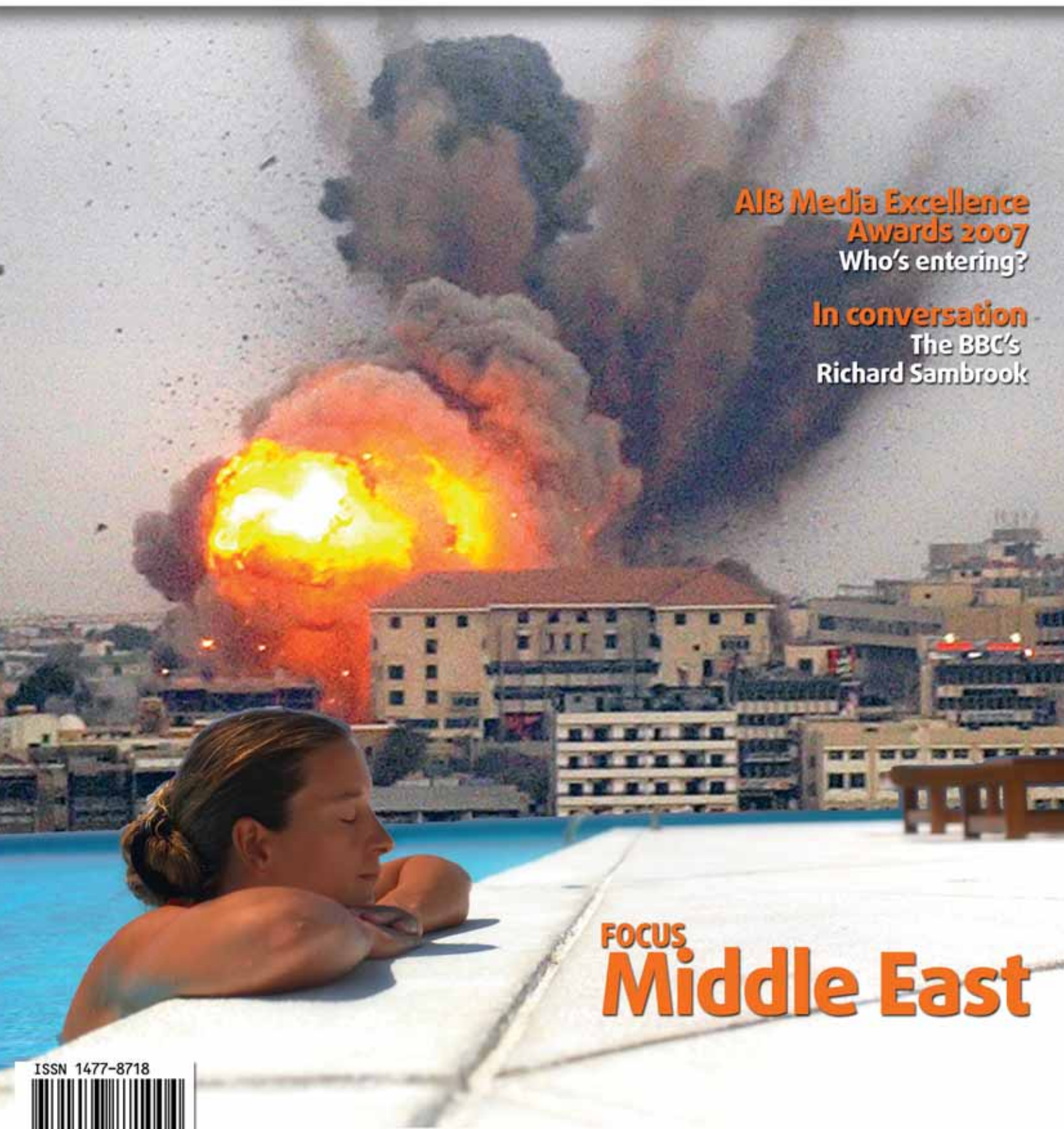


The Association
for International
Broadcasting

The Channel

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Volume 10 Number 2



**AIB Media Excellence
Awards 2007**
Who's entering?

In conversation
The BBC's
Richard Sambrook

FOCUS
Middle East

ISSN 1477-8718



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- 4 Global briefing**
- 12 In conversation**
BBC Global News Director Richard Sambrook
- 14 Critical thinking**
Simon Spanswick reports from the Middle East
- 16 A crowded, fragmented market**
AP's Alla Salehian on ME content requirements
- 18 The Middle East – not 'just somewhere on TV'**
How Al Arabiya defines its role in Arab
- 19 Arab journalists also hurt, sometimes badly**
Mark Brayne on journalism, trauma and the Arabic media
- 20 RFI's voice in the Arab world**
Philippe Beauvillard on Monte Carlo Doualiya's mission
- 21 Substantial opportunity**
WorldSpace targets the Middle East
- 22 Alhurra X 3**
Why tune into the "American channel"?
- 23 I fight with my pen and my spirit**
How Deutsche Welle supports transparency on the web in Iran
- 24 And the latest...**
New AIB members, new initiatives
- 25 AIB Media Excellence Awards 2007**
How to enter
- 28 Danger and hope**
RFE/RL's Radio Free Iraq journalists at work
- 29 Brands plus decision-makers**
EuroNews' Olivier de Montchenu on expansion
- 30 On the freedom watch**
Ibrahim Nawar of Arab Press Freedom Watch
- 31 Leveraging convergence trends**
The latest findings from Arab Advisors Group
- 33 Arab women meaning business**
The Arab International Women's Forum has an agenda for change
- 34 NTV in wonderland**
A curious tale from Uganda
- 36 Fact file**
Margarita Simonyan, Editor in Chief, Russia Today
- 37 That all important eye contact**
Prompting has just got better, says Autocue's Kieran Smith
- 38 Tracking it**
Andy Nobbs on what Teletrax does for Reuters
- 41 Going hyper is good**
Linx moves to FTP video delivery
- 42 Radio goes the open route**
The first open source play-out software for developing countries
- 44 The state of Africa's media**
Stephen King of BBC World Service Trust sums up AMDI
- 46 Crazy for mobile TV**
