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Leading the new race for
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The winners and finalists of the
AIB Media Excellence Awards

The Channel

THE MAGAZINE OF THE ASSOCIATION FOR INTERNATIONAL BROADCASTING | www.aib.org.uk | Volume 10 No 4 | JANUARY 2008



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it safe**

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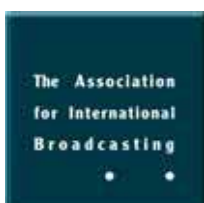
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“The definition of 'watching TV' is evolving”



WELCOME

...to a brand new Channel. The focus in this issue is on international news channels. Since CNN started in 1980, the number of 24x7 INCs has risen at a rapid pace. CNNI, Sky, CNBC, BBC, Zee, Al Jazeera, Fox, Star, Phoenix, YTN, NDTV, Aaj Tak, Channel News Asia, Al Arabiya, Russia Today, Telesur, Al Jazeera English, France 24 and Press TV have followed. More are in the pipeline. Each aims to offer a different view of the world, reflected in their news content.

Does this dovetail with what one of our interviewees said, that "Objectivity does not exist in international news"? The proverb says 'you can lead a horse to water, but you cannot make it drink'. Indeed, the viewer decides which button to press. There is great choice – he/she is in control. Broadcasters change rather more slowly than audiences, so it's a race to match the habits of a very technology-savvy consumer. Also, the definition of 'watching TV' is evolving – no longer just explicit eye-contact with a screen but more often a kind of background noise on the mobile, always on, and watching only intently when something of interest is shown.

The exciting aspect about international broadcasting is that it is about gadgets and the advance of technology but, ultimately, it is focused on living human beings in all parts of our world. They may be listening and watching in the digitally most advanced country on earth, South Korea, where connectivity is everywhere and being put to good use: the intelligent floor in a hospital will alert a nurse to the fact that a patient has had a fall. In *The Channel* we also report on the other end of the spectrum: launching a community radio station in a remote village in Papua which, as a by-product, now provides electricity for the villagers for the first time.

Change is so rapid in this business that by the time the next Channel issue appears a lot of what we've reported will be old hat. As long as that change goes in the direction of freedom of choice, of media that are not controlled and policed, of people talking to each other and fair partnerships, that's fine by me.

GUNDA CANNON EDITOR

EuroNews adds Arabic



EuroNews has won the European Union's call for tenders to extend its offering to include Arabic.

EuroNews already broadcasts in seven languages simultaneously (English, French, German, Italian, Portuguese, Russian, and Spanish).

With the launch planned for 2008, a team of 35 people will work at EuroNews' head office in Lyon, France. In parallel, the channel will adapt its technical facilities (production, broadcasting and distribution) to host this new language version. The Arabic service will be broadcast across EuroNews' entire network of 35 satellites,

making the Arabic-service signal available worldwide.

Philippe Cayla, Chairman & CEO of EuroNews, says the addition of Arabic is an important milestone in EuroNews' multi-language strategy. With Arabic, the channel will be able to grow its audience among Arabic-speaking populations in Europe and in the Mediterranean basin. In Europe, the fact that EuroNews is available in Arabic will definitely help Arabic-speaking populations to better understand the framework of European policies and the issues at stake. In the Mediterranean basin, and

in the Arabic-speaking world in general, where EuroNews already has a substantial audience for its English and French versions, the channel will be able to grow its audience very significantly and become the standard-setting international news channel.

EuroNews hopes that its Mediterranean shareholders in the Arab world (ENTV in Algeria, ERTU in Egypt, ERTT in Tunisia) will help to raise EuroNews' profile in their respective countries, and that the Arab States Broadcasting Union will be able to extend this effort to the other countries in the Arab world.

We want news

The debate over commercial radio stations in India being allowed to carry news and current affairs continues. FM radio operators - which now number several hundred across all major cities in India - met with the Asha Swarup, Secretary at the Information and Broadcasting Ministry in December pointing out once again that they had been singled out by the government's restriction on the carriage of news programmes while TV owners face no obstacle to carrying news. The government's view is that radio is far more wide-reaching than TV and therefore there needs to be a continued restriction on news that could potentially cause unrest in the country. It is unlikely that commercial radio will succeed in its goal in the short term, but the stakes are high. There is currently little to differentiate commercial stations, a majority of which have very similar formats with many playing back-to-back popular Bollywood music.

At the same time, All India Radio's Director General of News, Mr P K Bandopadhyaya, has said that the national public broadcaster is looking into a dedicated news station to counter the onslaught of TV news channels which are having a detrimental effect on radio audiences in urban areas. Radio remains very important in rural areas, Bandopadhyaya believes, with little change in listening figures.

Initial research by AIR has found that running a full-time news channel is viable, although the broadcaster faces a problem as it has an ageing workforce resulting from the ban on recruitment to both All India Radio and Doordarshan that has been in place since the mid-1990s.

SES ASTRA gives high speed to Poland

SES ASTRA is extending the distribution of its high speed internet access product ASTRA2Connect in Europe by making the product available in Poland from January 2008.

The contract partner for the Polish service is the Euro Marketing Group, who will offer ASTRA2Connect through its partner networks, retailers and web-shops. The Euro Marketing Group is a service provider and distributor of IT equipment, including TV tuners, in Poland, Ukraine and Russia and is experienced in providing broadband Internet services via satellite for the residential market.

Around 2m Polish households are still without DSL coverage. SES ASTRA CCO Alexander Oudendijk said ASTRA2Connect is an innovative product for these customers offering a highly attractive solution to access high-speed internet also in regions where terrestrial infrastructures are not available. ASTRA2Connect is a fully satellite-based solution for broadband access that delivers dual- and triple-play services without any terrestrial support.

SES ASTRA's new SIRIUS 4 satellite which was launched in November will be made commercially available from January 2008, after extensive in-

orbit testing. The satellite will be located at 5° East, SIRIUS' orbital position for delivering broadcast and broadband services across Europe, and will also transmit HDTV channels. SIRIUS 4 will also carry an African beam which will be marketed by SES ASTRA. Håkan Sjödin, MD of SES SIRIUS said that SIRIUS 4 will extend coverage and service in Eastern Europe. The success of the SIRIUS 4 mission is a milestone for SES ASTRA, and Sjödin stressed the very good cooperation with their launch partners, International Launch Services and Lockheed Martin Commercial Space Systems.

Sarkozy says “non” to anglais



French President Nicolas Sarkozy created immense uncertainty in the international broadcasting industry in early January. At his first press conference since taking office last year, Sarkozy expressed doubt about the need for France 24, the international TV news channel launched in December 2006, to continue broadcasting English- and Arabic-language services in addition to French. The President also said that French international broadcasting – consisting of France 24, Radio France Internationale and TV5 Monde – should be brought together under a single holding company, to be called France Monde, mimicking the BBC's Global News Division.

Responding to a question from a Radio France Internationale correspondent, Sarkozy said that the new concept would make better use of resources – including editorial, distribution and correspondents – of all three international services. Sarkozy gave his support to a single French-language TV news channel with subtitles added in English and Arabic, instead of three distinct services. The President said he was not prepared to have a taxpayer-funded channel not broadcasting in French.

The concept of subtitled international news lacks credibility. Live subtitling of news bulletins is provided by many national broadcasters for the hard-of-hearing, but the challenges of instantaneous translation and subtitling are immense for an international channel such as France 24.

It is worth noting that France 24 has successfully negotiated carriage for its English-language service on satellite and cable platforms in a significant number of markets; it is difficult to see how a subtitled French-language channel would be welcomed by platforms that have

a predominately English-language audience.

Meanwhile RFI has said that it welcomes the move to bring the international channels together, seeing real advantages for the Paris-based radio and online broadcaster. Antoine Schwarz, RFI's CEO, says that the new grouping will offer new opportunities to the station, with more cross-media productions possible.

TV5, meanwhile, presents a different set of problems as it is owned not only by France, but by the francophone communities in Belgium, Canada and Switzerland. While there may be opportunities for some sharing of resources such as distribution and marketing, the very different funding and ownership means that there are considerable hurdles to be overcome before TV5 can become part of France Monde.

Nothing is formally decided yet and there will be much debate between the French foreign and culture ministers and the president over the coming weeks, and considerable lobbying by unions, staff and management of the three broadcasters.

IN BRIEF

AP EXCLUSIVE FOOTAGE DEAL

AP Archive has won an exclusive deal to manage the worldwide archive footage sales business of Sky News. Over 15,000 hours of Sky News footage will be added to AP Archive's portfolio, which currently includes the collections of other major broadcasters such as ABC News in the US. Sky News will add a considerable amount of UK news and stock footage to AP Archive's global content, plus footage of major international events. AP Archive plans to add digitised Sky News footage to its web site in early 2008.

SUPREME MASTER

RRsat Global Communications Network has been chosen by the Supreme Master TV Channel for its global transmission services. Since November RRsat Global Network has been broadcasting the channel to five continents – North and South America, Asia, Africa, Middle East, Australia and New Zealand – using such prominent satellites as Galaxy 25, Hispasat 1C, Intelsat 10 and Optus B3.

FIRST CELLPHONE TRANSLATOR

Japanese electronics giant NEC has created a world-first real-time translator on a mobile phone that can instantly turn Japanese travellers' words into English. One second after the phone hears speech in Japanese, the cellphone shows the text on the screen and one second later an English version appears. NEC said it is the first time automatic translation is available on a cellphone without external help. The software can recognise some 50,000 Japanese words.

Bible and Koran site is a hit

Since its launch in December, millions have visited an unique Internet project set up to promote a better understanding of the similarities between Christianity and Islam. www.bibleandkoran.net puts the integral texts from the Bible and Koran side by side – search on a given term and references from both books appear allowing the reader to make an instant comparison. Available in English, Dutch and Arabic the project is the brainchild of Radio Netherlands Worldwide and Dutch broadcaster IKON.

Radio Netherlands Worldwide ended its 60th anniversary year on a high note – with a concert featuring 'voices of the world'. DG Jan Hoek – right, accompanying Crown Princess Maxima at the Concertgebouw in Amsterdam – said, "Language breaks through barriers and approaches all people as equals – there is nothing that symbolises our work better than this." The concert was attended by the DGs of international broadcasters across Europe, as well as Dutch parliamentarians and other opinion-formers.



IN BRIEF

VOA INCREASES OUTPUT

The Voice of America's Urdu service added 7½ hours of radio news broadcasts daily, in response to the emergency situation in Pakistan. As the protests in Burma escalated in September, Radio Free Asia and VoA both doubled their Burmese broadcasting hours. In December VoA's Somali Service added an afternoon broadcast. The Broadcasting Board of Governors expressed deep sadness over the death of VoA journalist Alisher Saipov, shot and killed in Kyrgyzstan in October – a fearless journalist, with impeccable skills and deep knowledge of the region.

MEDIA LAWS IN AFRICA

UNESCO has released a study on media laws in ten African countries. 'Media Legislation in Africa: A comparative legal survey' is available online. Guy Berger, head of the School of Journalism and Media Studies at South Africa's Rhodes University, led the research effort which looks at Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Mali, Mozambique, Nigeria, Senegal, South Africa, Tanzania and Zambia and compares the laws of those countries with each other and international standards.

CNN EXPANSION

CNN Worldwide is increasing its staff of correspondents by 10% as part of a US\$10m newsgathering investment. CNN said it would not renew its contract for news from Reuters and instead bolster its own news resources. The investment focuses on the expansion of CNN's UAE bureau. CNN is also hiring staff in Johannesburg and Mexico City and plans operations in Afghanistan, Belgium, India, Malaysia, Nigeria, the Philippines, Poland, Kenya and Vietnam.

Russia outlines broadcasting strategy

The Russian government has approved its TV and radio broadcasting development strategy for 2008-15 and an action plan for its implementation. The plan envisages approving a package of TV and radio channels that will have to be broadcast across the entire country, drawing up and adopting national priority standards in the sphere of TV and radio broadcasting, improving the procedure for licensing broadcasters, taking account of digital technologies and digitising archive material.

The federal targeted programme "The development of TV and radio broadcasting in Russia in 2008-15" will include a cost estimate for the transition to digital broadcasting. Free channels will be financed through advertising; other channels will broadcast and be financed by subscription.

The TV and radio broadcasting development strategy envisages lifting restrictions on channels being operated by one broadcaster, and relations between a broadcaster and a platform operator will be regulated by contract.

Vizrt graphics for CCTV

Vizrt is delivering graphic systems Viz|artist and Viz|trio to China's CCTV to design and create graphics for the 2008 Olympics. The graphics will be used in studios and in the field during the games.

As CCTV awarded the design contract to Vizrt's partner, Reality Check from Los Angeles, many graphics shown in CCTV during the Olympics will be based on Vizrt's software.

Vizrt won both the "normal"

graphics and virtual enhancement contracts in 2007. The deals will be recognized over the two first quarters of 2008.

**Pakistan demands conduct code**

The Committee to Protect Journalists is greatly concerned by pressure being exerted by the Pakistani government on broadcasters to sign a 14-page government-mandated 'code of conduct.' Station owners say they have been told that if they do not sign the agreement, they will not be allowed to return to the air. All broadcasters, minus the official TV channel, have been silent since they were shut down on November 3, soon after President Pervez Musharraf suspended the country's constitution. The Pakistan Electronic Media Regulatory

Authority (PEMRA) has been meeting individually with members of the Pakistani Broadcasters' Association and owners of FM radio stations. So far, about 15 broadcasters have apparently agreed to sign on to the new restrictions, and are now back on the air. Pakistan's four major independent news broadcasters—Ary OneWorld, Aaj TV, Dawn TV, and Geo TV, all owned by larger parent media companies—have not reappeared on cable yet. Some are reaching viewers via streaming Internet and satellite transmission. International broadcasters like

Single-card solution

PANORAMAdtv, the video products division of Wohler Technologies, has released the HDCC-200A HD/SD-SDI dual-channel, closed-caption encoder/decoder bridge, a compact modular solution that simplifies closed-caption encoding of two independent SD and/or HD sources. Compliant with all broadcast standards and CEA-608/708, the HDCC-200A adds convenience and flexibility to digital and multiformat broadcast and production workflows.

Today's digital production and transmission workflows require straightforward yet flexible handling of captioning data for both SD and HD source material. To meet this need worldwide, said Wohler CEO Carl J. Dempsey, they approached one of the world's foremost closed-captioning experts, Elio Deluca of Europa Australia. The result is the HDCC-200A, which provides state-of-the-art processing functionality for SD, HD, or hybrid workflows. The product is the perfect, cost-effective tool for US broadcast and production facilities that must comply with the new FCC requirements.



80% of radio archives are rotting

The Sound Directions project at Harvard and Indiana universities has published the results of two years' research in 'Sound Directions: Best Practices for Audio Preservation'. The work, carried out in consultation with an advisory board of experts in audio engineering, audio preservation and digital libraries, establishes best practices in many areas where they did not previously exist and explores the testing and use of existing and emerging standards. It includes chapters on personnel and equipment for preservation transfer, digital files, metadata,

storage, preservation packages and interchange and audio preservation systems and workflows.

Each chapter is divided into two major parts: a preservation overview that summarises key concepts for collection managers and curators, followed by a section that presents recommended technical practices for audio engineers, digital librarians, and other technical staff.

The work is a must for institutions pursuing audio preservation. A PDF is available from www.dlib.indiana.edu/projects/sounddirections.

Quantel's MAM a winner

Mission, the new media and asset management system from Quantel designed to complement the Enterprise sQ and Newsbox production systems has won Best Storage and Media Asset Management Solution award at the Producción Profesional Awards. Quantel Director of Marketing Steve Owen says Mission makes AM a fully integrated part of the production process – not a layer bolted on top of it.

With Mission Quantel has added to the capabilities of the Enterprise sQ and Newsbox systems and enabled customers to maximise use of their content. Unique to Quantel, users can choose to mix and match Quantel's production systems with MAMs from existing development partners, or with Mission they can choose the route of single vendor responsibility.

GlobeCast goes East

BBC Worldwide's Global Channels business has selected content management and delivery company GlobeCast as its distribution partner for the expansion of its four new entertainment channels to the Telstar 10 and HOT BIRD satellites in Asia and Europe. BBC Knowledge, BBC Entertainment, BBC Lifestyle and CBeebies are currently available to IPTV, DTH and Cable Operators in India, Hong Kong, and Singapore and all four channels launched in Poland with major operator Cyfrowy Polsat in December. This is the latest of several high profile international channel deals for GlobeCast, which boasts France 24 and Al Jazeera English among its global broadcast clients.



Teletrax monitors TV show promotions

CBS Television Distribution will use the Teletrax comprehensive suite of broadcast intelligence services to electronically monitor and analyse affiliate stations' usage of its on-air TV show promotions across all 210 major cities, or DMAs, in the US. Teletrax will provide CTD with reports detailing how its video content is used and aired by affiliate stations, so it can evaluate marketing campaign performance and more precisely measure return-on-investment and maximise profits. Teletrax will monitor the promotions of CTD's top syndicated shows.

Teletrax president Andy Nobbs said that following on from the contract agreement with CBS TV Network, Teletrax was very excited to now also provide broadcast intelligence services to CBS TV Distribution.

