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Ben Silverman: I'm staying at NBC

Entertainment co-chair 'committed to the job'

By Paul J. Gough

Sept 15, 2008, 02:53 PM ET

Updated: Sept 15, 2008, 06:28 PM ET

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NEW YORK -- Despite some media reports to the contrary, NBC entertainment co-chairman Ben Silverman said he's staying put at the network.

"I am so committed to this job," Silverman said during a session Monday afternoon at the New York Television Festival in midtown Manhattan. Silverman reiterated that sentiment in a brief interview after the event backstage.

Saying "I may be the Paris Hilton of NBC," Silverman acknowledged that he didn't handle the unexpected attention surrounding his ascension behind the scenes and his joining NBC.

"I don't think I have managed it as well as I could," Silverman said of his dealings with the press. He said he wasn't in the mold of the traditional TV executive but seemed to indicate that even though he sold Reveille for \$125 million a few months ago, he was in NBC for the long haul.

"It's a job I want and I'm doing by choice, which sort of throws people," Silverman said. He said he's always loved NBC from the time, as a kid, when he waited in line at 30 Rock to attend "Saturday Night Live."

"But it's a lot more fun going in there as the co-chairman" of NBC, Silverman said.

As he did in the network's programming presentation here in Manhattan in early April,

Silverman outlined his theories that include a strong emphasis on the financial side as well as the creative. He said that for shows like the heavily advertiser-involved "Kings" (Liberty Mutual) and "My Own Worst Enemy" (General Motors), it's not just about ratings but also the brand building abilities.

He seemed to extend that philosophy to the new TV season.

"Everyone is fixated on the fall," Silverman said. "I am fixated on the fourth quarter."


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