midlands.

I believe that ITV has deliberately "dumbed down" all of its news programme. Central is by no means unique, indeed, it is far from the worst offender. If you are ever in London, have a look at London Tonight with Alistair Stewart - totally opinionated, in an almost wooden style of delivery. Very odd indeed.

I don't want to know what the newsreaders think about this matter or that, I want the news, read with professionalism and meaningful analysis.

Having said that, Central should bring John Swallow back from retirement. I can just about remember him. His bit at the end was always good-humoured. It's a shame that the whole thing has become little better than the "and finally" segment.

And Police 5, bring back Shaw Taylor!

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Re:Central TV star names face axe

Posted by MartJ - 2008/10/03 14:23

Back from a week in Canada, just catching up on posts.

George, unfortunately John Swallow died back in July this year.

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Re:Central TV star names face axe

Posted by Carol - 2008/10/04 11:53

MartJ you get about a lot is it your job ? and if you need any help with your case's let me know :dry:

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Re:Central TV star names face axe

Posted by MartJ - 2008/10/04 13:08

Not job, just a trip to visit some friends

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