Teletrax maintains a proprietary network of detectors that monitors

the TV broadcasts of nearly 1,500 channels from over 50 nations, including all 210 US markets.

Teletrax also announced that it will provide the International Committee of the Red Cross with data on the usage of its video material by broadcasters worldwide.



IN BRIEF

RFI LAUNCHES HAUSA

Radio France Internationale has launched a news service in Nigeria in Hausa, widely spoken in West Africa. Financed by RFI and with collaboration from Voice of Nigeria, the 120-minute Hausa programme is produced locally by a team of five journalists and three technicians. The project has aroused the interest of Tanzania's radio and TV service for a similar collaboration in Swahili.

AUTOCUE FOR POLISH TVP

Highlighting Autocue's growth in Central Europe, the provider of newsroom automation and prompting solutions has clinched a major order from Poland's TVP for an important technology upgrade which incorporates seven new channels, one in HD. The Autocue kit will be delivered to TVP's Warsaw HQ for use across ten of its regional networks. To meet TVP's specific requirements, Autocue customised its Master Series prompters to include S-video inputs as well as including further modifications to enable backwards compatibility with existing mounts.

EU DVB-H RULING

The EU's decision to back DVB-H technology as the standard for mobile TV broadcasts in all member countries is under attack from Germany, Britain and the Netherlands. EU media commissioner Viviane Reding wants to put DVB-H on a list of official standards, and could compel member states to adopt the mobile technology in 2008. Germany, Britain and the Netherlands say no system should be made mandatory and the market should be allowed to decide.

IN BRIEF

WRN DELIVERS RAINBOW

UK-based TV and radio transmission company WRN has signed with Rainbow Radio to broadcast the station to new listeners across North America via the Galaxy 25 digital satellite. Rainbow Radio, which describes itself as "the premier-licensed Ghanaian/West African commercial radio", is currently broadcasting across the UK and Ireland on Sky, for which WRN provides comprehensive satellite and data services.

WORLDSPACE APPOINTS

WorldSpace Satellite Radio has appointed radio industry pioneer Roberto Zaino as content director for WorldSpace Italia. The majority-owned subsidiary expects to begin broadcasting throughout Italy in late 2008, offering a bouquet of 40-50 channels of commercial-free music, news, entertainment, talk and sports programming. FIAT Group will introduce WorldSpace satellite radios as factory-installed optional equipment on some of its models in late 2009.

CITIZEN INITIATIVE

BBC Urdu's website launched its *Your Edition* initiative in India, visiting Lucknow, Bhopal and Hyderabad. Aliya Nazki who took part in the roadshow said the response had been over-whelming, adding "We are now selecting a panel of 'power-users' from the people we interacted with. We will then cultivate 'digital relationships' with these power-users who will write for us and also comment on our journalism. Within 3-9 months we hope to turn our power-users into 'citizen editors', launching a micro-site called 'Your Edition' by the end of 2008."

Global satellite demand still rising

According to research company NSR's latest "Global Assessment of Satellite Demand", every region of the world is showing sustained growth from DTH, and NSR sees no reason for this to change before 2012. Achieving the highest growth rate of any market segment for the coming years, Ku-band video services such as distribution for FTA and cable headends, DTH, contribution and occasional use are certainly the highlight of the global commercial satellite market. NSR forecasts that over 500 36-MHz transponder equivalents of Ku-band capacity will be added to global capacity demand between 2004 and 2008 with half of these transponders coming from DTH markets alone.

The classic telephony & carrier market, which still accounts for 18% of all leased commercial C-band and Ku-band capacity, remains weak and



it has only been robust demand for cellular backhaul services in many regions that has offset the slow decline in traditional point-to-point voice and other non-IP data traffic.

In North America and Western Europe the addition of over 100 HD channels in 2006 for C-band and Ku-band video distribution and DTH services on commercial capacity was significantly offset by the loss of about 30 analogue channels this same year. These two major markets, accounting for 21% and 13% of the global number of leased transponders, are unfortunately seeing the enormous benefits of HD being partially eroded by analogue-to-digital transition, though NSR expects the situation to turn around shortly.

Elsewhere, NSR has seen demand growth delayed. In markets like South Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa demand growth has been delayed because of lack of supply. This in turn is leading to a wave of satellite operators rushing to launch new capacity to capture this demand, leading possibly to oversupply two to three years down the line.

CanWest with S4M

Canadian broadcaster CanWest MediaWorks and German company S4M – Solutions for Media have successfully concluded the main phase of a major joint project. In conjunction with CanWest MediaWorks, S4M has designed and implemented a highly integrated broadcast management solution based upon the S4M products S4Rights, S4Schedule and S4AdSales. "CanWest is the first conventional broadcaster in Canada to completely move all stations to an integrated and customer-focused business management system", said Brett Manlove, SVP of Broadcast Sales and Marketing, CanWest MediaWorks. All conventional stations for CanWest MediaWorks' Global Television and E! Networks have gone "live." S4M's solution has eliminated the need for 3 distinct and separate software systems along with 8 separate databases. It positions CanWest as a 'leading edge' broadcaster able to meet the future needs and requirements in a highly competitive environment.

Thomson delivers HDTV for ARD

In what was the first public demonstration of a HDTV channel from a public broadcaster in Germany, nationwide broadcast network ARD went on air with a public HDTV showcase for a limited demonstration period, using equipment supplied, installed, and integrated by Thomson. The system was installed at the ARD Play-Out-Centre Potsdam, near Berlin.

To add the HD capability without increasing the workload on the Play-Out-Centre, Thomson's systems integration engineers installed a four-channel HD K2 media server alongside the

existing standard definition system, which uses Grass Valley Profile servers. The HD version of K2 was architected to enable SD customers to simply plug in a new HD K2 client into an existing SD infrastructure and immediately start playing HD to air.

ARD needed to add HD capability to its existing Potsdam play-out center without any disruption of its existing SD services, as well as to design, implement, install, and commission the HD system in the very tight timeline of just ten weeks.

According to Patrick

Montlaid, SVP of Thomson's Integration and Networking Solutions business unit, there is tremendous consumer demand for HDTV from Europe's leading public broadcasters. ARD and ZDF, Germany's two public channels, both plan to start HD broadcasts by 2010.



Censorship across borders



Triggered by the declaration of the state of emergency in Pakistan on 3 November and the subsequent broadcast ban on major private news channels, BBC Monitoring published an interesting piece of analysis on Dubai Media City.

Since it opened in 2001, DMC has become a major hub for regional and international media. 22% of the 370 Arabic satellite TV channels are based in the UAE. News agencies, publications and broadcasters from Europe, America and the Indian sub-continent have also taken advantage of the tax breaks, facilities and incentives offered by Dubai. The MTV music channel launched its MTV Arabia venture

there, and CNN International is reportedly planning to establish a regional headquarters in the UAE as part of its global expansion.

But in mid-November, Pakistan's two leading private news channels, Geo News and ARY One World, based in Dubai, were ordered to stop their transmissions at a few hours' notice in line with the UAE's policy of neutrality and non-interference. Although their cable distribution inside Pakistan had been halted, the channels continued broadcasting by satellite to international audiences and the small number of Pakistanis with satellite receivers. Both private channels claimed they were forced off air

by pressure from Pakistani President Pervez Musharraf.

The New York-based Human Rights Watch said that the ban raised "serious questions about Dubai's viability as a regional hub for the international media". For the record, the Pakistani case is not the first time that the politics of neighbouring countries has affected broadcasters, or would-be broadcasters, in Dubai. The IFJ also voiced concern that Dubai had allowed Pakistan to reach outside its borders to stifle independent media.

In the meantime, both Geo News and ARY have resumed broadcasting but both channels are reported to be considering moving out of Dubai.

DAB adoption

RadioScape, the world's leading developer of end-to-end digital audio broadcasting solutions, has created new digital radio designs in response to manufacturers and brands looking for fresh concepts to drive greater growth in DAB adoption. Among them are RadioScape's DAB-on-a-wire plug-in digital radio for the iPod and the world's first portable internet radio with built-in Wi-Fi and FM antennae, 2.1 audio output, plus an option for a 128 x 64 pixels graphics LCD display and its unique 'touchnav' touch-sensitive slide control.

RadioScape CEO John Hall says DAB+ has been particularly well received in the Asia-Pacific region. Asia-Pacific - particularly Greater China - plays an increasingly significant role in RadioScape's global business strategy, opening its third regional office in Greater China.

SARFT has designated 2008 for digital switch-over to DAB in China. RadioScape is already the primary supplier of DAB-based broadcast solutions in the country, supplying 20 systems broadcasting to most of China's major cities.

InterMedia opens in UK

InterMedia, the media research, evaluation and consulting organisation (www.intermedia.org), has announced the launch of subsidiary InterMedia UK to act as the focal point for the company's growth.

InterMedia's European clients include the BBC, Deutsche Welle and Channel One Russia, as well as NGOs such as Panos London. "InterMedia UK's presence in Europe and location closer to key centres in the Middle East and Africa will allow us to better serve broadcasters and other clients who have expanding worldwide operations," said

Allen Cooper, InterMedia UK's managing director.

InterMedia conducts research and evaluation among difficult-to-access populations in some 60 developing countries annually. Cooper brings more than 25 years' experience planning and managing international media research, both at InterMedia and with the BBC World Service.



War crimes justice

The Institute for War and Peace Reporting and Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty have cooperated in a radio programme on war crimes justice in the Balkans. Broadcast by RFE/RL's network of 40 affiliate radio stations in the region, it has combined reports from the Inter-national Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia and war crimes justice-related news, features and analysis from the Balkans.

A survey in Bosnia in December 2006 shows 15% of the population listens to RFE/RL regularly - around 600,000 people. 39% of the audience is aged 25 to 44.

In November, RFE/RL launched a weekly show on Georgian Public TV (GPB) introducing the young generation forgotten or undiscovered cultural figures and political themes of Georgia's Soviet communist past.

In December a high-level conference in Warsaw examined the role of RFE in the political transformations in Poland and the collapse of communism. Former Prime Minister Tadeusz Mazowiecki said that the Munich-based station served for decades as the only source of uncensored information available to the Poles.

IN BRIEF

PHAROS IMPROVES FLOW

For over ten years Pharos has constantly developed its Mediator, Playtime and Pilot desktop broadcast management solutions to offer a next-generation platform to better manage the flow of media through broadcast facilities. At the Video Forum & Broadcast Live 2008 in London (January 30 - February 1) Pharos will showcase the latest additions to its desktop media management, automation and control systems: the Mediator Library Management module, Playtime studio tools and additions to Pilot desktop control.

NEPAL EXCESSES

According to the Federation of Nepalese Journalists, one journalist was killed, one abducted and 652 cases of excesses against media workers and media houses were recorded following the start of a democratic system of governance in the country. The study by the FNJ was carried out between April 2006 and December 2007. During this period, 55 media institutions were closed down and information collection and flow was stopped in 33 cases.

BURMA RAISES SATELLITE FEES

Burma's government has introduced immense increases in the cost of the annual licence for satellite TV receivers. From 1 January, the fee increased from 6,000 kyats (around US\$5) per annum to one million kyats. The new fee is around three times the annual salary of a Burma primary school teacher, according to the Kyodo news agency. Observers suggest that the fee increase is part of an attempt to prevent Burma's citizens from accessing news from abroad.

Media restriction condemned

The heads of five of the largest international broadcasters have called upon governments to honour the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights and "end any and all practices that hamper the rights of people everywhere to receive and impart information."

At their annual meeting in Hilversum, Netherlands, directors of the BBC World Service, Deutsche Welle, Radio France Internationale, Radio Netherlands Worldwide, and Voice of America issued an unprecedented joint resolution denouncing growing trends towards media restrictions and attacks on journalists in many of the countries to which they broadcast.

While acknowledging that each broadcaster has had different experiences, they spoke with one voice about a common concern, the "grave and rising threats to the right to gather information and communicate it across national borders." Jan Hoek, Director General of Radio Netherlands Worldwide who currently chairs the group of five broadcasters, said, "Our

most important objective is to inform people without access to diverse media sources and viewpoints, who lack reliable and independent information. In a progressively polarised environment where the media in many countries are encountering fierce curbs on their freedom to publish, we need to stand together to meet the needs of those millions of audiences worldwide who have come to depend on us as a vital source of trustworthy information."

According to several press monitoring organisations, press freedom has been on the decline in many countries in recent years. The Paris-based Reporters Without Borders has tracked an increase in the number of journalists killed at work each year since 2002.

The five international broadcasters reach hundreds of millions weekly by radio, television, and the Internet. Programmes are produced in 60 languages and broadcast worldwide through thousands of affiliate radio stations, television channels, and cable systems.

Tracking everywhere

Audience survey company Médiamétrie is rolling out a new system using inaudible tones embedded in TV broadcasts that give a richer view of the popularity of shows by demographic group and format. Ultimately, the aim is to track select volunteers beyond their living rooms and TV sets to radio, personal computers, mobile phones and perhaps video game consoles that double as tiny TV sets, giving broadcasters and advertisers valuable data on consumer habits wherever they are.

DW Forum

The first Deutsche Welle Global Media Forum will take place in Bonn, 2-4 June 2008. The philosophy driving the initiative is that those working on the future have to think in networks - and in global dimensions. The forum will address topics such as crisis prevention via media intervention; reading between the lines - perception and prejudice in the Middle East; journalism training in post-conflict states. Details online at www.dw-gmf.de.

France digital

France will use two separate standards for digital radio broadcasting - T-DMB, based on the Eureka 147 standard in use in the UK and other parts of the world, and Digital Radio Mondiale. The announcement will help the country's plans to develop a commercial launch of digital radio in 2008.

However the French Digital Radio Association had hoped that DAB+ would be adopted in the country instead of T-DMB which it says increases costs two or three times over DAB+. DRM will be the standard for frequencies up to 30MHz, while T-DMB will

be on Band II and L-band channels. France becomes the first country to mandate DRM as a broad-casting standard. French media regulator CSA is expected to advertise tenders for digital radio services with the first launches at the end of 2008.

In Australia, media regulator ACMA has invited applications for licences to operate digital radio muxes in each state capital city. There will be two muxes available in Sydney, Melbourne and Brisbane and one in Adelaide, Hobart and Perth. It is possible that DAB+ will be the standard rolled-out in Australia.



BBC poll finds world divided on press freedom

To celebrate the BBC World Service's 75th anniversary, the BBC commissioned a poll of 11,344 people across 14 countries on the importance of press freedom.

While an average of 56% across all countries think that freedom of the press is very important to ensure a free society, 40% believe that social harmony and peace are more important, even if it means controlling what is reported for the greater good. 56% think the press and media in their country is free to report the news accurately without bias. Only 19% say there is little or no media freedom in their country.

Private and publicly funded news organisations receive similar ratings from the public when it comes to reporting the news honestly and accurately. In some countries the poll shows concern over the ownership of private media. Strong majorities in Brazil (80%), Mexico (76%), USA (74%), and Great Britain (71%) believe that the concentration of media ownership in fewer hands is a concern because owners'

political views emerge in reporting.

Of the countries where press freedom is most highly valued, Western developed countries are more critical of how honestly and accurately the news is reported, including Germany (28% average rating for good performance of public and private media), Great Britain (29%), and the USA (29%) whereas Venezuela (44%), South Africa (49%), Nigeria (58%), and Kenya (61%) rate the media performance more positively.



TV network devoted to death

German satellite broadcaster Etos TV hopes to move reality TV to the next stage with the world's first bereavement channel.

Etos TV founder Wolf Tilmann Schneider said: 'Over 800,000 people die in Germany every year but the death notices in the paper say nothing about them. The regular media completely ignores this topic.' Etos TV will be based on three programming pillars. The first will be short film obituaries about the recently deceased. Mr Schneider's business partners, the German association of undertakers, will

gather picture and video material from relatives and help write texts for voice-overs. The station will broadcast the film for a fee of EUR 2,000.

Another programming strand will feature reportage about the world's most beautiful graveyards.

Finally, the station will broadcast advice and discussion programmes covering issues it thinks will be of interest to its target over-50s audience. The station will broadcast for three hours daily over the Astra satellite from 2008 onwards.

RNZI's awards



Radio New Zealand International's honours at the AIB Media Excellence Awards (International Radio Station of the Year and Most Innovative Partnership) made waves in New Zealand and the Pacific.

Congratulations flooded in from NZ stakeholders and media partners and listeners across the Pacific. NZ Broadcasting Minister Trevor Mallard (above) called it an "outstanding achievement" and said the broadcaster's service is now "more valued than ever", as it delivers independent news, reporting and programmes to residents of the Pacific.

In December, Tongan journalist Anau Fonokalafi, winner of the Pacific News Association/RNZI Best Pacific Junior Journalist 2007 award, joined RNZI for an all expenses paid working attachment with the RNZI news team.

IN BRIEF

CHINA IN KENYA

China continues its march into the media markets of Africa, following in the footsteps of the country's commercial companies tapping into the rich natural resources of the continent. CCTV9 is starting joint programmes with Kenya Broadcasting Corporation. KBC's MD David Waweru says the two organisations have been successfully working together for the past five years and it has been "beneficial for both China and Kenya." China Radio International's first African FM relay is in Nairobi.

