


**COVER
STORY**

Working from a cozy attic studio, Sharon's **Stephen Heywood** has crafted himself into a digital phenomenon, a one-man

EMPIRE OF THE AIR

Story by **Michael Roknick**
Photography by **Cory Byknish**

SURROUNDED BY A DOZEN OR SO MONITORS, a set of lights and more computers than can be counted on a single hand, Stephen Heywood is at the forefront of Internet technology.

His broadcast studio, there's no other term for it, is located in a cozy nook in the attic of his Sharon home.

"My office is worth more than my entire house," Heywood says with a serious look.

At first a visitor might get the sensation this is the digital version of Wayne's World, the whacky Saturday Night Live character who has his own cable TV show in the basement of his home. But in Heywood's case this a true business.

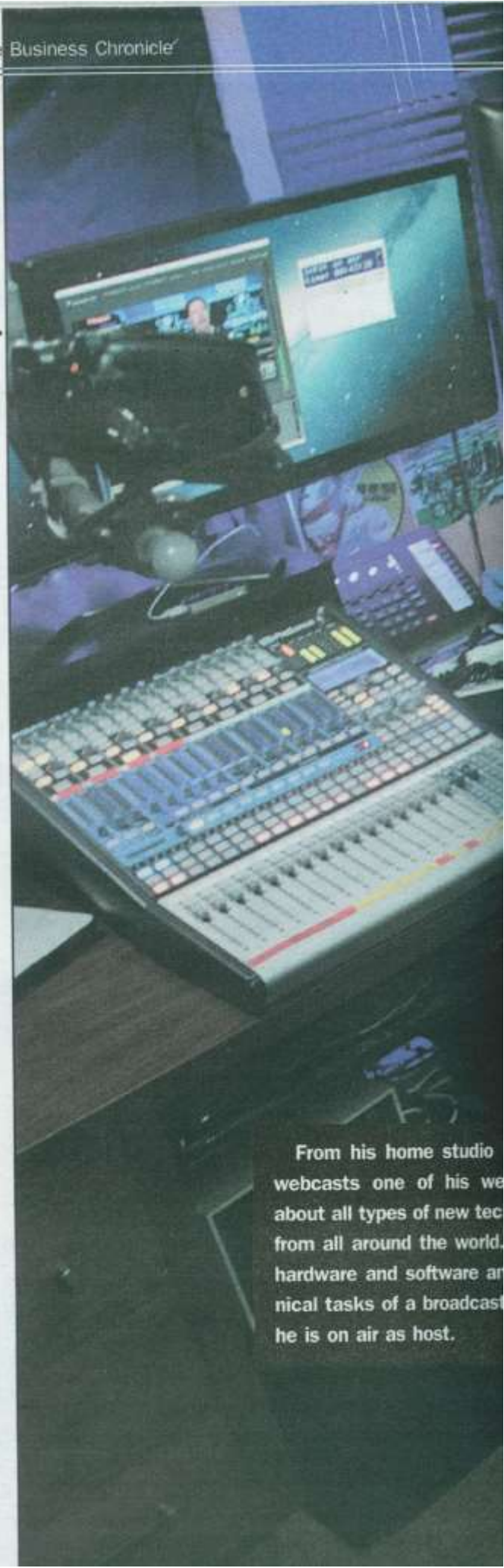
Like TV networks ABC, CBS and NBC that offer a variety of shows, Heywood has created his own network - only his network is shown on the Internet.

While Heywood is certainly seen in front of the camera, he's making his mark on changing what's done in the world of broadcasting and digital technology. By cobbling together var-

ious pieces of high-tech hardware and existing software, he's taking broadcasting into a new age through his business, The Tech Buzz. Now a proprietorship, he plans to incorporate the business next year.

Walk into any TV station news studio and you will likely see a small bevy of employees doing everything from operating cameras, sound system, TelePrompTer, editing, graphic design and delivering the news. By using technology Heywood has been able to boil down all those positions to one man - himself.

Continued on page 14



From his home studio webcasts one of his webcasts one of his webcasts about all types of new tech from all around the world. hardware and software ar nical tasks of a broadcast he is on air as host.

TB200FF



The Tech BUZZ
News at its Best, Technology at its Finest


**COVER
STORY**

Continued from page 13

"I can do everything from change the angle of the cameras to run the TelePrompTer while doing a show," the 34-year-old said. "And I can do it by just using my smartphone."

