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Entrepreneur glad to be back in the game

By Kevin Smith, Staff Writer

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PASADENA - Paul Corvino lives for goals.

As the head of nationwide subscriber sales at Cablevision, he helped increase sales by more than \$100 million, transforming the company's traditional sales model by integrating customer service and engineering.

Corvino later joined America Online in 1998. In his role as senior vice president and general manager of interactive marketing, he boosted advertising sales and e-commerce revenues from \$35 million to nearly \$2 billion in just four years - the largest increase in the history of media ad sales.

Now he's at it again.

In August, Corvino came on board as co-CEO with Intellivent Group, an advertising and marketing agency formed several years ago by former-FreshDirect marketing executive Steven Yevoli.

The upshot?

Last month Intellivent announced an exclusive partnership with Schwan's Home Service Inc., the world's largest frozen food home delivery company.

Intellivent was selected to create a comprehensive advertising, sampling and promotion program for Schwan's.

"We sell to advertising and media companies," Corvino explained. "We have a sales force of professionals with lots of experience who are trying to get people to advertise through the Schwan's network. We made a deal to own the distribution network for Schwan's - and that entails 6,700 customer service managers."

Those "customer service managers," the personable truck drivers who deliver Schwan's products in retro-styled delivery vehicles, reach more than 3 million households a month.

"That's three times the circulation of the New York Times and more than Vanity Fair, GQ and Us Weekly combined," Corvino said. "And it's not done over the Internet, it's done face to face through trusted relationships."

Intellivent has already secured an advertising agreement with Dish Network, among others.

"It's really more of a partnership," said Corvino, 52, who lives in Pasadena. "For every Schwan's customer who takes the service, we get a bounty. So if only one in a thousand says yes we still hit a home run for Dish Network, Schwan's and Intellivent."

Another company is paying Intellivent 50 cents for each ladies' razor it hands out to customers of Schwan's.

Yevoli, who founded Intellivent in 1987, said Corvino brings a lot to the enterprise.

"Paul has an enormous amount of experience and he understands the advertising community and how it relates to consumer demands and wants," Yevoli said. "He's built a bridge with our customers ... that's something Paul is excellent at."

Corvino, who also worked in various capacities at The New York Times from 1981 through 1995 in the advertising and sales departments, was looking for a fresh challenge after leaving AOL.

"I've been out of this for a while and it's nice to be back in," he said. "I did a lot of business since leaving AOL, but I felt I wasn't really building anything. I missed going to sleep at night and not having a goal or number over my head. I missed having a team and rolling a big rock up a hill together."