



Kelly Choi on 'Secrets of New York'

## The 'Secret' behind NYC TV's success

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The City-owned station NYC TV today marks the fifth anniversary of its switch from a primarily staid educational outlet, Crosswalks, to a full-fledged multi-platform programmer.

"We didn't want to be just another public television station and wanted to distinguish ourselves," said Trevor Scotland, NYC's chief operating officer.

So far that's working.

One of NYC's signature shows, "Secrets of New York," airs on PBS stations around the country. Likewise, a short partnership with WNBC/Ch. 4 resulted in NBC buying LXTV, a NYC TV production partner, so it could create similar fare for itself.

NYC TV, which draws between 70,000 and 100,000 viewers a night in prime time, was given a major facelift five years ago when Crosswalks was shuttered.

Since then, Scotland has reached out to other print and TV organizations to become partners, and has launched a series of shows geared toward younger, hipper audiences, such as twice a year-coverage of Fashion Week.

The station's Web site [www.nyc.gov/nyctv](http://www.nyc.gov/nyctv) also offers some shows on demand and streaming video. In the fall, NYC will broadcast in high-definition.

That's a far cry from when Scotland began seeking partnerships for new shows, and to expand the organization.

"I would make calls and no one would know who we were," he said.

That's changed over time, as NYC has gotten more attention through Emmy nominations, Emmy wins and other major award recognition.

The station got a major boost a year and a half ago when WNBC/Ch. 4, in need of some daytime programming, aired a handful of shows from NYC TV focusing on the city. The programs - and NYC staffers - were exposed to larger audiences, although, in the end, Scotland said it wasn't the right partnership for NYC.

Production costs on the shows were too high to keep up in the long run, while also maintaining NYC's focus.

"Here's the bottom line," Scotland said. "It was a great opportunity for us. ... It took a lot for us to create the programming they wanted."

Roughly 60% of the station's prime-time content is original, ranging from "Secrets of New York," which spotlights hidden parts of the city, to "City Scoop," a weekly roundup of events in the city, to "Blueprint NYC," which shows viewers specifics about city buildings.

The station also offers "SummerStage," from Central Park's concert series of the same name.

"I think we have an eclectic mix of programming that literally turns the cameras back on the streets of New York," Scotland said. "That's what makes the programming interesting."