How T-Systems started a trend
- 47 Roadmap to digital**
ABU helps broadcasters plan their 'digital roadmaps'
- 49 Compelling customer experiences**
Amdocs' Michael Matthews on Apple's real news
- 50 What a star**
RRSat and Fashion TV



Richard Sambrook is responding to the challenge of defining purpose and remit



What more does Middle Eastern media have to do to become an alternative to Western media



The run-up to the 2007 AIB Media Excellence Awards has begun. Will you be there?



Cheered on arrival, NTV Uganda's story turned into a sad and curious tale

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Broadening presence in Africa

Al Jazeera English, the international news channel based in Doha, is now available in Africa thanks to a deal with MultiChoice's DStv platform. The channel went on the air on DStv channel 62 on 31 May. Al Jazeera English already has a strong presence and high level of expertise in Africa. The channel currently has bureaux in Egypt, Ivory Coast, Kenya, South Africa and Zimbabwe and shares the resources of Al Jazeera Arabic channel's bureaux in Chad, Libya, Mauritania, Morocco, Senegal, Somalia, South Africa and Sudan. Wadah Khanfar, DG of the Al Jazeera Network, said that the channel's broad presence in Africa with its dedicated resources will bring an additional depth of coverage to the important issues and stories in Africa.

Four out of 339

The Broadcasting Board of Governors has congratulated Radio Free Asia and the Voice of America on receiving all four prizes for Chinese-language broadcasting at the Human Rights Press Awards in Hong Kong. Two of the prizes went to VOA's Luis Ramirez for his reporting on rural unrest sweeping through China and to Ding Xiao of RFA's Mandarin Service for breaking the story of a deadly police crackdown on peasant protestors in Dongzhou, Guangdong Province. A merit certificate was awarded to RFA's James Zhu for his reporting on the beating of plainclothes officers of human rights lawyer Gao Zhiseng. Ding Xiao also received a merit certificate for her follow-up reporting on the Dongzhou crackdown. The four awards were chosen from a record 339 submissions.