BLANK SCREENS

European broadcasters oppose a proposal by the European Commission to open radio frequencies to mobile phone operators and say digital TV screens could go blank as a result. The wide-ranging proposals aim to boost competition in broadband and wireless services by giving national regulators powers to split dominant operators. The reform would also treat the radio spectrum as 'service neutral,' opening any frequency to whoever pays for it - such as telecoms companies, broadcasters or the aviation sector.

BRAZIL ADOPTS JAPAN STANDARD

Brazil started terrestrial digital TV programmes in December, the first foreign nation to adopt Japan's digital TV standard. Brazil's six major commercial TV broadcasters are now delivering terrestrial digital services to 1,000 households in and around Sao Paulo. Brazil is intent on having DTT broadcasts nationwide by 2013, blending Brazil's own technology with the Japanese technology. Chile and Peru are also considering the Japanese standard.



CV

NAME

Hanh Tran

DATE OF BIRTH

February 1954

CAREER

Hanh Tran came to Australia as a Colombo Plan student in the late 1970's, and studied forestry and media. He then lectured in Photomedia at the Canberra Institute of the Arts, and headed the photography school at the Australian Centre for Photography. In 1993 he joined Radio Australia's Vietnamese Service as a producer, then moved to the BBC World Service in London, heading their Vietnamese Service from 1997 until 2001. After a 5-year break to look after his three children, Hanh returned to the ABC as a consultant and executive producer for Radio Australia's Vietnamese Service, which moved from shortwave broadcasts to an interactive and aspirational online service ('Bay Vut'). In May 2007 Hanh was appointed Chief Executive of Radio Australia, with immediate effect.

MEDIA USE

In the morning he turns to radio straight away – the only medium that allows him to keep track of things without being burdened with looking at a screen

FAVOURITES

Films and cinema are his passion. Keen gardener and keen photographer: is either growing something or taking pictures of the things that he has just grown. Contributes to ABC staff exhibitions that happen from time to time



NOT PLAYING IT SAFE

Hanh Tran is less than one year into his post at the head of Australia's international radio broadcaster.

He's had a busy few months, but was pleased to talk to *The Channel* about the station and his plans.

What's been happening at Radio Australia since you took over?

Internally we have a lot of housekeeping to do. Basically I changed the way we produce our content to make sure everyone talks to everyone else, get a bit of cross-fertilisation going and the two-way traffic flow between English, which is the backbone of content, and our six other languages. Externally, we have to maintain our relationship with rebroadcasters – we have got a couple of new ones – and we had to look at expansion into audiences we haven't been able to reach before, like in India, Korea, Burma.

What are your priorities for Radio Australia?

Expansion without additional resources, that's a real challenge. Also coping with a market that is changing so fast, and trying to serve two sets of audiences. We are dealing with a loyal core audience who is still listening to short wave but we are trying to recruit new audiences who use mainly the internet. We are focused on Asia-Pacific. The Pacific mainly relies on our SW broadcasts, internet is not very reliable. In Asia we have on the one hand Vietnam with one of the highest internet uptakes in South-East Asia, and then countries that are still very fragmented in terms of platforms like Cambodia, Indonesia, and to some extent China. So we have to cope with a wide spectrum of access to the new media.

Vietnam is a test case for Radio Australia – it was the first language dropped for direct

broadcasts and moved to the web. What has the response been?

Our loyal listeners who are now mostly in their sixties and have still got their short wave radios complain bitterly of course, as do people who live in the countryside and don't have access to the internet. But regrettably, this is no longer our target audience. We want urban educated aspirational audiences and we hope that by serving this group the benefit will trickle down once they become leaders and opinion formers. The Vietnamese service had to drop the short wave because we can't do the internet very well if we have to spread our resources to transmissions at the same time. It was a hard choice in the beginning but in the end it became the only choice for us. In a sense Vietnam provides a template – I think eventually in countries like Cambodia, Indonesia, China, the young will take the internet and leave SW radio behind. The signs are there. Even where the short wave radio is available it is not the medium of choice because people are too mobile now, they want things to be portable, to be downloadable.

So broadcasters have to adapt to the way people are living their lives, rather than the other way round.

That's right. From my experience it seems that broadcasters change rather more slowly than our audiences. That is a problem and a challenge to manage this.

What does this new audience expect?

People are not terribly worried about political struggle any more, they aim for a better life, for more affluence, and they look to learning English, to a gateway to studying overseas to better their own lives. They are very worldly in terms of how to handle information pouring

in from western broadcasters like ourselves. So in that kind of environment we have to compete pretty hard to give them something that they can't find elsewhere. So we have to tailor our English lessons and aim at people who want to come and study in Australia.

Can Radio Australia's pioneering work serve as a blueprint for other international broadcasters?

There are lessons that we can learn from everyone else operating in this market. I am not sure whether we are leading in any area but I am sure that in Vietnam in terms of internet service to young audiences we have broken new ground. But I don't want to feel that the task is done because it is like hitting a moving target – once you think you have got something tied down it starts to move again. Right now we realise that the web site we designed barely twelve months ago needs updating because people want blogging, they want to express themselves, they want to interact a lot more. And there is not only the availability of resources, we are also coping with a workforce that is ageing and that is not amenable to change, not very adaptable at all. I try to be modest and I am an optimist but I don't think that success is going to be quick.

What can you offer audiences that other broadcasters can't?

We have proximity which works to our advantage, we pride ourselves on being very adaptable and finely tuned to the needs of audiences, on having local knowledge. Because we can't compete with well resourced broadcasters like the BBC we have to find niche markets which means that we have to be very sharp in reading the market and be prepared to make hard decisions to do a very limited number of things and not playing safe. It's a risky strategy but if

“ I am an optimist but I don't think that success is going to be quick ”



you get it right it will work. I am not sure there are any lessons that bigger broadcasters can learn from Radio Australia because our situation is quite unique.

Would you like to see technology suppliers making what you are doing on cross-media platforms easier?

At the moment, we are not ahead of technology, we are behind. We are still not fully capable of utilising a lot of the existing technology. And it's not just the technological side, we are also facing a management structure that is not very adaptable. Sometimes I feel frustrated that we are coping with a fairly traditional mode of thinking, and that applies to IT matters and editorial protocol. A lot of these things will be decided at a level above mine, change is going to be very slow.

Is India somewhere you are looking to expand to?

We are thinking of spreading the English content there, we won't have a Hindi service like the BBC or anything like that. Sport would give us a foot in the door and then we have to think about the content because it is a very sophisticated audience. We haven't got a comprehensive strategy worked out yet but we take heart with the

▲ Radio Australia advertised on a tuk tuk in Phnom Penh

progress made by our sister network, Australia Network, who is doing very well in having their cable TV shown in India.

Is there a synergy between Radio Australia and Australia Network?

Cross-promotion is something that we have started to do, and in technical terms there is great potential in piggy-backing on their signal in India.

In the future could Radio Australia and Australia Network news producers be one and the same, working across both platforms?

At the moment a review is in progress which looks at the operation of the two newsrooms – to see how the two could work together to avoid duplication, to cross-fertilise, all those things. We should have some concrete plan by February or March 2008.

So it is a time of immense potential change?

Yes, the fact that both the radio and TV network will come together under the same umbrella if you like, ABC International, will make it a lot easier for branding and that kind of thing - exciting times. I think we are going to combine our resources, produce a lot of multi-

“ People are not terribly worried about political struggle any more, they aim for a better life. They are very worldly in terms of how to handle information pouring in from western broadcasters like ourselves ”

media material, so 2008 will be an exciting year.

What about the future – any wishes?

What I would like to do is to become a really well recognised brand name among our audience. People would see us as the first port of call when they look for information on study opportunities in Australia; in times of crisis in this region they will rely on us as an honest broker of information. And I would like us to be a little bit more adept at producing multi-media content because eventually that will replace the radio platform. I'd like to extend the network of FM rebroadcasters, and that gives us the look and feel of someone who has a lot of local knowledge because when you go to the internet it does not have that local feel. It's about trying to create that intimacy between Radio Australia and the audience.

Hanh Tran, thank you for talking to The Channel. ■

www.abc.net.au/ra



MEMBERS

Platinum

demonstrating commitment to international broadcasting and support for the industry and the AIB at the highest level



Gold

demonstrating strategic support of international broadcasting and the AIB



Corporate

demonstrating an active role in international broadcasting

Al Arabiya; Al Hurra/Radio Sawa; ABU - Asia-Pacific Broadcasting Union; APTN - Associated Press Television News; ABC Radio Australia; Autocue; Broadcasting Agency of Montenegro; Broadcasting Board of Governors (BBG); Deutsche Welle; Getin Media; GlobeCast; Hellas Sat; InterMedia Survey Institute; The Islam Channel; Linx Productions; Media Asset Capital; Norcom Information Technology; Pharos Communications; Quantel; Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty; Radio France Internationale; Radio Netherlands; Radio New Zealand International; Radio Prague; Radio Romania International; Radio Taiwan International; RadioScape PLC; RRSat; S4M Media Solutions; Teletrax Limited; Vizrt; VT Communications; Voice of Nigeria; Wohler Technologies; WRN

THE LATEST FROM THE AIB

The AIB is an increasingly influential networking organisation and industry association – which is why more companies are enrolling as members. Bloomberg Television and Thomson are the two latest major organisations that have joined the AIB, bringing their expertise and knowledge to the organisation and sharing in the intelligence network that the AIB provides to all its members.

Our members describe the AIB as a “networking club par excellence”, bringing together opinion-formers across the industry and providing a wide range of contacts that help members get business done.

The AIB does much more. We have a first rate intelligence-gathering service that informs our members about developments in the industry and provides analysis that helps them in developing strategy in the ever more complex international media industry. We celebrate excellence and reward success in our annual Media Excellence Awards (you can see who won our 2007 Awards in the special supplement in this edition of The Channel). We bring people together through our top-level, invitation-only working dinners held in key cities around the world. We report and promote through this magazine and our online newsletter – together these publications reach more than 25,000 people. We provide contact data and market updates in our annual AIB Directory of Global Broadcasting. We encourage the sharing of ideas among members through our regular conference calls.

And we offer genuine cost-savings through specially-negotiated discounts at industry events, such as the FT Digital Media and Broadcasting Conference and IPTV World Forum taking place in the first quarter of 2008 and at events such as the Arab Broadcast Forum and Middle East Broadcasting Summit later this year.

Significantly we don't just look inwards. We look at what is happening around the industry and in related sectors. Mobile telephony, digital design, social networking – all these are having an impact on traditional broadcasting and we're making sure that the AIB and its members have information, data and intelligent analysis to help them enter new markets and attract new audiences.

With all this going on, life at the AIB is busy and stimulating for the whole team – but we wouldn't have it any other way. So do talk to us about what the AIB can do for you. We're keen to start a conversation with you.

SIMON SPANSWICK CHIEF EXECUTIVE

“We look at what is happening around the industry - mobiles, social networking, digital design”



NOT FOLLOWING, LEADING

MD **Nigel Parsons** led **Al Jazeera English** out of the starting blocks for a spectacular first 12-month lap. Media response to the new international news channel, he says, has been 'unremittingly positive'



I think if there was one new international channel that was desperately needed it was this one. We are headquartered in the Middle East, the world's news hot spot, and we have the heritage of Al Jazeera Arabic channel whose brand of fearless journalism we want to build on.

We are headquartered in the developing world and looking at reporting from the political south to the political north. Previously news has always gone in the other direction, and so we felt a new perspective was very much overdue.

How do you define your success one year in?

Within weeks of our launch we were already referred to as one of the "Big Three" - we consider that a phenomenal achievement to be put on that pedestal with people who have been in the business a long time. I think we have been very successful in sticking to our mission statement, particularly in terms of being the channel of reference in the English language when it comes to the Middle East,

and being the channel of the developing world and giving, if you like, a voice to the voiceless. In places like Africa we are, anecdotally, already the channel of choice. I had a call the other night from someone who had just been to Afghanistan and he was astonished to see that the only channel anyone is watching there - from American troops to UN people to people in cafes - is Al Jazeera English.

Why haven't your competitors tried to beat you at your own game?

They have in a way but you are what you are. If you are a zebra, you are stuck with the stripes. If you are coming out of a major power it is very difficult not to reflect some of the agenda of that country. Ours is a bit woolly, we are based in the Middle East so we do reflect to the Middle East but we are also a tiny state. Every story we do is a foreign story.

Some people say that coming from the Middle East you might have a bias.

Not true. The latest survey by Arab Media Watch which included all the

“I admire the professionalism of the established players and would never underestimate them. Our job is to catch them up and overtake them”

major international channels and all the major Arab channels which focused on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict found AJE by far the most impartial channel. We are covering the Middle East from the inside out and it is very important that people in other parts of the world understand the perspectives of regions such as this. I think people in Europe far more than elsewhere understand the consequences of what's been committed in places like Iraq in the name of democracy. And if we are guilty of showing the ugly side of war so be it. That's our job.

Some of your fiercest critics are people who haven't seen the channel - how do you correct that view?

The US is quite a difficult market but there's been a sea change there. The media articles that are written about us are all favourable now and they all say "We need to see this channel, we need to understand the world we are living in". I think perceptions are changing in our favour.

What's your key objective when it comes to carriage?

We are in over 100m households



Launched 15 November 2006

Key personnel Nigel Parsons (Managing Director), Ibrahim Helal (Deputy MD, News and Programming), Steve Clark (Director of News and Programmes)

Funded by the State of Qatar; budget not disclosed

Staff 1000 (a little under half are journalists)

Viewers (households) 100 million

Where available see www.aljazeera.net/english for a full list

Mission To be the world's leading international English language news network

now across the world which is phenomenal within a year of launch. We have our own channel on YouTube which is heavily watched, gets up to 100,000 downloads a day, about half of them from the States. Apart from the small cable deals we have in the States we are available to American customers of GlobeCast – there are almost 2m receivers out there. We are increasingly active in places like Latin America, Asia is an important area for us, in Africa we are still looking to expand, so it's on all fronts all the time, we are strengthening our distribution team quite significantly.

You have had a very active correspondent in Pakistan. Is AJE being watched in the country?

Yes, it is being widely watched. We want to be there as the story develops. I think in Pakistan we have been ahead of the game from day one in terms of the international channels. We have had a few successes like that this year – in Burma/Myanmar

we were the only ones who stayed in reporting after the crackdown. Everyone stayed outside and said they weren't allowed in - well, we weren't allowed in either but we still were there.

How do you see your relationship with the other players?

I admire the professionalism of the established players and would never underestimate them, and our job is to catch them up and overtake them. Others have got a slightly different agenda: they have acknowledged themselves they are there to put the point of view of their country. I think they will struggle for a mass audience because they will struggle to be relevant across borders.

Does Al Jazeera have plans for more languages?

It's an idea that's always on the table but there are no immediate plans to branch out into other languages. We need a

▲ **Main Image:**
Nigel Parsons in
the Al Jazeera
English
newsroom
Top right: Al
Jazeera, Doha

period of consolidation.

Feedback from the audience – how are you measuring that?

There are snap surveys of sample groups on our web site and unsolicited feedback. The media itself has been unrelentingly positive.

What about non-traditional platforms – is traditional TV dying?

If it is dying, it is going to be a very long and slow death. I don't put all these different platforms in separate boxes, I think they are all part of the same product. The central product, for the time being anyway, is still TV. In the Middle East only 6% are connected to broadband, so TV has a way to go here, similarly in Africa. It is a huge advantage for us actually that so many of our audience will rely on TV for years to come so we can stand back and watch other broadcasters experiment with all the new toys and new channels, and sooner or later one will emerge dominant and that is the one we will go for.

Nigel Parsons, thank you for talking to The Channel. ■



MOSCOW VIEWS

Margarita Simonyan has been heading international TV news channel **Russia Today** since its launch in 2005, and her credentials for the job are impressive. Has reporting from war-torn areas and G8 summits prepared her for the challenge of promoting a Russian TV channel to the West?

Russia has always received a lot of media coverage, but this often lacked depth and “local knowledge”. So initially the idea was that Russia Today, the first English-language news channel broadcasting from Russia, would present a view on events in Russia that’s different from what viewers get through other channels. Soon we realized we can give our viewers more choice by providing a different picture of the world beyond Russia. We have bureaux in London, Paris, Jerusalem, Cairo, Washington, New York and many freelancers around the world. But the world news we present is the news as seen from Moscow, and of course that means Russia, Eastern Europe and Central Asia get special attention. We take pride in having immediate access to many top politicians and the best experts in all these regions. And the channel’s slogan “Proud to be different” reflects our determination to find the stories that rarely make it to TV, or to bring another dimension to

the news that people already know, or think they know.

What are the successes of the first year?

We are the first Russian TV station to launch its own virtual channel on YouTube, featuring RT videos 24 hours a day. We have gained carriage on many platforms - more than 60 cable operators carry Russia Today now. One recent addition is Time Warner which brings RT to New York and part of New Jersey. Additionally, TV viewers all over the world can watch Russia Today by receiving an unencrypted signal directly from more than ten satellites.

