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## Randy Douthit Masters 4 Decades of Television

Our Friends · Tuesday, April 8th, 2025

Television's greatest success stories often begin in small markets, where raw talent meets opportunity. Randy Douthit's remarkable journey in television production started in a local Oregon TV station, but his impact now reaches millions of viewers worldwide.

As the executive producer and director of *Judy Justice*, Douthit draws upon four decades of broadcast expertise that span groundbreaking news programming at CNN, the *creation of Larry King Live*, and 25 years of unprecedented success with the iconic courtroom reality show *Judge Judy*. His ability to identify and develop compelling television content has earned him multiple Emmy awards and the television industry's prestigious Peabody Award, marking him as one of broadcasting's most accomplished producers.

### Randy Douthit Shapes Television News

Douthit's television career began in his native Oregon, where he worked as a local TV director while still attending school. His early commitment to excellence set the foundation for his future success. "I was always there, I was always willing to do whatever it takes to get a show on the air," he recalls of his early days in broadcasting.

At CNN, Douthit's talent for crafting compelling television found new outlets. He executive-produced and directed *Crossfire* before conceiving and executive-producing *Larry King Live*. The latter program, with its distinctive format and King's legendary interviewing style, earned the prestigious Peabody Award, marking Douthit's ability to elevate television journalism.

The most significant chapter in *Randy Douthit's career* began with Judge Judith Sheindlin. "**When Judy began**, I had a very strong feeling that we were going to be a hit show," he remembers. "We were on the lineup of all independent, small stations. But if you looked at the ratings pages, you could see that at a certain time, there was a big pop, a big growth."

His instincts proved remarkably accurate. The original *Judge Judy* debuted on Sept. 16, 1996, and ran for 25 seasons, becoming one of television's most successful courtroom shows. Under Douthit's guidance, the program made complex legal concepts accessible while maintaining high production standards.

The transition to *Amazon Prime Video* with *Judy Justice* marks Douthit's latest achievement in television production. The streaming format allows for a deeper exploration of cases, providing viewers with a more comprehensive look at legal proceedings. "The new show offers more

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opportunity for a deeper dive into traditional small-claims court cases,” Douthit explains.

### **Building Success Through Innovation**

Today’s *Judy Justice* maintains fundamental elements while addressing contemporary issues. “The best television is television that reflects the world we live in,” Douthit explained. “That’s what makes television feel real and relevant to people. More diversity makes for better quality.”

The production process involves a careful case selection from courtrooms nationwide. Douthit and Sheindlin personally curate the docket, ensuring engaging legal disputes. The show features an expanded cast, including Sheindlin’s granddaughter Sarah Rose as law clerk, Whitney Kumar as court reporter, and Kevin Rasco as courtroom bailiff. Since its 2021 debut, *Judy Justice* has accumulated more than 150 million streaming hours and earned two Daytime Emmy awards. Throughout his career, Randy Douthit has maintained that **passion drives excellence**. “My best advice — just do the job,” he shares. “I think that probably the most helpful aspect of my job is that I love doing it. I love doing it, and therefore I did it well. And I think if people enjoy doing it, they will also do it well.”

This dedication to craft parallels Douthit’s appreciation for other fields where technology and human expertise intersect. “Racing is the ultimate marriage of human and machine. Each component contributes to the other and they both make each other better,” he reflects. “It reminds me of the experience of television. There are moments happening and the way you capture the moment and show it unfolding can bring an attention and opportunity to celebrate and highlight it in a way that preserves it and keeps it special.”

As Randy Douthit continues to guide *Judy Justice*, his journey offers valuable lessons about the importance of passion and commitment to quality in broadcasting.

*Photo at top courtesy of Randy Douthit*

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