

R-888-MF

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# INTERACTIVE TELEVISION Prospects for Two-Way Services on Cable

Walter S. Baer

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A Report prepared under a Grant from  
THE JOHN AND MARY R. MARKLE FOUNDATION

**Rand**  
SANTA MONICA, CA. 90406

Petitioner ARRIS Group, Inc.'s



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PREFACE

The technology of cable television is advancing rapidly. Of prime importance to cable television in the 1970s will be the development of two-way interactive communication services on cable systems. This report describes that development; the technical, economic, and regulatory forces that influence it; and the public policy issues that it raises.

This report has been written for several distinct groups of readers. Those concerned chiefly with broad policy questions may wish to read only the summary, the introduction, and the final section on policy issues posed by the evolution of two-way services on cable. Readers who want a more detailed description of potential services, including the "subscriber response services" that seem most likely to be feasible in the next five years, should also read Sections II and III. Those interested in the near-term economics of this group of services should focus on Section IV. Finally, readers interested in the present status of two-way cable television will find a discussion of recent field tests and demonstrations in Section V.

The research on which this report is based has been conducted under a three-year grant to Rand from The John and Mary R. Markle Foundation for the study of communications policy issues. The initial phase of this research was also supported by The Ford Foundation as part of a broader study of the feasibility of cable television in Washington, D.C. The Rand work in Washington was undertaken in close cooperation with The MITRE Corporation, McLean, Virginia.

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