What are the key markets?

Key markets for RT’s English service are Europe and the US. Recently we launched a large promo campaign, both on the internet and in print, aimed at the European and American audience, and as a result we’ve noticed growing interest and brand recognition. It’s still less than two years since Russia Today was launched but we believe that in a relatively short time the channel has earned the respect of viewers

and fellow journalists the world over for its commitment to independent journalism, and its professional attitude.

How do you measure your audience?

There is a complicated system in place to arrive at figures for the direct and the internet audience. This is based on subscriber figures from cable operators, and an analysis of activity on our website. We constantly monitor the viewer’s activity on RT’s YouTube channel, as all our major stories always get listed in the contents of the channel, and it helps us get instant feedback from our viewers.

What platforms are part of your delivery strategy?

According to eMarketer research, some 90m users surf the Internet even when watching TV. We are very active in using alternative ways of broadcasting and communicating with the world. We are working on further developing our video channel on YouTube, and we are also considering joining several other internet video sharing services. RT is about to launch a ►



► Moscow metro

◀ Russia Today in New York

**Launched** 10 December 2005**Key personnel** Margarita Simonyan (Editor-in-Chief), Deputies: Denis Trunov, Alexey Nikolov, Vladimir Belko**Budget** US\$30m**Staff** 700+**Potential audience** 35m households = 105m viewers**Where available** on satellite in the UK, France, The Netherlands, Belgium, Northern Europe, Spain, Poland, South Africa; on over 60 cable platforms; for full list see www.russiatoday.com

completely redesigned corporate website – we believe our designers have managed to implement the best trends of web 2.0 concepts, featuring a diversified yet easy to navigate system of menus and links, feedback and voting mechanisms.

What about TV on mobiles?

Phoning and SMS-messaging are still dominant. As 3G network solutions are not yet supported in Russia, it's too early to talk about promoting real time video on mobile phones. However, the mobile industry is developing rapidly here and I'm sure we'll see all the latest trends implemented in the near future. Russians already use their phones to access the internet and multimedia, read RSS feeds, etc. which proves that when it comes to mobile TV applications the solution will find its users. At present, no TV programming is available on mobile phones but we at Russia Today are definitely planning to do that.

What are the challenges of marketing RT?

Trying to promote a Russian TV channel in the West is indeed a

challenge. Let's face it, many people have a stereotyped and biased attitude towards Russia in general and the Russian media in particular. We face this kind of bias occasionally, mostly from people who have never seen any of our output. Usually all it takes to overcome this prejudice is to ask people to watch RT and make their own judgment. But this is a process that consumes time and money. Most of our journalists and reporters are Russian, and although their English is of a very high standard, using the foreign language presents an additional challenge. Otherwise, we are not different from any international TV channel. The market in global media is becoming very crowded, comparisons between the performances of different stations continue to be made, and we all try our best.

What is the relationship with other INCs?

Overall, I believe it's definitely more about complementing each other than competing. We believe there is actually more interesting news in the world than one channel

can fit in its output. With our in-depth knowledge of certain parts of the globe we have an edge when covering events there, and our colleagues use more and more of our exclusive footage. Other channels will be stronger in other regions. There is occasionally a bit of healthy competition when it comes to stories that are universally recognized as top-liners.

Does RT play a part in Russia's public diplomacy?

We simply do not think in such terms. Russia Today is a media outlet and does not intend to be anything else.

And the outlook for the future?

In the short term, we are launching in Spanish in 2008. In the long term, my team and I would be happy to see RT as one of the world's leading news channels. If we manage along the way to create more interest around the globe in what's going on in Russia, that would be an added bonus.

Margarita Simonyan, thank you. ■

“There is more interesting news in the world than one channel can fit in its output”



IT'S A NEW RACE FOR THE MARKET SHARE

International news channel **France 24** launched on the web before its satellite distribution began – a well conceived and executed campaign that was recently recognised with the AIB Award for "Most creative marketing concept". With CEO **Alain de Pouzilhac** at the helm, the channel has been breaking all records in achieving carriage worldwide

Opinion leaders are watching more and more international news on the internet and TV, but at the same time they are more sceptical about what they watch. People are also increasingly watching international news channels because security is a top priority for all who travel. Previously, there were only two international channels delivering news in English, BBC and CNN, giving their vision of the world. We decided to launch France 24 broadcasting international news with

a French perspective, to look at the world with diversity.

Do your news items differ from the BBC or CNN?

Our analysis of international news promotes diversity of opinion, thought and approach. The BBC looks at the world with diversity like us but we are totally different from the BBC and CNN in that we also convey the French tradition of 'culture' and the art of living - we consider 'culture' important for the development of civilisation, not just economy. And in contrast to CNN we start a debate – we try to provide a

spirit of confrontation and contradiction with regard to international news. We try to explain all different points of view, and in this we differ from the other channels.

So you think there is more balance on France 24?

More balance than on CNN – yes, more balance than on the BBC – no, I'd say we are equally balanced. I think that objectivity does not exist in international news. You report with honesty, independence and impartiality about the facts and what you have seen. But we are influenced by our religion, our education, our country, by our environment. We try to develop a French point of view. To have all these different points of view is good for objectivity.

Is an organisation that puts a particular perspective onto news going to struggle for a mass audience?

No, I think internet has changed totally the basis of our audience. Basically we have two target audiences. The first is traditional opinion-formers, in industrial countries approximately 15% of the population – everybody is trying to reach them. Then we have the new opinion leaders which represent roughly 30%. New opinion leaders are not necessarily senior executives or people who travel a lot – they utilise technology to influence the community. If you combine these two target groups, you reach about one third of the world population who are interested in international news. That's the reason why we decided to launch France 24 first on the internet before starting broadcasts.

What about feedback from the audience?

Audience feedback for us is crucial. For the internet, we have put in place measurement of monthly user figures – in October 2007 it was 4.3 million. We are waiting for the results of the EMS research

which will be available in early 2008. So far we know from EOLS 2007 (European Opinion Leaders Survey) that France 24 reached a 9% market share weekly in Europe. Every two months we get the figures for the evolution of our market share, and that for me is the key driver in our future strategy.

What has been your impact in the Middle East?

It was very important that France 24 launched in English – because 80-85% of opinion formers around the world do not speak or understand French. Then we realized that 60-80% of the population in the Middle East don't speak English or French. We believe that the main challenge in the 21st century is to prevent a conflict between Muslim and Western countries. And to do that we have to put our point of view in this part of the world, and to do that we have to speak Arabic. We are soon going to Arabic 24 hours. After that, in 2009, we must launch in Spanish, and then in 2010 we must decide whether we want to broadcast in German or Mandarin – this will depend on what happens in the Chinese market.

There is talk of a merger between France 24 and RFI and TV5.

The French government is right that we have to see how we can be more efficient worldwide and how we can develop more synergy between these three channels. TV5 is French of course but also serving the international French speaking community, in Canada-Quebec, Belgium, Switzerland – which means that it is impossible for TV5 to have a French perspective. TV5 is a generalist network with country-specific channels while we are specialists for international news. It would be very difficult to merge a network with a specialist but trying to develop synergies makes sense, e.g. in distribution or in advertising. We at France 24 are confident because we believe that

“I think that objectivity does not exist in international news. We are influenced by our religion, our education, our country, by our environment

”

we are successful, we have developed our own personality. Our own journalists are totally different from TV5 or RFI – they are more multi-media, they speak several languages, they have a new journalistic approach so perhaps the new brand of international broadcasting will reflect the evolution of France 24.

What are the key global marketing strategies?

The internet technology has changed the behaviour of the consumer. For me the key to the marketing success of France 24 is the correct analysis of consumer habits and using the right means to attract them. We don't have a lot of money so we have to be creative and that's why we think a restructuring of French international broadcasting will be an advantage. For example we need to intensify cooperation with Agence France Presse, we have to develop further the relationship with RFI correspondents, we have to make more use of Réseau France Outre-mer correspondents. But what's most important in France 24's development strategy is to develop the concept of anywhere, any device!

What's your aim?

To be a real challenger of the leaders. I don't think in five years we will be a leader ourselves – even if I am sometimes dreaming about this. But technological evolution makes international broadcasting a new race, and if we make full use of these new possibilities we may be pleasantly surprised in five years' time.

Alain de Pouzilhac, merci. ■

Launched 6 December 2006

Key personnel Alain de Pouzilhac (CEO), Jean-Yves Bonsergent (COO: distribution, technologies & support), Gérard Saint-Paul (COO: news & programming)

Budget 86m euros

Staff 520 + 1,000 correspondents worldwide

Viewers (households): 80 million

Where available: 120 countries worldwide – see www.france24.com for details

Mission To cover international news from a French perspective 24 hours/day, 7 days/week

MISSED OPPORTUNITY?

In July 2005 the Spanish-language pan-Latin American TV channel Telesur was launched from Venezuela, the first of its kind to emerge from Latin America. It is the brain-child of president Hugo Chavez to counteract what he describes as the hegemony of US media in Latin America, and an attempt to reverse years of private sector TV domination in Latin America by investing millions of dollars of state money in a new TV channel. The channel was heralded as a regional channel, with important participation from different left-wing governments in Latin America. The channel is presently co-owned by Argentina, Bolivia, Cuba, Ecuador, Nicaragua and Venezuela, as Ecuador and Nicaragua have recently joined the channel's executive board, reflecting the electoral victories of left-leaning presidents Daniel Ortega in Nicaragua and Rafael Correa in Ecuador.

ALTERNATIVE TO CNN

Telesur sees itself as an alternative voice to CNN providing news from Latin America seen through Latin American eyes, and its offering of Latin American stories is underpinned by an extensive newsgathering operation. It is part of its stated mission to give air time to voices and themes not covered in mainstream media.

The latest developments are that Telesur is helping to fund a new state-owned TV station in Ecuador, Tevecuador, which went on the air in November 2007. It also supports the renovation of state channel 6 in Nicaragua. In Cuba, channel 2 is due to carry Telesur programming after 2200 local time. In Brazil, an educational channel in the state of Parana will air six hours of Telesur programmes in Portuguese, largely financed by Telesur. Telesur has also been hoping to launch satellite



In Latin America, TV is by far the most important source for news - viewers tune into regional or international TV. The media market is crowded but there is space in the market to offer a different perspective. **Philip Court** looks at Telesur

coverage of Europe. It still has no distribution deals in the USA. Within Venezuela it is planning to start a domestic version of Telesur for nationwide distribution.

In his detailed case study of Telesur and 'The boom in counter-hegemonic news channels', James Painter, Visiting Fellow at the Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism at Oxford, points out there are interesting questions to ask about the arrival of new state-financed channels: to what extent are they reacting against the domination of a Western-based international news agenda and world view; and how do these channels show - or do they show - they are editorially independent of their funders?

DOUBTS OVER IMPACT

In the case of Telesur, doubts remain about the channel's impact. Despite these multi-million dollar investments, it is not clear how many people in Latin America are actually watching the channel. The official version is that Telesur is now available in parts of the region previously not reached by TV signals, but no independent viewing figures are readily

available. Its detractors say it has few viewers outside the state TV channels which carry parts of its programming. A major obstacle to securing an audience, they say, remains the continuing bias in Telesur's coverage of news, particularly of events in Venezuela, Bolivia and Cuba - three of the countries sponsoring the channel. And perhaps the biggest obstacle is the historical lack of trust in Latin American state-funded channels.

JUST A NICHE CHANNEL?

So will Telesur be able to reach a mass audience or is it just a niche channel broadcasting to left-wing sympathisers? Is the station, from a journalistic and editorial perspective, more than just a projection of a president's view of the world? And, as James Painter asks in his study: is Telesur missing what could have been an interesting opportunity to break the pattern in Latin America (and most parts of the developing world) where state-funded media are instruments of government? ■

www.telesurtv.net

A big obstacle is the historical lack of trust in Latin American state-funded channels

PRESS TV JOINS THE INCs

PressTV is unique in many ways. It offers viewers an alternative outlook on current affairs exceeding the boundaries of mainstream media. It looks for the "complete" story. Much of mainstream media today revolves around presenting the same news story, in the same light, in similar format. PressTV is headquartered in Iran, a country that is currently much in the news – that's another reason to watch PressTV.

Are further language services planned?

PressTV was launched specifically as an English-language news channel – it is a branch of Seda Sima's international division which consists of 35 radio stations broadcasting in 31 languages plus four TV channels which broadcast in six other languages. But we are launching a new function on our website that translates the site into any language.

Which audience do you target?

We are aiming at opinion formers, and individuals whose appreciation for news goes beyond what is currently available in mainstream news broadcasts. Of our present viewers, a large majority are intellectuals with a relatively high income.

And audience feedback so far?

Actually, many are pleasantly surprised by the concept of PressTV and have told us so – feedback has been predominantly positive and supportive. In terms of audience measurement, our most accurate data has been recorded via our website where viewers are able to watch the channel live and on demand. Although we only launched in July, viewer figures have been rising consistently putting us right on track and we

“**Reporting should lead to the discovery of truth**”

have extensive distribution plans that have already been put in motion.

Are there enough potential viewers for your station to grow successfully?

Many of our viewers are curious about the Middle East and Iran, while also turning to our channel to view a "new kind of news". Individuals are now asking for alternative news that crosses borders and offers perspectives not evident in mainstream media. Who else can accurately offer this perspective other than a channel based in the region itself?

What are you doing to convince viewers and critics that your output is unbiased?

PressTV's sole focus is not the Middle East, yet when it is the topic of conversation, PressTV requires that all perspectives be represented equally. It is of the utmost importance for us to portray all sides of the issues. Without any discrimination we employ individuals of all nationalities and creeds to diversify our viewpoint and to guard against bias in our output.

In your view, can objectivity and editorial independence really exist?

Reporting should lead to the

discovery of truth. I believe this to be the objective of reporting.

How are you reacting to the multi-platform trend?

We are very aware of these trends. PressTV has a very successful and active website that progresses daily. We have also begun implementing numerous plans to expand our audience via the new technologies available in the market to better address the changing lifestyles of our viewers in different parts of the world.

What role does the channel have in Iran's public diplomacy?

I hope that one day PressTV will play an influential role in bridging the gap of misunderstanding between many Western societies and Iran and the Middle East.

If you had three wishes for your channel, what would they be?

I would hope that PressTV has a positive impact on world opinion on Iran, I hope that PressTV accumulates a large interactive audience, of course. Lastly I hope that one day in the near future, instead of consistent coverage of crises and war, we have consistent reports of peace and brotherhood.

Mohammad Sarafraz, thank you. ■

▼ **Mohammad Sarafraz, CEO, Press TV**

Launched 2 July 2007

Key personnel Mohammad Sarafraz (CEO), Nader Rad (Director Live Programmes), Mehdi Homayounfar (Director Documentaries), Saeed Tahami (Director News)

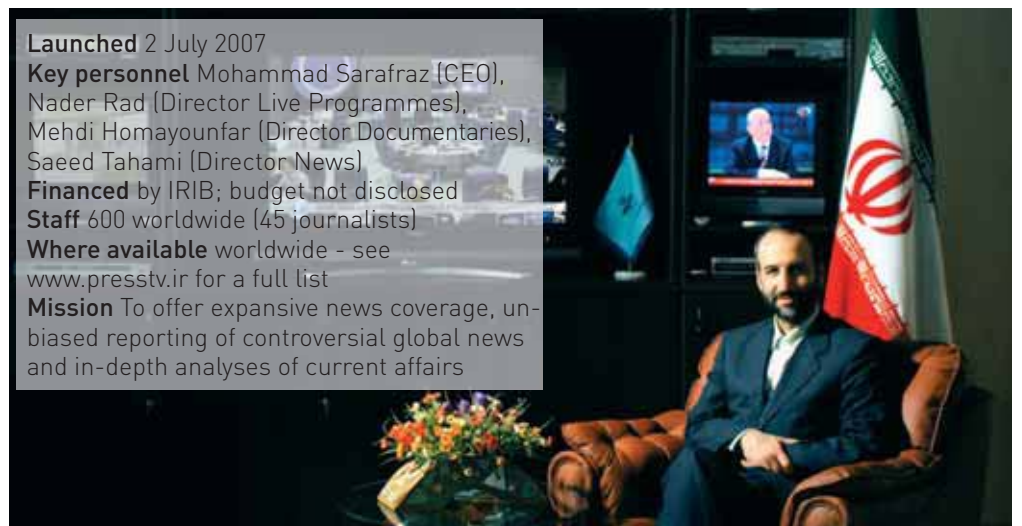
Financed by IRIB; budget not disclosed

Staff 600 worldwide (45 journalists)

Where available worldwide - see

www.presstv.ir for a full list

Mission To offer expansive news coverage, unbiased reporting of controversial global news and in-depth analyses of current affairs





NAME:
Christodoulos Protopapas
JOB TITLE: CEO
COMPANY: Hellas Sat

MY CAREER

Born in 1961 in Limassol, Cyprus, I graduated from the Electrical Engineering Department of the National Technical University of Athens. I held positions as Director General of 'O Logos' Radio and TV Channel – which I designed, built and installed – and Technical Advisor to Alpha TV Group in Greece. In 1995 I established 'Logos Net' which was the first Internet service provider in Cyprus.