Starting the debate

To mark its 60th anniversary, Radio Netherlands Worldwide has embarked on a series of global debates on the future of independent media and press freedom. The first debate was held in Bucharest. RNW's Arjen de Wolff (left) worked with Romanian TV news channel Realitatea TV on the project. "Since the fall of communism, Romanian media has changed drastically, with many radio and TV stations coming on the air to serve the population of 22m people", Arjen says. "Some international broadcasters, such as RFI and the BBC, have established FM transmitters in the major Romanian cities. But despite the plurality of media, it is not always clear to everyone who owns what and how those interests affect what the Romanian public get to see and hear. The debate was the first time media owners, journalists and politicians had sat in the same room and discussed the problems of transparency and accountability. What is needed is a published public code of ethics for stations and newspapers. The next set of debates will be in Accra and Cotonou in July, culminating in a major international debate in The Hague on November 28th.



Link with Russian-speaking Israelis

Voice of Russia, the international radio voice of the Russian Federation, is broadcasting a daily 2 hour Russian language show to Israel's large Russian-speaking community via All for Peace Radio. WRN, the international transmission service provider, has organised this relay on behalf of Voice of Russia. WRN MD Gary Edgerton says the relay offers a comprehensive reach to Voice of Russia's target audience. All for Peace Radio 107.2 FM broadcasts a signal that reaches Jerusalem and the heavily populated Israeli coastal cities such as Tel Aviv, and its 89.3 FM frequency covers the north of the country including Afula and Nazareth.

Monitoring India's satellite TV

India's Information and Broadcasting Ministry is setting up an Electronic Media Monitoring Centre to keep an eye on satellite TV. All programmes of satellite TV channels transmitted or re-transmitted through cable are required to adhere to the provisions of the programming and advertising codes of the Cable TV Networks (Regulation) Act 1995. Channels must keep a record of programmes downlinked for a period of 90 days and be able to produce them as and when required. 222 private satellite TV channels have permission to uplink from India, six TV channels uplinked from abroad have been permitted to downlink in India, and 54 foreign TV channels have been provisionally permitted to downlink in India. The proposals of 71 private satellite TV channels for permission to uplink from India are at various stages of scrutiny. "Guidelines for Uplinking from India" are available on the ministry's website.

Mastering media with DW

The lack of solid journalistic training in most developing countries has prompted Deutsche Welle to initiate plans for a masters programme in International Media Studies. Based on the experience of Deutsche Welle Academy, which trains about 1500 journalists and staff members of radio and TV stations a year from all over the world, the masters course will offer a two-year bilingual programme for initially 40 participants, starting in 2009. Students should have a bachelors degree in order to be eligible. The focus will be on journalism, communication and media sciences as well as media management. Cooperation with foreign universities, which operate in comparable fields, will be welcomed. The programme will be user-oriented and should also be of interest to people already engaged in media business.

Telesur poised to take Europe

Telesur, the TV network promoted by Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez as a corrective to what he sees as the biased coverage of Latin America by US media conglomerates, has earmarked Spain as entry point for its European operations, by signing up affiliates to carry Telesur programming. Telesur president Andres Izarra hopes that operations in Spain will begin by the end of 2007. Back home, President Chavez branded cable news channel Globovision - Venezuela's last remaining opposition-aligned TV station - an enemy of the state.



Opposition? I can't see any

He accused it of distorting reaction to the closure of RCTV, a network which closed after the government refused to renew its licence. Protests in the streets that the government is drifting towards Cuba-style authoritarianism have been ignored or played down by most private networks, but not by Globovision who reported them as a battle for free speech.

