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## The Sudbury Star

Sudbury key for new TV channel

Sudbury Star (On)

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Page: A4

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A new Toronto-based television station is scheduled to hit airwaves in October, delving into the natural resource industry and digging Northern Ontario out into the forefront of its coverage.

IDNR-TV is making its first broadcast on Oct. 2 through Persona cable and will focus on the Canadian natural resource sector, especially in Sudbury.

IDNR-TV will give executives, analysts, investors, consumers and employees a deeper understanding of issues and topics that affect the industry, the station states on its website.

"Hearing what the mandate behind IDNR-TV really is, I thought it was a very noble cause," said Anita Verma, who has been with the station for more than a month and is slated to be a reporter and show host.

"It is furthering the Canadian economy and everything Canadian, because natural resources play such a pivotal role in Canada as one of the fuelling industries. And it really puts Sudbury and Canada, on the map internationally, as well. (Natural resources) is under-reported, people don't have enough information and there is a lot of stigma attached to, for example, mining."

Verma visited Sudbury to interact with local media, tour facilities and get a broader understanding of local players, both politically and economically. She had just finished a tour of McCreedy Mine earlier in the day before interviewing and being interviewed by members of The Sudbury Star editorial staff.

She said IDNR-TV will target Sudbury because of its strong connection with natural resources, mining in particular. As such, it is important to understand what makes the community tick socially, financially and politically.

"Mining is a key industry that falls within natural resources and Sudbury just happens to be the hotspot for it," Verma said. "So where else to be, right?"

"And Sudbury is one of the key towns we will be broadcasting in and so we want to get to know the community. And hence we are here to get to know the media at the forefront, what the city stands for and what really makes the city what it is."

Part of the effort to understand the community will involve a chance for viewers to express what programming they want to see that is related the station's mandate, said IDNR-TV's CEO, Ivor Barr.

"We are proposing a different kind of television," Barr said. "I am not saying that IDNR-TV will re-invent the wheel because we are not re-inventing the wheel, we are just coming with a different rim."

Barr said the lines will be caller-ID free, names will not be given to a marketing list and everyone's opinion will be welcomed.

And not all the shows will be about natural resources that come from the ground. Plans are in the works to produce *The Greatest Discovery Ever Made*, a show that features young fine arts students in an American Idol-style competition.

"We are not very much interested in kids cloning the Backstreet Boys," Barr said. "That is not very interesting and is very much commercial."

"We want to give exposure to kids that have talent and also use those kids as motivation for others to get close to school, to get close to the passion of learning and also to also get close to a passion of developing positive activities besides school."

The idea for IDNR-TV and its employees is to expand through local studios and eventually have a voice across Canada, but Barr acknowledged that not even "Rome was built in a day."

It has been a long and painful process, Barr said, because many people see natural resource as a scourge on the environment. Individuals along the way did not want to be involved in a station that focuses on what Barr believes served as the foundation of Canada.

"Generally, people are very much manipulated by the mainstream media, which will do mining coverage if there is an environmental catastrophe, any underground accident or whatever is bad and sells as drama," Barr said.

"And let's be honest, the mainstream media wants blood and tears."

And though IDNR-TV will cover positive topics affecting the natural resource community, the station will not be a mouthpiece for companies, Barr added.

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Illustration:

- Cameraman Steve Miric and reporter Anita Verma, of Natural Resources IDNR-TV Television, interview David Kilgour, publisher of *The Sudbury Star*, during a recent visit to Greater Sudbury.

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