I moved to the satellite business in August 1994 when I was appointed by the Board of Ministers of the Government of Cyprus as Member of the Cyprus Space Committee. In that position I represented the Cyprus administration at international meetings and conferences. My special interests are satellite communications, management information systems and networking, and I have written a number of books on the subject of intelligent systems.

Since September 2001 I have been Managing Director of Hellas Sat Consortium Ltd, the first satellite operator in Greece and Cyprus. In May 2007 I took over as

Chairman of ESOA, the European Satellite Operators Association.

HELLAS SAT HISTORY

Hellas Sat is a joint venture between Greece and Cyprus and was established in August 2001. Two companies, Hellas Sat Consortium Ltd & Hellas Sat S.A., were formed as a subsidiary of the Hellenic Telecommunications Organisation (OTE S.A.) partnered with other strategic investors from Greece, Cyprus and abroad. OTE, the largest telecommunications provider in South East Europe, was and still is the major Hellas Sat shareholder.

Since the successful satellite launch in May 2003, Hellas Sat is the owner and a wholesaler of capacity and services of the HELLAS SAT 2 high power and advanced satellite located at 39° East orbital position. Hellas Sat has established full TT&C and monitoring capabilities and our satellite is being operated and monitored by our network facilities in Greece and Cyprus. Hellas Sat provides high quality services at affordable prices and professional business practices with understanding of different customer needs.

HELLAS SAT TODAY

Hellas Sat is a leading satellite operator offering services in Europe, Middle East and Southern Africa. Hellas Sat individual solutions are based on a wide portfolio of services offered in all regions. Hellas Sat today is bringing into homes more than 200 TV and radio channels in all regions, is offering broadband internet services on various platforms while providing capacity for content distribution/contribution, governmental/global security needs, maritime and occasional use services.

Since the commercial launch of HELLAS SAT 2 in 2003, we are experiencing increasing demand for our services from all regions in our reach in Europe, Middle East and Southern Africa, and are performing better than expected in terms of revenue growth and satellite fill rate. We are currently focusing on

strengthening our position in Central and Eastern Europe and developing a market presence in Southern Africa, where we positioned one of our steerable beams and still have available capacity.

Our strategy remains the development of the orbital position of 39° East into an attractive alternative proposition for the international market for video broadcasting and broadband services.

OUTLOOK

The satellite industry has been growing continuously over the last few years with increasing demand for video, internet and other satellite services globally. Specifically with regard to video services, High Definition TV (HDTV) is a growth opportunity for all in all regions, although to be realistic it will take some time to be commercially viable in Central and Eastern Europe where our primary DTH customers are.

Hellas Sat has certainly run in the past successful HDTV transmissions while we are currently exploring DTH opportunities in the Southern Africa region. There is increasing demand for bridging the digital divide in all regions of our beam reach and continuous demand for secure, easily deployable and mobility oriented VSAT networks, so satellite communications continue to be an important part of delivering information globally.

FUTURE PLANS

In our case, that of a single satellite operator experiencing increasing demand, real growth can only come from launching a second satellite. We are currently evaluating the various available options, bearing in mind that such a decision will secure the long term development of our orbital position and enable us to continue offering a broad portfolio of services.

Hellas Sat will be continuing its active role within ESA, ESOA and other international forums. ■

Meet the

Judges

DOUG BERNARD

Voice of America

SIMON BUCKS

Sky News

PETER BURDIN

BBC

LINDSAY CORNELL

BBC Research

TOBY HARTWELL

APTN

CARLSON HUANG

Radio Taiwan Intl

GERRY JACKSON

SW Radio Africa

AHMAD IBRAHIM

Al Jazeera

JOHN IVE

Ivetech

JONATHAN MARKS

Critical Distance

BRIAN MARTINEZ

Bloomberg TV

JOANNA SHIELDS

Bebo

DAVID SMITH

Okapi Consulting

SIMON SPANSWICK

AIB

DENIS TRUNOV

Russia Today TV

MIKE WHITTAKER

Showtime Gulf DTH



COMMENDED

Al Arabiya

Saving Ali Dabaja

Judges' comments A moving story excellently photographed that brings credit to the reporting team's bravery. Powerful television, although perhaps intrusive, thought one of the judges.

Russia Today –

Chernobyl Anniversary

Judges' comments A well-photographed and surprisingly detailed report which got to the heart of the matter.

Clearer coverage of a single news event - TV

CBS News



This is one of the most popular categories in the AIB Media Excellence Awards, perhaps because competition between international news and current affairs channels has grown with recent channel launches.

The judges were unanimous in their decision to award **CBS News** the prize for its programme *Among a Resurgent Taliban*, broadcast in September 2006. **Lara Logan**, CBS News chief foreign correspondent, obtained unprecedented access to Taliban fighters in one of their strongholds in Ghazni province. The judges said that this report was outstanding, offering exclusive coverage with high production values. Lara Logan is one of the bravest reporters around, suggested one of the panel and her frequent visits to Afghanistan show through in this report with its depth of understanding of the issues.



Journalist Sami Yousafzai collects the Award on behalf of Lara Logan

COMMENDED

Radio Sawa

Heart of the Matter: Soldiers of Heaven

Judges' comments A range of interesting views from different guests with different perspectives, commented the judges, although perhaps a little old-fashioned in presentation style with lengthy discussions that test listeners' patience.

This award is sponsored by



Clearer coverage of a single news event - radio

BBC World Service

As popular as its television equivalent, this category brought in a large number of entries covering a wide range of news stories from around the world.

The judges awarded the top prize to **BBC World Service** for its coverage of the Israel-Lebanon war, saying that this was an example of classic war reporting combined with an almost perfect blend of frontline access and compassion for the impact on ordinary people caught up on both sides of the conflict.



Balanced reporting that took listeners right to the heart of the war-torn areas of both countries, said another judge. The reporting provided pictures for listeners that were as graphic as any shown on television, commented another.

Best topical programme

- TV

NDTV

NDTV is the winner for its original and moving report on HIV-AIDS. A powerful piece of television dealing with a difficult subject that has at its core a range of issues that are not openly discussed in India, such as prostitution and contraception.

The entry, produced by **Tanuja Singh**, was well filmed and edited, and brought to the viewer an understanding of the scale of the problem that's been ignored by many for a great length of time. Tanuja is pictured receiving her Award from Mishal Husain.



COMMENDED

Al Arabiya

Fake Passports in Somalia

Judges' comments A very watchable production that examined how easy it is to obtain a passport in the failed state of Somalia, often for as little as US\$20.

Bloomberg Television

The Business of Climate Change

Judges' comments

Comprehensive analysis and reporting on the effects of climate change in Europe, sleekly produced.

Best topical programme

- radio

BBC World Service

This was a popular category and judges found it challenging to reach a final decision. As a result they awarded three highly commended citations.

COMMENDED

Radio Australia

Pacific Beat Blogs Challenge

Judges' comments Well-researched and balanced. The entry got to the heart of why international radio remains vital in many parts of the world.

Radio Free Europe

Uzbekistan and its Neighbours

Judges' comments An excellent programme with a good range of soundbites and packages, impressively revealing the dark work of the Uzbek secret services.

United Nations Radio –

Commemoration of the 200th anniversary of the Abolition of Slavery

Judges' comments Good presentation that talked through the history of the slave trade and slavery in an interesting and engaging way.



It was the **BBC's** *Ghana: African Perspectives* that the judges decided should be declared the winner for an exceptional piece of radio. Dealing with the difficult subject of abortion in Ghana, presenter **Rosie Goldsmith** (pictured left with programme producer Anca Toda) talked to young women who described – in sometimes harrowing detail – how they had tackled unwanted pregnancies. The programme – which judges branded “inspiring” – also talked with local health workers to see what steps they were taking to solve the problem.

SW Radio Africa

France 24

Most creative marketing concept

The judges in our marketing and strategy categories decided to award two prizes to take account of the very different challenges facing radio and television broadcasters.

In radio, **SW Radio Africa** caught the attention of the judging panel for their initiative to beat censorship in Zimbabwe. SW Radio Africa is based in the UK and beams its programmes back to Zimbabwe to provide a lifeline to citizens that are effectively denied access to free and fair information about their country. SW Radio Africa is routinely jammed by the authorities in Zimbabwe and has countered this by sending the station's daily news headlines via SMS text messages to mobile phones. More than 6,000 people in the country receive the service, with around 100 additions to that total every day.

The judges were agreed that SW Radio Africa's initiative was a very smart way to overcome the difficulties of a very challenging operating environment.

For television, **France 24's** launch campaign wins our Award. The channel launched on the web before its satellite distribution began and they worked hard to cultivate the blogging community and engaging in an online dialogue with people who both praised and criticised the channel. Our judges said that the campaign was very well thought through and well executed, with a unique use of animation to bring in younger viewers.

The marketing campaign seems to have generated the right results, with the channel breaking all records in achieving carriage in some parts of the world.



Gerry Jackson, station manager of SWRA, collects their Award



The France 24 team, with Jean-Yves Bonsergent, COO, holding the Award



COMMENDED

EditShare

EditShare MBC

Judge's comments Open architecture and an ability to handle a wide range of formats and editing platforms make this a strong choice for live producers.

S4M Solutions for Media

Judge's comments A very thorough implementation of ad-sales software that's essential for broadcasters that need to ensure their revenues are generated faultlessly.

Gear of the year Omnibus Systems



Omnibus CTO Ian Fletcher receives the Gear of the Year Award

Whilst many broadcasters are becoming less technology-driven, they are increasingly dependent on many different technologies. This is particularly evident in the production chain, where it's essential that many different pieces of kit need to fit and work together. The AIB judges decided to reward organisations that were spearheading new approaches to workflow.

The winner of this year's Gear of the Year award goes to **Omnibus Systems**, a UK-based company that creates the software to run a TV station on standard commoditised IT equipment, instead of specialist and expensive kit that only performs a single function. Scalable and integrating a great number of functions that allow multi-skilled operators to take control, commented the judges, as well as being applicable to broadcasters of very different sizes. The judges were particularly impressed by the energy-saving opportunities presented by Omnibus Systems' ITx which wins this year's Award.

COMMENDED

Radio Australia

Breakfast Club

Judges' comments Interesting and engaging radio that works well and tries to do away with formulaic breakfast broadcasting.

Radio Canada International

Entre dos Mundos

Judges' comments A creative and interesting partnership between Canada's international radio broadcaster and Radio Cultura in Brazil that works on a number of levels.

This award is sponsored by:



Most innovative partnership

Radio New Zealand International

In addition to reaching listeners directly through short and medium wave transmissions, plus an increasing number of FM relays, international broadcasters are working in partnership with local stations in many parts of the world. It's a learning process on both

sides but now a number of long-term partnerships are emerging which offer a win-win result to the parties.



The winner of this category is **Radio New Zealand International**. With just 12 staff, RNZI serves 18 stations in the Pacific, choosing to work with local broadcasters instead of building an expensive network of FM stations. Our judges were impressed with the work RNZI has undertaken with partners coming together and giving each audience – local and regional – information

and topics to connect to on all levels in their own language. It's a complex yet all-encompassing concept that's working brilliantly.

Most innovative cross-media production

BBC Global News

This new category was designed to showcase the work that many broadcasters are now engaged in to bring together - in a co-ordinated way - radio, TV, mobile and the web. The judges were looking for examples of genuine cross-media production, not simply throwing some existing audio or video on to a website as an afterthought.

Richard Porter, BBC World,
and Liliane Landor, BBC
World Service



BBC Global News is the winner for its Generation Next production. Nine days of special programming on television, radio and online captured the views of young people under the age of 18 across the world - an important demographic as today's youth population is one sixth of the planet's total. This was, said the judges, a wide-ranging concept that was well executed, providing interesting topics for a hard-to-reach market. The follow-up was first class with excellent research that tackled subjects that transcend national boundaries.

COMMENDED

Deutsche Welle *World Cup XXL*

Judges' comments A clean and concise production that offered an innovative take on a major global event.

Radio Netherlands Worldwide *UN Millennium Goals*

Judges' comments This offered a fresh look at a familiar international issue with good presentation and sufficiently broad for anyone in any market to listen to and be entertained and stimulated.



COMMENDED

France 24

Judges' comments An impressive start for this channel, now operating in French, English and Arabic, with an enthusiastic team that is delivering news, current affairs and documentaries in an engaging presentational style.

NDTV

Judges' comments The judges noted that the channel tackles socially important issues and engages with the audience through the use of a slick professional style of presentation.

This award is sponsored by



AIB International channel of the year 2007 Bloomberg Television



International television is booming with more channels launching in the last 18 months than ever before resulting in more competition and greater need for differentiation.

Our judges this year were faced with a range of entries highlighting quite different approaches. After much deliberation, they decided that

Bloomberg Television should be the channel named as the 2007 AIB Channel of the Year. With comments ranging from consistently high quality to punching above its weight, the judges thought that Bloomberg Television has brought business and finance to the mainstream, successfully marrying specialist material with more mainstream coverage of news and current affairs. With an excellent range of interviewees, Bloomberg Television manages to get to the heart of the subjects that it tackles.

COMMENDED

BBC World Service

Judges' comments Good presentation, good interviews, good vox pops and overall high production values and a clear mission - covering the issues of concern to the international community.

Radio Sawa

Judges' comments Good production values delivering content that is needed in the Middle East and North Africa, commented our judges. Perhaps a little more international content is needed to divert from the Middle East/US news agendas.

This award is sponsored by



AIB International station of the year 2007 Radio New Zealand International

With so many international radio stations with such different budgets, priorities and language services, judging this category proved challenging. However, the result was clear-cut: **Radio New Zealand International**,

targeting the Pacific, has proved it has the ability, clarity of vision and resources to deliver something that's valued by its audiences throughout the region. The judges agreed that it has a challenging market to reach, but believe that the station is fulfilling its mission.



News was described as straight down the middle and no-nonsense although the judges did suggest that presentation had room for improvement. Overall, with its inclusive partnership approach to local broadcasters and the value it delivers for its stakeholders, RNZI is the deserved winner of AIB International Station of the Year 2007. The Award was collected by Jonathan Hunt, New Zealand High Commissioner in London

AIB International radio personality of the year George Arney



The need for great personalities on radio has never been greater. With the increase in international television channels, radio relies on its voices to keep the audience engaged and to stay tuned. The judges were looking for people who are passionate about their work and who explain complex topics in interesting ways.

The 2007 AIB International radio personality of the year is **George Arney** of BBC World Service. The judges were unanimous in their decision that the top award should go to Arney - they said his slightly quirky approach reveals great truths about how people live their lives, and that he takes listeners behind the scenes with the planet's most powerful leaders. His ability to give the listener a feeling of place as well as content is perhaps, thought the judges, the strongest argument for him winning the Award.

COMMENDED

Jonathan Groubert
Radio Netherlands Worldwide
Judges' comments A solid

broadcaster with gravitas who demonstrates an excellent grasp of the subjects he discusses on air, showing a remarkable degree of research.

Dr Adil Awadh
Radio Sawa

Judges' comments Radio Sawa is fortunate to have a heavyweight presenter of Dr. Adil Awadh's stature. Dr. Awadh brings a level of credibility to this Washington-based operation. He faces obstacles other international radio presenters do not as he is studio-based and unable to travel to his target zone.

AIB International TV personality of the year Lyse Doucet

Television news is increasingly competitive so every channel needs a roster of talented individuals with strong on-air presence to keep the viewers from channel-hopping. It's also about trust - the viewers need to feel comfortable and believe that the person on the screen knows what they're talking about.



The judges were highly impressed by **Lyse Doucet**, one of the main presenters on BBC World.

They said that Doucet is one of the leading presenters and journalists on international TV today, who is highly professional and conveys the news with just the right measure of confidence.

COMMENDED

Barkha Dutt
NDTV
Judges' comments

Professional and engaging, with an on-screen personality that demonstrates excellent research into the subjects she discusses.



AIB Editors' Award

Everywoman - Al Jazeera English

When Al Jazeera English launched in November 2006 it quickly grabbed the headlines for its news output. But the channel has created a number of world-class feature programmes that the AIB believes deserve more attention. The programme **Everywoman**, produced by **Maire Devine** (pictured collecting the Award) and presented by **Shiulie Ghosh** (pictured top left) is the best example.

The programme is uncompromising in its approach and digs deeper on often sensitive subjects to uncover the stories that women want told.

Everywoman is the first show of its kind produced in the Middle East and the AIB believes the work of the *Everywoman* production team is worthy of special acknowledgement in this year's AIB Media Excellence Awards.

COMMENDED

Mobuzz TV

Judges' comments Based in Madrid, Spain, this innovative company produces a short daily lifestyle magazine that is specifically designed to be viewed on an iPod or mobile phone. They have been experimenting with a range of formats in order to produce content that works well on the smallest screen - it's a very different technique to producing for 4:3 or 16:9.

The company is international, producing its output in English, French and Spanish and the AIB believes that the Mobuzz style of production is refreshing, creative and done with enthusiasm.



BUSINESS NEWS GOING MAINSTREAM?