SES Astra reports strong performance in first quarter • Arqiva completes the acquisition of BT satellite broadcast business • BBC's Global News audiences reach a record 233m • India's AIR, DDI studying Emergency Warning Broadcast System (EWBS) • BBC expands FM presence in DR Congo and releases first national survey • Attributor will track and 'fingerprint' AP content on the web • Ideal becomes Quantel SI partner in India • GlobeCast celebrates 10th anniversary at NAB 2007 • Al Jazeera English available on YouTube • VoA appoints Losang Gyatso as chief of its Tibetan Service • BBC and ITV to launch a free-to-view satellite proposition • RRSAt CEO David Rivel named 2007 Teleport Executive of the Year

A blueprint for Europe

WorldSpace Satellite Radio is working with the Fraunhofer Institute for Integrated Circuits IIS to develop a receiver reference design (or engineering blueprint) for the European market. The agreement brings WorldSpace's European subscribers one step closer to mobile satellite radio service, beginning with Italy. The WorldSpace European receiver will be the first satellite-terrestrial hybrid receiver developed to comply with the satellite digital radio (SDR) standard, newly established by the European Telecommunications Standards Institute (ETSI). The standard enables the combination of terrestrial repeater networks and satellites, which will help to maintain excellent service quality for consumers in difficult reception environments. WorldSpace plans to roll out its service on a sequential, country-by-country basis. In addition to Italy, the Company's target markets include France, Germany, Spain, Turkey and Poland, representing a combined population of approximately 361m people and 148m vehicles. Join AIB chief executive Simon Spanswick at IBC as he chairs a panel discussion debating satellite radio.

Africa's interest in Europe

Jean-Luc Maertens is EuroNews' new Distribution Manager for Africa. A former manager of the Africa and Indian Ocean desk for Canal France International, he is now in charge of boosting EuroNews' presence in Sub-Saharan Africa through distribution on all broadcasting media. In Sub-Saharan Africa, EuroNews is the only international news channel distributed via all satellite platforms, reaching over 3m households. It is also the only international news channel broadcasting around the clock in Africa via direct terrestrial distribution (in Kinshasa since 2004). EuroNews CEO Philippe Cayla has stated as one of his strategic targets for the channel to "become the leading international channel in Africa".

Gay in China

Hong Kong-listed broadcaster Phoenix Satellite Television has produced a weekly

show on gay issues which is accessible to millions of people in China through the broadcaster's Internet site and other portals. The makers hope it will

increase tolerance in a society where homosexuality is still a taboo subject. Homosexuals have been persecuted - often jailed, or even executed. Until 2001, the Chinese authorities still classed homosexuality as a mental illness. The show's producer says it will be a forum for gay people "to get in touch with each other and communicate", and he hopes that at the end of the show's 12 episodes "homosexuality will no longer be an issue".



EU updates 1989 advertising rules

After 18 months of talks, EU culture ministers at the end of May agreed to ease TV advertising rules and allow product placements, while giving individual member states across the 27-nation bloc the choice of setting tougher standards. Advertising is limited to 12 minutes per hour per day; for films, TV films, children and information shows, the minimum between each commercial break is now 30 minutes. Product placements will be allowed with the exception of children and informational shows and on condition that viewers are informed before or afterwards. The new package also retains the existing country-of-origin principle which says that EU broadcasters only have to respect the rules of the country where they are based not into which they broadcast.

Weaned on TV

Research has revealed that about 90% of US children under the age of two and about 40% of

babies under three months regularly watch TV, DVDs and videos. The high number of young children watching TV came as a surprise. The American Academy of Pediatrics estimates that children in the US watch about four hours of TV every day. They recommend that children below 2 should not watch any and older children should watch no more than 2 hours a day of quality programming. But 29% of parents surveyed believe baby-oriented TV and DVD programmes offer educational benefits, while other studies suggest excessive TV viewing can lead to attention and learning problems in later life.