The concept he works with is essentially a show broadcast on the Internet using video streaming. By using the Internet he can run a show like a news broadcast complete with interviews and snazzy graphics. Anyone hooked up to the Internet with a computer can gain access to his shows through his Internet site: thetechbuzz.net

An advantage of using the Internet is people can go on his site 24 hours a day and view his broadcasts at their leisure - no DVD or DVR recording is necessary. Ads are sold for each show just like on TV. His network's hour-long shows:

► **Weekly Roundup** - His own show that he hosts that deals with the latest technology from cell phones to computers. *Live broadcast is Monday, 3:30 to 4:30 p.m.*

► **Broadcast Now** - A show dealing with Internet broadcasting that shows people how to use the technology such as microphones and cameras. *Live broadcast is Tuesday, 3:30 to 4:30 p.m.*

► **The Jeff Adams Show** - A comedy show hosted by Jeff Adams, a middle-aged hipster living in Florida who talks about a variety of subjects such as how to be creative and his own experience in trying to lose weight. *Live broadcast is Thursday, 3:30 to 4:30 p.m.*

► **Throws Unlimited** - A new show to be launched Oct. 17, will be hosted by Kristy Woods of Mercer. The All-American shot put and discus thrower shows others how to perform better in track and field events. She will also bring in people from area schools who also give their advice. *Live broadcast Thursday, 7 to 8 p.m.*

He can create digital sets that appears like someone is on a major broadcast studio, a spaceship or just about anywhere real or imagined. This bit of digital magic works exactly like a TV station weather green-screen broadcast where the image of the weather map is inserted into the background with the weatherman standing in front of the camera pointing to things on the map. In Heywood's case though, rather than a big



Using a green screen behind him, with the touch of a button Stephen Heywood can insert new background imagery to make it look like he is sitting in a major TV network studio.

budget TV station all of this happens in his attic studio.

The sell is easy to understand: Heywood has created his own TV-like station and network for a fraction of the cost. The Internet world is starting to catch onto this idea, as Heywood can count Steve Wozniak, co-founder of Apple, among his broadcast interviews.

Creating an Internet network is designed to drive viewership to the site and, well, create a buzz about the various shows. There are a number of Internet broadcasters out there whose shows remain unknown, he noted, because they don't have the audience-drawing power a network gives.

"You may have a good show," he said. "But until somebody knows about it, it doesn't do you much good."

A native of Tatamy, Pa., near Allentown, Heywood has traveled a long journey both in his personal life and



Apple Inc. co-founder Steve Wozniak is among the notables Stephen Heywood has done web interviews with.

transforming technology. Home-schooled from fourth grade through high school, he attended Valley Forge Christian College in Phonexville, Pa., and finished his pastoral ministry degree online from Cathedral University, based in California.

It was around this time 5½ years ago he began toying around with Internet broadcasting. He learned how to use and create the broadcasting concept through a combination of reading and simple trial and error.

"I did it with a laptop," he recalled.



Stephen Heywood takes church services to a new level at Shiloh Ministries in Mercer with technology to broadcast services on the Internet for those who cannot be there. Above left, he demonstrates how he can change the lighting colors in the church with an app on his phone. In addition to his technology work, he and his wife are ministers at Shiloh.



Pastor Kenneth Woods of Shiloh Ministries in Mercer stands next to one of two television screens which can show video or messages during church.

that this new technology has a place in ministry. Both he and his wife are ordained ministers deeply involved in youth ministry, so serving churches was a natural link.

A webinar he hosted geared for churches on Internet broadcasting drew 2,500 registrants nationwide.

"Mega churches are saying they want to get into video streaming," he said.

He now finds himself installing Internet broadcasting equipment at churches, including Shiloh Ministries in Mercer, where the couple serve as ministers.

Working with church leaders, Heywood erects cameras, computers and other items needed so that a church service can be seen live online or at the convenience of the viewer 24 hours a day. Costs for the setup vary based on budget and the wants of a church. But he said a basic package can be had for under \$5,000 with a top-of-the-line package going for \$20,000.

He finds himself busy these days as he continues to grow his Internet network and helping churches reach a wider audience.

While this is a new communication technology still feeling its roots, radio and TV went through the same trail period. Those in the communicating business who ignored those two ventures paid dearly.

"This is the new medium," Heywood said. ♦

"It was very, very simple."

Then while tooling around online he spotted a chat room with a man on video answering technology questions ranging from iPhones to computer woes.

"It was like a light bulb went on," Heywood said. "I said, 'I can do that - but make it more interactive.'"

By using \$500 software created by Telestream Inc., he was able to put graphics on video, switch cameras, do B-rolls - just like a regular TV station. He began talking with company officials about what he was doing with their product and soon was hired on

as a contractor.

"My workflow was something they never saw before," Heywood said of his broadcasting products.

He created his own Internet video broadcast show called "Lifecasting." He left a video camera on 24 hours a day where people could go into his website and watch him go about his daily chores at his office located in an apartment occupied by him and his wife Erin.

"There was no set start time or end time. It was on constantly," he said.

From there he began building an Internet community around that idea

and came up with the name The Tech Buzz for a business.

Initially, Heywood wanted to hang out online with like-minded people interested in technology, but then found the lure of Internet broadcasting enticing.

"If you would have told me five years ago this is what it would become, I would have laughed," Heywood said.

After moving to their current Sharon home about five years ago, he first created a studio in their dining room and eventually moved to the attic. But he also found in the process