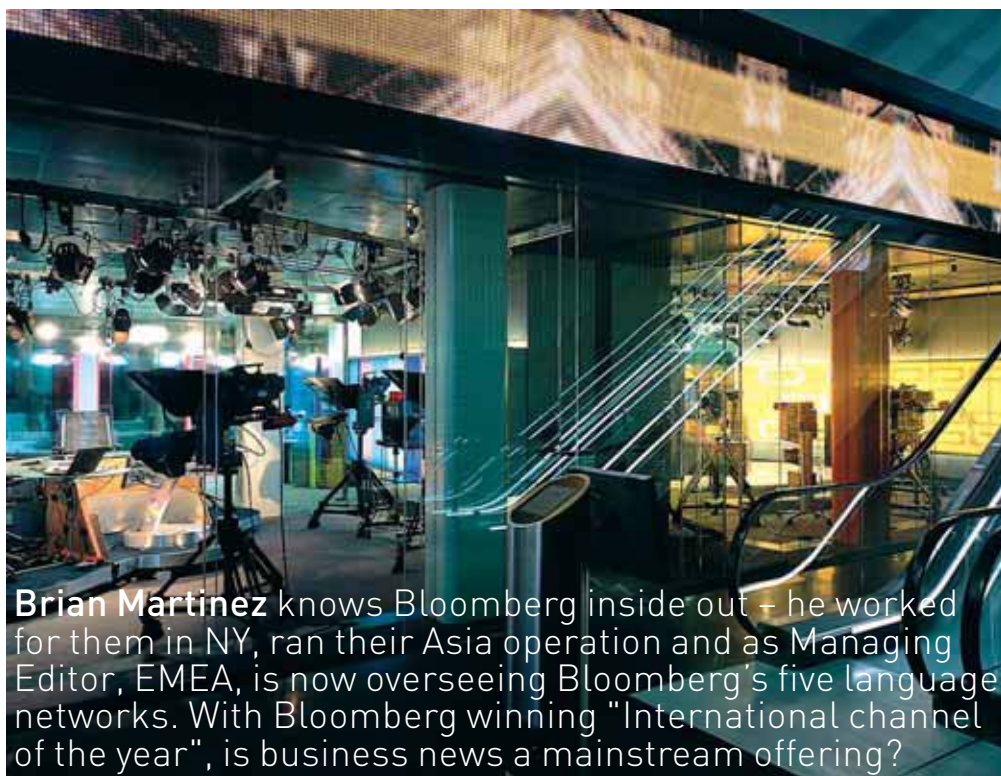
The role of Bloomberg TV is to deliver up-to-the-minute breaking news to our core audience, which is professionals, high wealth individuals, decision makers that tend to move markets, and to deliver that news accurately and as quickly as possible.

We are seeing more business news reported on national TV - is business news moving from a niche to the mainstream?

Whether it is a bombing in Istanbul or violence in Baghdad and how that affects the price of oil, to a hurricane in the Atlantic that is approaching the Gulf coast, any type of event can move markets. Maybe there is more public awareness of that now but what we at Bloomberg do best is bridge that gap, showing that you need to know what is going on in the world because it is influencing the markets and has impact on economies, and does tend to have an impact on what the global leaders will have to say in terms of policy etc. We try to deliver an understanding of that.

How do people consume Bloomberg?

We have many, many products. First we have the Bloomberg professional service which is the terminal that people have on their desktops, that includes the Bloomberg News service, Bloomberg TV, Bloomberg Radio, Bloomberg Markets magazine, and Bloomberg Press which publishes books for investment professionals. We are available on the internet, on public



Brian Martinez knows Bloomberg inside out – he worked for them in NY, ran their Asia operation and as Managing Editor, EMEA, is now overseeing Bloomberg's five language networks. With Bloomberg winning "International channel of the year", is business news a mainstream offering?

displays in offices, if you are a consumer of Bloomberg TV or Bloomberg news we're available in your home. There are many different ways to access Bloomberg news – it depends on your schedule. We have always been a multimedia company so we are obviously thinking about new ways of disseminating our news, whether that's to mobile or internet protocol TV, digital TV – whatever format it is, we are always on the cutting edge of technology.

In the States Fox has launched financial news – is that major competition for you?

Bloomberg is unique in that we are not entertainment – our mission and goal is to deliver the news accurately and as fast as possible to keep people informed. We are not really looking at some sort of race

between CNBC, Fox TV and Bloomberg. Most important for us is to make sure people are informed.

What's happened in your region recently?

In October we launched a new look and feel for the channel which we will develop over the coming months as we begin to tell the story with more cutting-edge graphics and new charts, utilising the data behind the Bloomberg professional service to tell the story and get that onto the screen. Also expansion into emerging markets and developing new programmes around those markets. In 2007 we have seen growth and expansion in all our business areas into Central and Eastern Europe and the Middle East.

“We are unique in that Bloomberg is not entertainment”

You also produce features – in

fact you picked up a 'Highly commended' for "The Business of Climate Change" at the AIB Media Excellence Awards. Is there going to be more of that?

We produce features on a rolling basis depending on what sort of hot topics are relevant in the market. Recently we have produced "The Business of Climate Change", a look at India, speaking to its billionaires and the people that drive its economy. We also produced a special on Islamic finance, as well as a special on Russia's development during the Putin years. We'll continue to be reactive to what's moving in certain markets, and that will determine what sort of focus programmes we'll do.

Looking at the overall business news genre, do you think this has a rosy future?

I don't like to predict but as far as Bloomberg is concerned, we'll always be looking at what our clients want us to deliver at the

time and try to be on the cutting edge of that so that we can anticipate what they are looking for. So while the markets may not look so rosy, the demand for market data and news in different areas may be high still.

What does winning "International channel of the year" mean for Bloomberg TV?

It recognises that Bloomberg delivers in-depth analysis that nobody else can in terms of business news and it's great to have your colleagues in the business recognise that.

What about Brian Martinez the man – what media do you use in the morning when you get up?

My BlackBerry! News makes me tick so the first thing I do is look at news headlines of what happened overnight. Usually by 11 o'clock it is so busy that you are not really sure which way to turn.

Brian Martinez, thank you. ■

► **TOP:** Brian Martinez
BOTTOM: Bloomberg studio



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VT
Communications

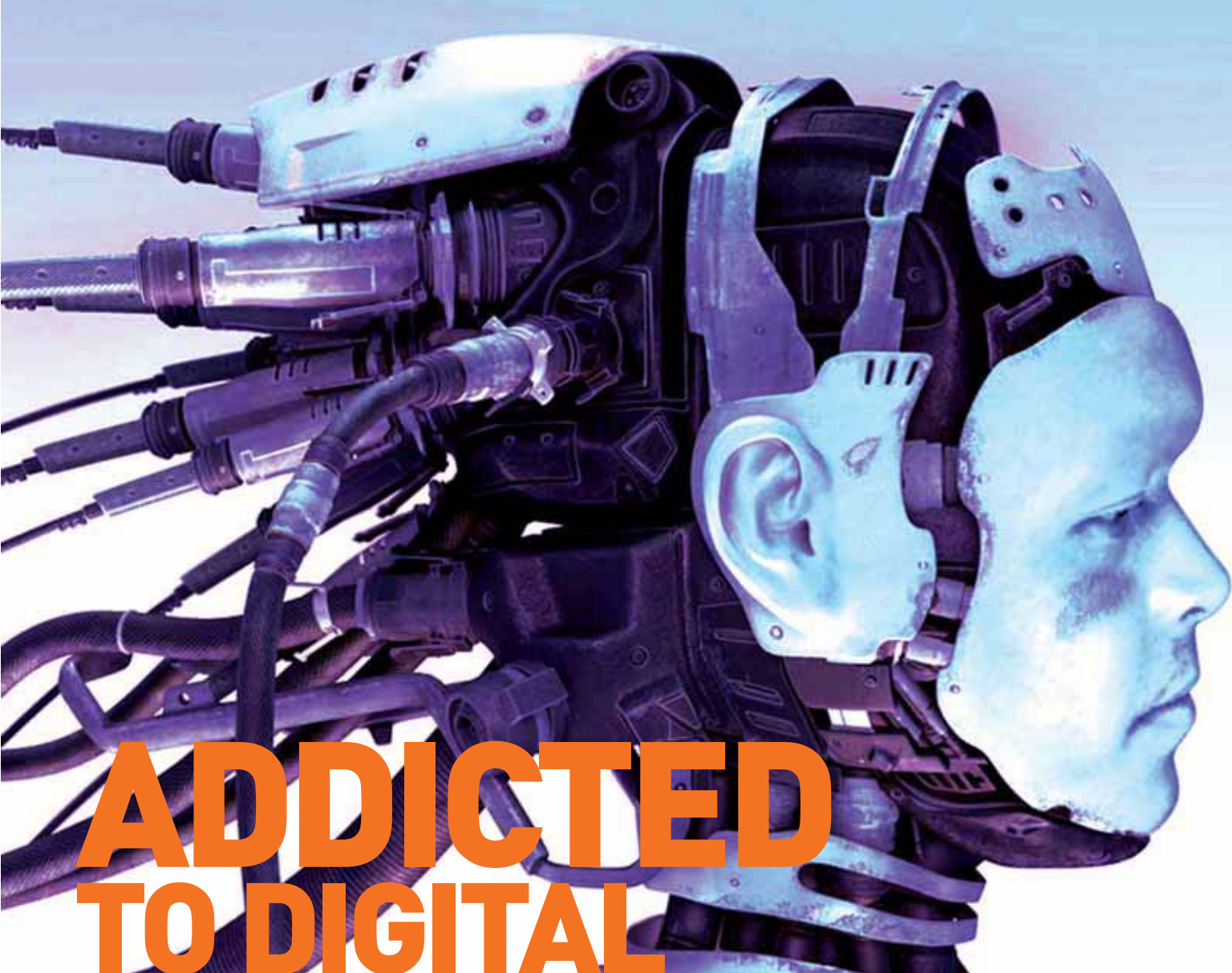
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ADDICTED TO DIGITAL

The world's first 'rescue camp' for teenagers addicted to the internet has been set up near Seoul. South Korea is on the leading edge of the digital revolution, as digital guru **Tomi Ahonen** found when he researched "Digital Korea" with co-author Jim O'Reilly. In South Korea the digital future has already arrived – is it the path to a virtual nightmare or to doing more fun things, in more fun ways?

The mobile phone plays a vital role in South Korean daily life. What are the most interesting aspects of its use?

First perhaps is the rapid rate of change. The world average replacement cycle for phones is about 18 months. In Korea it is 11 months, so every year the total population gets a new phone, on average. Older teenagers and young adults change phones every 6 months. With this rate of replacement, a real culture of fashion emerges for phones, there is an autumn fashion and a spring fashion for new phones! It goes very much beyond that. The European average usage level of SMS text messaging is about 2 messages per day. The USA is at about 1 message per day. Among students in South Korea, 30% of

students will average 100 SMS text messages sent per day!!! That means that the fingers are perfectly in tune with the keypad of the phone. Messages are sent at immediate and "near-telepathic" speeds.

You found that average daily consumption of DMB digital TV on mobiles was 129 minutes (Jan 07), that's over two hours per day. What are they watching?

TV viewing is not charged per session, it is either free (advertising sponsored) or it has a set monthly fee for unlimited watching, then as we have the phone always with us, it rapidly becomes a "background noise" device. We are not actively watching MTV or CNN all day, it means that the service is on in the background. Using a bluetooth headset we can privately listen to the TV programme while doing whatever it is we do. The same with mobile TV in the car, it is mostly ►

ME AND MY AVATAR

Avatars are "video game like" cartoon representations - digital puppets if you will - of people that are used in virtual chat worlds and environments, and on mobile phones as screen savers. Differing from how users are identified inside traditional chat programs where users have only text identification or perhaps a small picture of the face of the users, or cartoon representation. Avatars are actual "virtual robots" which are usually three-dimensional, have form, clothing, haircuts, etc. One of the most popular avatar sites in South Korea is Neowiz's "SayClub" that has over 20 million subscribers, which is over 40% of the total population of Korea. In SayClub, the avatar initially comes only with underwear. The user has to then outfit the avatar to fit the kind of persona that user wants his/her avatar to reflect in its virtual world. Some want their avatars to resemble their real world appearance. However, more often the avatar can gain attributes - a dark haired person to be blonde for example or an overweight person to be slim - and of course wear clothes that the real user might not be able to afford. Each additional item of clothing or accessory needs to be purchased and then dressed upon the avatar. As these kinds of environments grow, they soon gain a vast range of content such as clothing from the major brands and up to premium fashion designers like Gucci. It is not uncommon for South Koreans heavily into virtual worlds to spend more on the accessories and clothing of their avatar than their real wardrobe. An estimate by Daewoo Securities on the value of the avatar market in South Korea was \$114m in 2004.

VIRTUAL FRIENDS

The virtual world and social networking site Cyworld facilitates the forming of new friendships through its "Becoming Buddies" feature, which is a creative human relationship management system. Becoming Buddies allows sharing of information, pictures, blogs etc as well as bonding in friendship. Forming friendships and then building human relationships is a core element of Cyworld. South Korean teenagers measure how popular they are by how many friends link to their Cyworld home pages. However, even more, once you have two out of every five members of the population in your virtual world, the whole economy takes notice. Every brand and company wants a presence inside Cyworld. Today all significant South Korean businesses already maintain a presence inside Cyworld. It is no longer a question of "should" Coca Cola or Nike or Ford find marketing tools to join MySpace. In Korea, every consumer brand has to be inside Cyworld. 30,000 businesses, offer over 500,000 items of digital content for sale already.

listened to, not really watched. But if something worth watching happens, you can watch it.

Then there are certain specific peaks. At lunchtime, cellphone-TV viewers often use their phones to catch up on a favourite soap opera, and schedule their lunch break to allow for that. A particular use is the bathroom - we can take the little TV to the bathroom and not interrupt our viewing. There is significant use by kids as their "private" digital TV option. When mother is watching *Desperate Housewives* on the main plasma TV of the household, the kids can go to their room, use the digital tuner on the phone, and watch their show without disturbing mom's viewing.

How are broadcasters and programme makers adapting to more TV viewing on mobiles?

They are still only experimenting and trying to learn. Obviously the new peak watching times will alter the work of scheduling. Also totally new content types, various user-generated TV and video content will play an ever larger part in the equation. But it's too early to say yet.

Are people still watching TV on the big screen at home?

I'm certain that the majority of TV viewing will be on larger screens than our mobile phones for many years, perhaps decades to come - on the big projection screen, the big plasma screen, the normal LCD TV screen, the PC/laptop screen, on dedicated DVD players with much larger screens than pocketable mobile phone TV screens. But there are plenty of instances and places and cases where we won't have access to our primary TV viewing option, and then the fact that soon everybody will have a TV tuner in their pocket at all times on their phones, will mean that we all will consume a part of our daily TV use on the phone.

Out of a population of 48m, 42% maintain a blogsite and 14m play multiplayer online games - what does that say about South Korean society?

I think blogging is a universal interest and aspiration. American blogging went from half a million bloggers in 2003 to over 80m today. But the point is that South Korea was first to have blogging go into

▲ From chapter 3 of "Digital Korea" by Tomi Ahonen and Jim O'Reilly, 2007



the mainstream. They released a movie where the main plot was about a teenager girl blogging, back in 2001, when even in Silicon Valley blogging was only for the die-hard geeks.

The multiplayer gaming is perhaps more a point that may have some Korean exceptional cultural interests. The South Korean videogamers regularly take a vast collection of the gold medals in the various cybergames world championships. In Korea there is a big culture around gaming, with dedicated TV channels. Top gamers are big celebrities with a massive fan following.

I do see in some of my nephews and nieces similar interests in gaming - rather play multiplayer games than watch TV for example. But will it become as big as in Korea - we have to see.

Why has South Korea embraced digital convergence in such a big way?

I'd say the biggest single cause was the government's pro-active role in driving this change. South Korea looked at Japan, and wanted to leapfrog Japan and find its own

“ Work won't go away but we can do more fun things, in more fun ways ”

economic engines to drive Korea. They focused on digital convergence, the information age, ubiquitous computing, etc. Then the government provided legislation and regulation support, enthusiastically supported international conferences and information sharing. And then the government fostered cooperation with academia and the industry, so the whole society worked very closely together. Korea also promoted competition as the driving engine. Rather than forcing all to use only one technology, Korea tends to want all rival technologies to co-exist, so that the country and the industry benefits from all those technologies. For the end-user this means the widest choice of near rival technologies.

In places your book sounds like science fiction – household robots reading bedtime stories to kids? Where is South Korea heading?

I like to think of technology becoming invisible, just doing its job. Think of the microprocessor. In the 1960s this was NASA science, put on the space missions, to get

computers onto rockets. Then the technology spread and by the 1980s we had several microprocessors in our cars. Today's cars have dozens and we don't think of the microprocessor any more. South Korea is now heading to a world where connectivity is everywhere, not just computing. So we get the intelligent floor. A hospital with an intelligent floor will have the ability to monitor the patient who has an accident and falls, for whatever reason – maybe a dizzy spell or a heart attack, or slipping on a floor that was just washed. But if the floor senses that someone fell on it, the floor can alert a nurse immediately.