CBeebies for India

Two of BBC Worldwide's channels launched in May on India Online Broadband - BBC Entertainment and children's channel CBeebies. The two channels were first launched in India on the DTH platform Tata-Sky, a joint venture between News Corp.'s BSkyB and Indian business conglomerate Tata Group. India Online Broadband offers various content streams via its IPTV platform, charging customers a one-time registration fee of \$25, with monthly subscription charges at \$5. IOL already offers the BBC's 24-hour news channel BBC World.

Mexican soap for China

Mexico's Televisa network has signed a deal with the Chinese government to make Chinese versions of its most successful programming, including its world-famous soap operas. Televisa said it already has tested the market by broadcasting four soap operas dubbed into Mandarin, and it has begun cable transmissions in Mexico of China's government-run channel CCTV dubbed into Spanish. At the beginning of June, China launched a new communications satellite into orbit to provide broader radio and television signal coverage across the country.

DRM + AIR + ABU

The Digital Radio Mondiale Consortium, All India Radio and the ABU were partners in a trial in Delhi showcasing DRM digital radio transmissions in the medium wave band using Single Channel Simulcast (SCS) and Multi-Channel Simulcast (MCS). The trial was targeted to MW radio broadcasters, equipment manufacturers, radio receiver manufacturers as well as retailers, and the aim was to demonstrate the feasibility of the relatively new technology of SCS and MSC, while broadcasting analogue and digital radio signals using only one transmitter. DRM Chairman Peter Senger sees great potential for the DRM system in Asia. DRM is the world's only open standard, universal, digital on-air system for short-wave, medium-wave/AM and long-wave.

• Thai cabinet clears the way for Thailand Independent Television to become a commercial-free public station • European Commission funds mobile TV research and development project for France • AIB Media Excellence Awards 2007 open for entry - Awards event on 20 November • HDTV feeds for F1 races later in 2007 • NAB chief calls for STB availability by 2008 • Guinea to grant licences to more private radio stations • Joost raises \$45m in funding from four VC and media groups • BBC Worldwide to launch community-based, video-rich websites • VoA Kurdish celebrates 15th anniversary • Rainer Sollich new head of Deutsche Welle's Arabic programmes • UK Ofcom delays radio wave spectrum

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- Indian Cable Networks Typically Provide 56 Channels (550 MHz) To 106 Channels (862 MHz)
- 1310 nm & 1550 nm Bi-Directional CATV Fiber Optic Systems Deployed
- Digital CATV With 150 Channels Being Rolled Out In More Than 25 Cities Before End 2007
- Cable Modem And Broadband Services Already Deployed In Many Towns & Cities
- IPTV Already Launched Commercially
- VoIP Gaining Popularity, Being Deployed Widely For International Voice Traffic



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From our own team

When ABC MD Mark Scott announced the appointment of Hanh Tran as Chief Executive of Radio Australia, he said he was delighted that from a very strong field of internal and external applicants “the next person to lead Radio Australia has come from our own team.” Hanh has over 10 years experience in international broadcasting. Radio Australia, together with the Australia Network, International Projects and International Relations, is part of the new entity ABC International which Scott announced in February. Under Scott, the national broadcaster is exploring ways to raise revenue in a new commercial approach, this may include charging people to download popular programmes from ABC websites. The ABC is currently engaged in a major 3-year project to expand the reach of its NewsRadio service to more regional areas of the country, increasing access to 95% of the population, mostly on FM.

Thank you, RFE/RL

On 10 May, the Polish parliament – the Sejm – unanimously passed a resolution to mark the 55th anniversary of the first programme aired by Radio Free Europe. “The Sejm thanks Radio Free Europe’s authors, employees and associates in Poland and in the West on the occasion of the 55th anniversary of the first RFE broadcast from Munich,” the resolution reads. “Their daily, arduous work allowed many of our compatriots to get to know the world during the decades of communism, allowed them to get to know the uncensored truth about Poland.” The resolution recalls that RFE spoke about Stalinist crimes, helped to understand the Solidarity trade union and raised hopes during martial law.

