SMG was first conceived when "about three years ago Hans and I were watching the student cable channel, TV36," Peters said. "At that time there were three or four shows on the channel weekly and they were all pretty much the same. MIT cable has a lot more potential than that.

Recent technological developments have helped the development of SMG, according to Peters. Avid Desktop Video Group, a subsidiary of Avid Inc., produced the editing equipment used by SMG.

"Just this year has the technology come down to a level where it's affordable to us," said Peters. "It (the editing equipment) is very inexpensive. It's just as good if not better than the traditional system."

Eric L. McDonald, G of the student cable group absorbed by SMG said, "SMG is good because we're going to be able to pool our resources." Student productions were limited in the past by the lack of editing equipment and portability, according to McDonald. With the help of SMG, "now we can do both," he said.

Eventually self-sufficient
Startup funding for the SMG came primarily from within the MIT administration. Dean for Undergraduate Education and Student Affairs Arthur C. Smith, Associate Provost for Institute Life Samuel J. Keyser, and Vice President for Information Systems James D. Bruce ScD '60 contributed a total of over $10,000, according to Peters. The MIT Council for the Arts provided over $4,000 as a part of a grant.

To meet operating costs, Peters says that SMG "plans to sell advertising to student groups. Ideally, we would make all of our money through advertising revenues."

Until advertising income meets costs, Peters said Bruce had made a tentative agreement "to fund the continuing operations of the group once it demonstrated active student participation."

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