This is the future that is emerging in Korea. Not only the science-fiction-esque robot in every home - which will happen in Korea first - but also the more obscure intelligence out of computing and connectivity that is built into our lives everywhere. So it's not just that we can pay for our parking by our cellphone, but if the car can tell me where the nearest available parking place is, that is real value to the user. And this technology is already being trialled in Korea.



◀ Tomi Ahonen

▲ 25% of Korea's population drive imaginary cars in KartRider

Finally, the pessimist's and optimist's view of the digital future?

I'm the eternal optimist! But yes, good question. The pessimist would say it's an all-pervasive, all-intrusive "network" that doesn't let us sleep well at night for all the messages interrupting us, various real and virtual employees, bosses, colleagues etc bothering us at all hours. The blurring of work and rest so badly that we all become neurotic and depressed. Virtual theft, identity theft, invasions of privacy etc will only get much worse...

Optimist? Work won't go away, but we can do more fun things, in more fun ways. Our services will be more fun. The way we consume things will be more fun. I think we will look back at the dawn of the Connected Age and think that the world back then was horribly complex, unpleasant, difficult, unfriendly, intimidating. But that it became a lot of fun along the way.

Tomi Ahonen, thank you. ■

BBC WORLD SERVICE GETS INTO TV

Richard Sambrook, Director BBC Global News, is responsible for programmes in 33 languages reaching 240m people. Standing out in an ever more crowded marketplace is a challenge, he says

Almost every month, a new global competitor appears on the scene. Recently, France, Iran, the Arab world, Italy and Russia have all opened up new international broadcasting operations, resulting in an explosion in competition to provide news with differing judgements and differing editorial priorities. This presents the BBC with a massive challenge; how to stand out and be easily identifiable in an ever more crowded, constantly developing, marketplace.

In March 2006, independent public opinion research organisation GlobeScan carried out a series of questions on 'trust and the media'. It polled over 10,000 people in 10 countries. The BBC rated higher than any other organisation when it came to 'trusting global media brands'.

People get their news in different ways in different parts of the world. In areas of Africa and the Far East, where people are more likely to have cell phones than computers, mobiles are the preferred distribution platform. And more and more people are using the internet and bbc.com or bbcArabic.com rather than radio to access their news.

TV DOMINATES MID-EAST

TV is the dominant medium in the Middle East with more than 300 cable and satellite channels available across the region. The BBC is joining them; launching BBC Arabic TV, part of a multi-platform Arabic offer across television, radio and online. Dozens of new staff have been recruited, and a new multi-media centre has been created at Broadcasting House in Central London. The BBC's brand is strong in the Middle East. In repeated surveys in some 20 major cities 85% said they would watch BBC Arabic TV.

Everything broadcast by the

BBC is now effectively global. During the outcry in September 2005 about cartoons in a Danish newspaper that depicted Mohammed in an allegedly blasphemous way, there were riots in Pakistan over rumours that *Newsnight*, our domestic late night current Affairs programme, was going to show the cartoons in full. It wasn't, but the story was out there spread around the world by email and mobile phone. *Newsnight* is only available in the UK, so the riots were about something that didn't happen on a channel that wouldn't even be seen in Pakistan. It's an example of how cultural sensitivities cross national and broadcast boundaries.

FREE MEDIA POSE THREAT

In today's complex world, the BBC strives to achieve impartiality by representing as full and diverse a range of views as possible. These have to be weighted according to who or how many, or how authoritative a view they represent. The BBC is dedicated to building trust between countries, cultures and communities. Transparency, accountability and independence are central to fulfilling that purpose. Former UN Secretary General Kofi Annan described the BBC's international news services as "probably Britain's greatest gift to the world," because of the impact of its journalism.

To those who oppose the building of open and peaceful societies, free media pose a dangerous threat – precisely because of their potential to empower by increasing understanding and inspiring free debate. That has led to attacks on BBC programmes and the people who make them. Our services in China and Iran are effectively blocked. Not because they are anti Chinese or anti-Muslim but because they are simply seeking to make high quality impartial news available to people who want it. In Burma, as news of the military

BBC Arabic TV Launching in early 2008, the BBC Arabic TV news and information channel will make BBC World Service the first media organisation to have a strong tri-media offer in news, current affairs and information for Arabic-speaking audiences in the region and around the world. It will initially broadcast 12 hours a day and be freely available via satellite or cable. The annual operating cost is £19m.

BBC Persian TV The new BBC World Service TV news and information service in Farsi for Iran is expected to launch early in 2008. Based in London, the service will complement the BBC's existing Persian radio and online services for Iran. It will initially broadcast for 8 hours a day, 7 days a week, from 17.00 to 01.00 hours – prime viewing time in Iran. It will be freely available via satellite or cable in the region. The operating cost is £15m.



▲ Egton House (right), home to BBC Arabic TV, alongside BBC Broadcasting House in central London

crackdown on protests spread via the internet, the junta closed it down. And in Pakistan, one of the first moves under the recent State of Emergency was to take international news channels off the air.

FREE INFORMATION AT A COST

In February 2005 BBC producer Kate Peyton was shot and killed in Mogadishu, a city where the only source of reliable news is the BBC's Somali service. And BBC correspondent Alan Johnston was kidnapped and held hostage for 114 days in Gaza, where he had reported from for three years.

It is well to remember that there's sometimes an unacceptable cost to keeping world society informed while promoting openness, fairness, economic and political development. ■

FACTFILE

WWW.DW-WORLD.DE



NAME: Uta Thofern
JOB TITLE: Editor in Chief
COMPANY: DW-World.de

MY CAREER

I have worked in both public and private media, and in all types of media: print, news agency, radio, TV and last but not least online, which offers the advantages of all in one. After training at the Munich school of journalism I first gained experience as a reporter for print media and radio, and as editor and presenter in news and magazine programmes. In 1992 I was entrusted with setting up and running the radio news department of the new public broadcaster MDR in the East German state of Thüringen. For me it was a unique opportunity to take part in establishing democratic media structures in that part of the former GDR and to experience the change in Eastern Germany at first hand. I later switched to the TV news department and left MDR in 2002 to work at Germany's international public broadcaster Deutsche Welle. As editor-in-chief at DW-RADIO for German, English and EU Programmes/Projects, I was in charge of global programmes for our German and English-speaking listeners. I then moved to my current position as editor-in-chief of Deutsche Welle's online service, DW-WORLD.DE. I am responsible for eight regional language programmes, supported by teams of native speakers of German, English, Chinese, Spanish, Portuguese,

Russian, Arabic and Farsi. Additionally, I am heading DW's multimedia restructuring process which started last September. In my view, being a journalist means offering a service to the general public, providing them with authentic information and always looking at an issue from all sides. Only well informed people are able to decide freely.

ON DEUTSCHE WELLE

Germany's international broadcaster has headquarters in Bonn and Berlin. Since DW first went on air on 3 May 1953, it has undergone a huge transformation from broadcasting one radio programme in German via short wave to becoming a multilingual and multimedia key player among international public broadcasters.

'Promoting understanding and dialogue' is at the heart of DW programming and services. DW's mission is to convey "German and other positions on important issues" to people abroad as well as "to provide a forum aimed at promoting understanding and dialogue between cultures and peoples". DW also promotes the German language with language courses as part of its output. Today, Deutsche Welle comprises DW-TV, DW-RADIO, the online service DW-WORLD.DE, and the international training centre for journalism and intercultural media training, DW-AKADEMIE.

The broadcaster's multicultural team of some 1,500 employees includes journalists from more than 60 countries. With their expertise and the latest technology for production and broadcasting, DW provides globally accessible news and information in more than 30 languages. DW reports about events in Germany, Europe and around the world, most importantly about what is happening in regions torn by crisis and conflict, or where there is no freedom of speech.

WHAT'S NEW

Among the reforms implemented this year was the regionalisation of DW-TV's programmes. DW-TV

Arabia offers more Arabic content than before, DW-TV USA and DW-TV Latinoamérica now include popular shows of Germany's national broadcasters ARD and ZDF. Also, DW-WORLD.DE launched its extended Farsi service DW-WORLD.DE/persian with additional online staff and a new multimedia design of the site. The flexibility to act and react quickly is key to DW and its staff in responding to the listeners'/users' needs for independent information. DW-RADIO demonstrated this by reacting swiftly to the escalation of the Burma crisis and immediately making their existing English programme available to the Burmese population. From summer 2009 onwards, Deutsche Welle's international training centre, DW-AKADEMIE, will offer a 2-year Master's degree in "International Media Studies" to media experts from developing and transitioning countries. DW is cooperating closely with universities from Germany and abroad to establish the programme.

MERGING TO MULTIMEDIA

In 2007 we embarked on a large-scale reform process of our organisational structures, which will transform the traditional media division. Our multilingual radio and online departments, DW-RADIO and DW-WORLD.DE, will be merged into new multimedia services; every language department will have the tools to produce services for any media platform needed in their respective target areas.

My task in this project is to set up the necessary working structures for our journalists to enable them to respond flexibly to the media usage of our audience(s) in the respective language regions. Our aim is to create organisational structures that can cope with new developments in media technology and provide the best possible conditions for producing high-quality content. In combining our multilingual radio and online expertise we can reach our audiences irrespective of the media used to convey news and information. ■

C4 MEDIA ACCESS PROJECT

UK Channel 4 Television has completed the first phase of its media access project, progressing C4 from video tape to an MXF file-based operation. **Kevin Burrows**, C4's CTO and **Spencer Rodd**, Technical Director at **Pharos**, explain about one of the most innovative technical progressions in C4's 25 years



In 2003 Channel 4 replaced its VHS-based preview facility with a Pharos browse system giving access directly from standard desktop office PCs. The objective was to deliver browse-quality content to relevant staff as efficiently as possible with minimal operational overheads. This would bring the further benefit of eliminating the risk of lost or damaged video tapes. The result was a highly co-ordinated solution centred on a Pharos Mediator media management database. Initially rolled out to 20 desktops and expanded later to 400, this proved very successful and is one of the largest broadcast browse systems in Europe.

The media access project was a logical extension of the browse concept, effectively adding in a single architecture all the facilities Channel 4 needed for file-based ingest, long-term storage and playout. Essentially a large library of file-based digital content and metadata, it allowed the channel to create and maintain a tapeless store of all programmes which could then be made available in any format, whether linear TV, video on demand, mobile or whatever might be called for in the future.

PHAROS MEDIATOR AT C4

The entire media access project -

ingest server, content store, archive manager, Petasite tape library and file transfer management - are managed by the Pharos Mediator media management system and database.

Pharos Mediator is a scalable broadcast media management system which can be configured to co-ordinate single or multiple workflows in any broadcast environment. Ingested content can be catalogued, researched, loaned and shared between users, providing collaborative working. Files can be outgest to any selected format, such as complete programmes music compilations for post-production or DVDs for local distribution. Multiple client libraries can be configured to provide security and privacy for clients without the expense and complexity of separate hardware for every client.

FILE FORMAT

An initial challenge was the selection of a generic file format. MXF 50i was chosen on the basis that it maintains optimal quality and is a relatively easy standard to export. If the need arises to send content elsewhere, recipients will be able to use the programme content and the accompanying metadata. Many broadcasters have gone down the road of proprietary IMX. Channel 4 wanted to avoid

“With 25 years of archived material, it is important to be as future-proof as possible”

IMX so that file-users could simply unwrap metadata stored with each file rather than needing to rely on a database. MXF 50i also makes decoding much easier as no additional software is required.

INGEST

Incoming programmes and interstitials are ingested at full 50 Mbit/s I-frame MPEG2 via Omneon ingest servers to an Isilon central online storage system before being automatically transcoded to 15 Mbit/s Long GOP MPEG2 for playout via the existing Pinnacle TX server system. Using Mediator, Channel 4 is able to perform the entire broadcast operation from its online digital library store.

The ingest area is equipped with quality control booths for content that needs careful eyeballing and fast-track desks for material that does not need to be viewed in real time. Both are controlled via Mediator. All ingested content is exported to the browse system through MPEG1 encoders at the same time as it is transferred for transmission. The browse system is used for off-air logs, for all compliance viewing and for checking of commercial break running order. A playlist function is already built in. A generic Application Program Interface is used to ensure flexible control.



ONLINE AND ARCHIVE STORAGE

Five nodes of Isilon disc storage, totalling 40 terabytes, are accessible for online storage. Everything so far as possible incorporates redundancy, including main and backup Mediator databases, main and backup servers. Ingest is split across two servers so only half of each is lost if a server goes wrong.

A 12-drive Sony Petasite LTO3000 based data tape archive provides sufficient capacity for up to 18 months of MXF 50i programmes. Multiple transcoders and multiple data movers interface between the servers and the Petasite. Each LTO3000 takes LTO3 data tape cassettes with a capacity of 400 gigabytes per cassette. Each server controls four Petasite drives. If one server goes down, the eight other drives would continue working. DigiBeta tapes are still held as backups with the option of making local or external copies.

MEDIATOR OUTGEST

Mediator manages outgest of video, files and metadata to any chosen destination using an XML interface for metadata. Outgest 1 is DigiBeta, Outgest 2 is Digital Rapids Version X, and so on. Outgest to graphics is handled similarly, exporting clips directly into a Pixel Power Clarity for making promotional graphics.

Quite a lot of material is issued



on DVD for the Channel 4 press office. This is transcoded from 50i and a logo superimposed. A Pharos database within Mediator makes a title slate which is added to the DVD chapters. Transcoders are used to generate 15 long-GOP files for transmission from Pinnacle servers. All broadcast schedules for a week or more go into the Mediator and that actually drives the transcode process.

TRANSITIONAL TIMESCALE

The project was anticipated to take 15 months from start to finish. It began about the time when affordable storage costs combined with a growing need to get the media out to the right places. It would have been too expensive a year earlier. Channel 4 wanted a system big enough to handle at least a year's programmes. The Petasite has sufficient capacity to store 12 to 18 months of content.

Channel 4 launched its 4oD video-on-demand service a year ago, supplying Tiscali, BT Vision, Virgin Media and the PC download service. The video-on-demand requirement came shortly after installation commenced and meant rescheduling some priorities. Half the system was allocated to deliver the 4oD service and the rest of the system is essentially complete.

Time could have been saved by opting for IMX rather than MXF. Starting today, one would certainly go down the MXF route as it is finally becoming fully supported by equipment suppliers. There was no rigid deadline to meet and it was important not to end up with several years of content that would need rewrapping in the future. It was



▲ **Main Image:** Channel 4's headquarters in London

Top left: Part of the Pharos Mediator managed data storage system in the C4 library area

Top right: Task-specific Pharos Mediator Spot Check user interface

planned that each MXF file should be standalone and potentially readable very far into the future.

The Media Access Project greatly simplifies media ingest and outgest. Pharos did a detailed study of workflow within each relevant department of Channel 4. Mediator enabled a starting workflow pattern to be defined for each operator. The ability to reconfigure workflow was also very important. The system has certainly met expectations, streamlining day-to-day workflows and increasing overall efficiency. It has also made engineering planning for additional services much easier. The system itself is very scalable, allowing more storage to be added whenever required.

THE FUTURE

For Channel 4's recently launched HD simulcast service on the Sky platform, the first phase has parallel HD ingest to a separate Omneon server which takes HD and SD for short-term storage and playout. HD content is stored on its original master tapes and only compressed for actual transmission.

Direct ingest of data files is clearly the future. An increasing number of commercials already arrive at Channel 4 from a server at the end of a line. For programmes, standards and delivery costs are the issues. With three or four *Hollyoaks* per week, for example, it is far cheaper to put tapes on a bike and send them down from Liverpool rather than wire them as files. The move to HD makes wired delivery of archive-quality programmes even more challenging but that is obviously the future. ■

INSPIRATIONAL UPLOAD

Simon Spanswick was one of 1,000 architects, technologists, media executives and gurus at Digital-Life-Design organised by Burda Media in the Bavarian capital in January

At the edge of Munich's old town, in a road crowded with historic buildings, is the 19th century former headquarters of the Bayerische Staatsbank, now the bright and airy HVB Forum, a centre for arts, conferences and exhibitions. On a sunny Sunday afternoon in mid-January, the Forum was packed with people. In the building's Grosses Atrium, it was standing room only as the third DLD conference got underway, introduced by the joint managing directors of Hubert Burda Media R&D Stephanie Czerny and Marcel Reichart, each of them brimming with enthusiasm and energy. This, they said, was an experience for friends.

NO DINOSAURS HERE

Burda is a 104-year-old family-owned German publishing empire run by the 67 year-old grandson of the founder. Burda publishes 250 magazines worldwide, many of them fashion and lifestyle titles. Revenue is around €1.1 billion and they employ over 7,000 staff. Hubert Burda Media is also the largest magazine publisher in Russia and very significant in

Eastern Europe and Turkey. The gut reaction is to classify them as a very traditional publishing house in danger of becoming a dinosaur. That would be wrong. In fact, CEO Hubert Burda has been the driving force behind the company's move into social media, insisting that he will never open a printing plant again. That's a clear message to his company's publishers, editors and investment arms to concentrate almost exclusively on digital strategies if they want to grow. But it is no good just announcing the future – you need to build a path.

EN ROUTE TO DAVOS

That's where DLD is clever. Why spend money sending your people to conferences all over the world to plan their next moves in new media? Instead, throw a three day celebration of the future - create scarcity by making it invitation only - and at the same time invite the world's movers and shakers to inspire top managers inside your company. Get Google, Mercedes Benz, Lufthansa and some venture capitalists to sponsor. Finally, pick the right dates, since many of the international guests you want are on their way to Davos. Munich is just as easy as Zurich if you're heading for the mountains.

“DLD is about DNA, gene pools, artistry, writers and networks”



At the opening, Czerny also pays tribute to the founder of the famous TED conferences (www.ted.com), architect Richard Wurman – 72 years old but looking more like 60 – admitting that DLD has borrowed ideas and concepts, but that helps in connecting technophiles all over the world.

Wurman is on the first panel titled “Smart boys about new markets” and he starts by grumbling. There are no women on the panel he notes and then changes tack, saying that in his view companies that say they are global are deluding themselves. No organisation can truly be global as things happen at a local level. It's necessary to understand things locally to be global is his message. He explains his latest project www.192021.org, launched when he discovered it is very difficult to compare what's happening in the world's largest cities. Since most of us live in urban areas, he shares his incredulity that the cities don't learn much from each other.

Former Apple Marketing VP Joe Schoendorf, now a venture capitalist and member of the World Economic Forum, asks who in the audience is under 25. A handful put up their hands and Schoendorf notes that half the world's population is under



▲ **Main Image:** clockwise from top right Viviane Reding confers with René Obermann; author Paul Coelho; Martin Sorrell, CEO, WPP; one of the fleet of DLD Mercedes cars
Top right: Niklas Zennström, co-founder, Joost;
Bottom right: Amy Macdonald performing at DLD Night

that age - which means many don't know the world without "always-on" connectivity.

60 MILLION ON FACEBOOK

This becomes a recurring theme of the three-day event – the world is increasingly connected, it's changing and good can come of that change. That's true of "Getting social" in which Facebook, Bebo, LinkedIn, Xing examine how social networking has developed and continues to grow. Matt Cohler from Facebook says that it has 60 million users worldwide, up from 10 million in September 2006. Versions in languages other than English are now becoming available to spread the online networking phenomenon to new territories, enabling more people to interact. It's happening in Eastern Europe, too, with the launch of noovo.com by entrepreneur Andrej Nabergoj. He describes his software as a social engine rather than social network which he intends to spread to Asia as well as Eastern Europe.

Viviane Reding, EU Commissioner for Information, Society and Media, makes an impassioned call to infrastructure operators across Europe. It's vital to ensure that there's more broadband, more wireless access. "The future world will be a wireless world," she says

forcefully. It's also important that the cost of wireless access is affordable for all taking something of a sideswipe at incumbent telecommunication companies such as Deutsche Telekom whose CEO René Obermann is sitting alongside. She says there is a need for new frequencies for these services – hinting at recent decisions at the ITU to allocate certain TV frequencies for mobile applications. She is also clearly pro-DVB-H as a single technology for mobile TV.

DLD turns out to be broader than telecommunications, Internet and wireless. The conference is also about architectural design, DNA, gene pools, artistic expression, entertainment. Inspiring speakers from an immense variety of backgrounds provide thought-provoking and stimulating presentations that remind all the audience what an amazing world we inhabit. They also focus on inspiring things happening in developing countries – like mobile banking in Ghana. Fortunately, these presentations are posted online so you don't lose the thread by trying to take detailed notes.

Of course, half the fun of the events like this is meeting new people and starting conversations. Over coffee, lunch and at the

fabulous DLD Night party it was possible to meet and share ideas with people of an incredible range of disciplines and to be reminded that, as broadcasters, we need to be able to focus on the widest possible world and to bring our audiences dynamic, stimulating and varied content.

MEETING TODAY'S WORLD

Guido Baumhauer, managing director distribution at Deutsche Welle, sums it up: "The DLD-conference was a great opportunity to stop and smell the roses. It's a chance to think, rethink, argue and reflect upon media developments in the near future. The mix of people was exciting, ranging from old media war horses to top bloggers, dot com winners and start up entrepreneurs. You don't get a chance to meet these people on a daily basis. Some of their insights were thrilling; others seem to be way off base. But in the end I left with the feeling that Deutsche Welle is currently doing the right thing. As international broadcasters we have to be more flexible in responding to market needs." The audience is up to something – and successful international broadcasters are already exploring this territory. ■

RADIO ARRIVES AND SO DOES ELECTRICITY

Radio news agency KBR68H and Media Development Loan Fund are helping set up local stations in some of the remotest parts of eastern Indonesia, providing many people with their first access to broadcast information. MDLF Programme Director **Tessa Piper** reports

The early morning mist hung in the still cool air in the remote village of Anyelma, high up in the Central Highlands of Papua where preparations were underway for the feast to accompany the launch of the community's radio station, Radio Pikonane.

The initiative to build a radio station in the regency of Yahukimo in this isolated part of Indonesia came from KBR68H, the country's only independent radio news agency. It is the latest in a series of radio stations to be built as part of a programme to extend information to some of the most remote and least developed parts of eastern Indonesia. The programme is being implemented by KBR68H and Indonesian non-profit organisation Perhimpunan Pengembangan Media Nusantara (the Indonesian Association for Media Development) in cooperation with Media Development Loan Fund – a New York-based non-profit company providing low-cost financing to independent media in developing countries – and the Royal Netherlands Embassy in Jakarta.

TOTALLY CUT OFF

The choice of location for the station was prompted by a famine that struck the area two years ago, but which remained unknown for weeks due to lack of information. As a result, 55 people died. There was food available in the nearest town, but without information no one was aware of the desperate need. An assessment visit by KBR68H and MDLF found a region almost totally cut off from development. Basic services such as water, electricity and telephone were unavailable.

The idea of building a radio station was strongly endorsed by local leaders, who quickly saw its potential. But there was scepticism too. "We have been promised many



▲ Clockwise from left: the radio station in Pikonane; an interview underway in the studio; receiving the gift of a radio

things again and again. But those promises never come to anything," said one village elder. This scepticism turned to anticipation and excitement as work on the station began and to celebrate the launch, nine pigs – highly prized possessions – were donated for a feast. "The blood of the pigs must touch the ground. Only then will the radio station become a true part of our community", explained Mary Lantipo, a leader of the community association managing the station.

Radio Pikonane is broadcasting on AM 1278 and FM 107.8 and reaches around 70,000 people with a mix of information, educational and entertainment programmes. As well as locally produced programmes on topics ranging from health to agriculture to human rights, Radio Pikonane relays a selection of news and talk shows produced by KBR68H.

Building the station was the most challenging initiative to date for the KBR68H team, who since 2003 have built seven other stations in eastern Indonesia. The remote location presented a major logistical challenge, particularly as a bridge linking the only road into the area is frequently swept away, leaving it impassable except on foot. The absence of any media in the area meant that station staff and volunteers lacked any experience and needed intensive training on all aspects of station management,

programming and technical issues – training that will continue over the months to come.

GEOGRAPHICALLY CHALLENGED

But the location presented an even more fundamental challenge: there was no electricity. With fuel in this remote area costing five times more than in Jakarta, a low-cost sustainable source of power was needed. A local company with relevant expertise was commissioned to build a 9,000 watt micro-hydro plant to harness the nearby Kut river to generate power to run the radio station and provide electricity to the local primary school, church, village meeting place and individual homes for the first time. Thanks to the micro-hydro plant and a donation from the radio news agency, local children are getting their first ever experience of using computers.

Hopes are high for a positive impact now that the area has both a radio station and electricity. "We now have new opportunities to help ourselves," said Kores Waitipo, a teacher who donated the land on which the station is built. "We plan to have farming programmes to help improve our crops. And with electricity those crops can earn more income because we can sell not just the raw product. Now we can also grind our coffee beans or blend carrot juice for sale." ■

“The location presented a major challenge: there was no electricity”

FOCUSING ON GROWTH

NCPower Pro ensures smooth broadcasting operations for TV and media companies. One of the key factors of our success is the ongoing enhancement of features which allows us to cater to all distribution channels - conventional broadcasting, IPTV, corporate and mobile TV.

A successful position in the market hinges not least of all on the right sales and marketing strategy. From the outset, we knew that we wanted to have an international thrust to our sales efforts. Having signed up renowned local media companies such as RTL, n-tv and Deutsches Anlegerfernsehen, we also systematically targeted foreign markets. Eastern Europe, Russia, China and the Middle East have been of particular interest to us.

In creating a good name for ourselves outside Germany, we have never lost sight of our principle of "thinking globally and acting locally". NorCom offers local solutions for local markets - we adjust the NCPower Pro range to meet the requirements of the specific customer's market. As a result, we are able to serve disparate countries on an individual basis to optimum effect. For the Chinese market, we have implemented a special menu system designed in the light of Asian preferences. The entire user interface is in Chinese, while the Russian version of NCPower Pro features a Cyrillic user interface.

MORE TV, MURMANSK

Our most recent sales success with More TV, a private regional broadcaster in Murmansk, Russia, is a good example of why customers opt for NCPower Pro. More TV was looking for a media production solution containing all workflow components such as ingesting,

Munich-based **NorCom Information Technology** offers innovative solutions in the production and processing of multimedia content. The key to success is focusing on high-growth markets, says **Viggo Nordbakk**, founder and CEO

“Our vision is to play an active role in the development of media”

research, scheduling, playing out and archiving while also being capable of processing video, audio, graphics and text files. With the installation of NCPower Pro, the 25-strong production staff at More TV have access to a tapeless end-to-end digital system for all TV-related activities.

Our aim is to offer an innovative and cost-efficient solution by providing editorial, technical and creative support. NCPower Pro offers More TV a long-term future-proof solution incorporating open standards meeting all of its requirements and additionally permitting it to react flexibly to changes. All processes – including research, copy-writing and editing – can be performed. The status of all contributions from the initial idea to scripts as well as broadcast scheduling and archiving can be monitored at all times. All tasks can be assigned electronically to internal and external, stationary and mobile staff and monitored.

Full end-to-end integration of the existing software architecture in the NCPower Pro system, multi-lingual capabilities (English and Russian) as well as the flexibility of the solution were just some of the many strong arguments prompting a decision in favour of NorCom.

The system does away with the

need to work with tapes and allows us to implement the “ingest once, use many times” principle.

LOCAL SUPPORT

If you have a good product and an effective sales team, local after-sales support is vital. We achieve local presence via our partners and/or subsidiaries, who are familiar with market conditions and the media in their country and build business relations steadily.

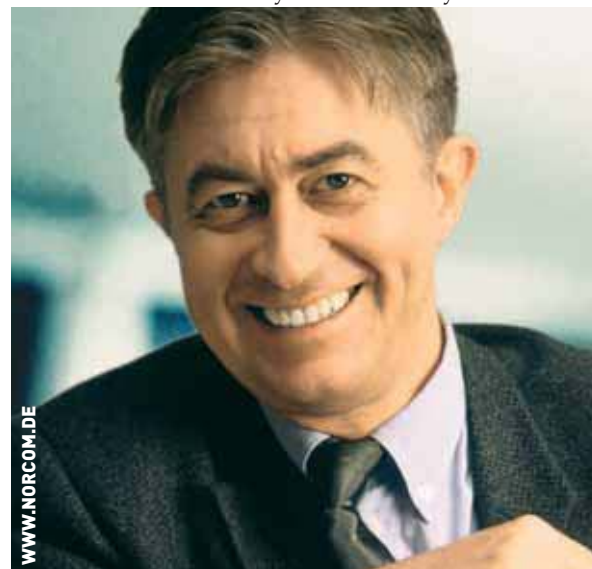
In China there are over 2,000 TV stations. In April 2007 we forged a partnership with Beijing-based Kommnet Group to open up the Chinese market. With its detailed knowledge and many years of experience in media software, Kommnet is an ideal partner for us. We had a joint stand at BIRTV, the largest broadcasting and media technology fair in Asia.

In Russia, where our customer base includes regional, national and also special-interest broadcasters, we recently established a subsidiary in Moscow. This allows us to react more quickly to customer requests, build contacts and, most importantly, to provide better after-sales service.

Our network of partners in other countries is growing. It is important that our partners meet our expectations of excellence – that they know their markets, are already operating successfully and act in NorCom's best interests.

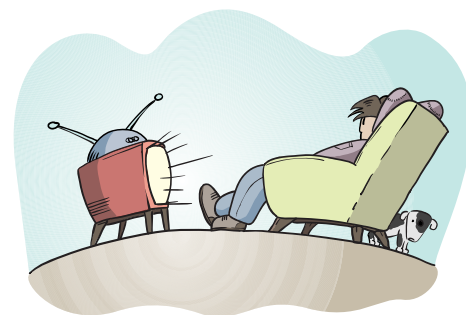
Establishing an international position at an early stage, and focusing our sales efforts on high-growth markets has, as it turns out, proved to be exactly the right strategy. Looking ahead, I see NorCom as one of the leading vendors of TV production software. Our goal is to position ourselves as an all-in operator providing media companies with strategic advice and assistance for their TV, IPTV or mobile TV projects. Our vision is to play an active role in the development of media - all we have to do is make this happen. ■

▼ Viggo Nordbakk



ELECTRONIC COUCH POTATO

Pixelmetrix has come up with a clever device that allows IP and digital TV operators to monitor end-users' experience. CEO **Danny Wilson** and IPTV Product Manager **Amit Sood** explain



The Pixelmetrix Electronic Couch Potato is an 'after the network' probe that measures and reports the end-users' experience for delivered video services. The ECP interacts with set-top boxes through infrared control and is able to change channels on the STB. Each channel is then monitored and the telemetry collected by the ECP is sent back to a central point, the ECP Consolidator. Data from multiple ECPs are processed and presented as service centric information to the service provider. The ECP receives decoded audio and video signals from the STB and assesses the audio and video quality of every monitored channel. The ECP is not restricted by any encryption scheme adopted for content protection in the network as it processes only decrypted signals coming out of the STB. In addition, the ECP has Ethernet pass-through functionality.

Multichannel TV operators, offering hundreds of channels are faced with managing their complex service offering in the face of the continued pressure to reduce OPEX. Maintaining the right content in the right place is not always easy and we often hear of cases where the 'adult' channel is mistakenly swapped for the cartoon channel. While operational personnel would call this a 'provisioning error', the legal department, given government regulations, potential fines or criminal charges, would call the mishap something quite different.

Guarding against these kinds of problems, the ECP features the

Pixelmetrix OCV - On-Air Content Validation for dynamic service plan verification. OCV checks whether channels are present and confirms the overall 'channel line up'. Once a problem is detected, alarms are sent to the ECP Consolidator with a detailed explanation of the source of the problem.

The ECP and Consolidator also lets IPTV players derive benefit from its extensive automation facilities. Essentially a programmable 'test robot', various test scripts are downloaded to each ECP from the Consolidator. The ECP completely changes how IP video networks are monitored and information extracted. The user interface of the Consolidator presents the status of the entire service, wherever the ECPs are deployed. Additionally, it is also capable of drilling down to the core of the problem.

ELECTRONIC EYES

The ECP monitors multiple performance parameters in the IP and transport layers. IP parameters can include service bandwidth, jitter, delay, etc. Checks conforming to the TR 101-290 standard are applied to the transport layer. A major concern for all IPTV operators today is the ability to accurately know the true channel change time. The ECP achieves this goal through two different mechanisms. IGMP Join/Leave times indicate, on the network layer, the duration it takes for the channel to change. The ECP takes the concept a step further to calculate the actual channel change time. Measurements on the decoded video gauge how long it takes before a user begins to see the next channel after a channel change request is sent. A unique feature of

the ECP is its ability to assess the quality of the decoded video, and present it on a scale of 1 to 5 as a MOS (Mean Opinion Score). This is applicable for every channel scanned by the ECPs. The ECP further monitors audio signal anomalies such as audio, silence and tone. The ECP also comes packed with the ability to check for video freeze frames and blackout.

POWERFUL CONSOLIDATION

The sole objective of the ECP Consolidator is to optimally present meaningful information to the operator about the service being delivered to the customer - information that enables them to solve a problem within the shortest time possible. The ECP Consolidator is the configuration and monitoring console for multiple ECPs spread across the last mile distribution points of the complete network. The ECP Consolidator presents to the operator the status of all broadcast channels scanned by ECPs. The multiple parameters monitored by each ECP for each channel are not presented as mere data, but as information presented in a way to report the status of service quality in a particular territory or an overall system-wide status.

Another vital feature is the ability to fully control and configure each ECP through the ECP Consolidator. Intuitively presented and customisable test scripts enable users to configure each ECP to perform specific tests or mass configure multiple ECPs swiftly.

More alert than a human 'couch potato', the Pixelmetrix electronic version provides IPTV operators with real-time insights into their customers' quality of experience. ■

“Each monitored parameter can be configured to individual threshold settings before alarms are raised”