TV trends in Europe

Since 1995, the Yearbook of the European Audiovisual Observatory has been providing data on film, TV and video in 36 European countries as well as for Japan and the US, gathered from over a thousand sources. “Trends in European TV”, the second volume of its Yearbook 2006 on Film, Television and Video in Europe, makes interesting reading (trilingual edition). It looks at the global audiovisual market; radio and TV companies in Europe; financial resources of the radio-TV industry in Europe; the transition to digital TV; trends in TV audience; trends in TV programming; TV production companies. The Yearbook is available in hard copy or online.

Regulator for private radio

The Indian government is planning to set up a regulatory authority for the private radio industry by the end of 2007, including FM as well as satellite radio. It remains unclear what status the body will have. At present, the Telecom Regulatory

Authority of India is the only independent regulator dealing with telecommunications and broadcasting issues. By the autumn of this year, there will be close to 280 private FM stations on the air and the process of bidding for another 400 frequencies will begin. The Association of Radio Operators in India welcomed the move, saying that as the sector opens up the industry is in need of an independent radio regulator.

Private radio is expected to become a booming industry with an annual turnover of US\$2.4bn over the next eight years and a separate regulator will ease the strain on India’s Information and Broadcasting Ministry.



And the winner is...

RCI viva has launched Digital Diversity: an audiovisual competition for 18-35 year old Canadians to submit 3 to 8 minute short films or radio podcasts on the theme of immigration. There are over \$25,000 in prizes to be won. The films will be evaluated by a multicultural jury and the winners will be broadcast online on the RCI viva website in the autumn, where the general public will be invited to vote for their favourite creations. For more, see www.rcinet.ca/digitaldiversity.

Let’s measure it this way

Radio New Zealand has decided to change the way it conducts audience research, and contracted Nielsen Media Research to undertake a fully representative nationwide survey which will have radio diaries in the field continuously for 40 weeks of the year. RNZ Chief Executive, Peter Cavanagh, said it was time for the organisation to move on from its dependence on a limited snap-shot audience survey when measuring performance against its charter objectives.

Radio Prague on the move

Radio Prague is moving house later this summer. The move is due to the total reconstruction and redecoration of the building where Czech Radio has been located since 1933, the “Broadcasting House” in the centre of Prague. Work on the building, which was damaged at the end of the Second World War and again during the Soviet-led invasion in 1968, will take two years. Radio Prague and its entire staff are relocating to a new office block right next door. “It is like moving from the 20th to the 21st century,” says Radio Prague’s Director Miroslav Krupicka. “Many people will miss the old building’s smell of history”. Radio Prague’s address remains the same: Vinohradska 12, 12099 Prague 2, Czech Republic.



A champion for BBC licence payers

Michael Lyons - a former economist and local councillor – took up his position as Chairman of the BBC Trust, the BBC’s new governing body, on 1 May. His appointment is for a four-year term ending 30 April 2011. The BBC Trust is responsible for representing the interests of licence fee payers. It applies the principle of public value in holding to account the Executive Board, which is responsible for the day-to-day management of the BBC. Mark Thompson, BBC Director-General, said: “I believe he will be a true champion for all licence payers across the UK, ensuring that the BBC is in the strongest shape creatively and professionally to give audiences the best possible value over the next Charter period.”

auCTION and sale of new mobile phone spectrum • Doordarshan launches mobile TV pilot in Delhi • WorldTV expands its Bosnian-Serbian offering • AIB Media Excellence Awards 2007 open for entry - Awards event on 20 November • Arabic news TV expands with France 24 launch • Sony to sell HD digital radios • BBC gets go-ahead to launch its iPlayer on-demand service in November • German cartel office to probe DVB-H consortium • RTVE to launch big multimedia news TV channel • Eutelsat opens new video neighbourhood at 9 degrees East • medienforum.nrw announces “made for mobile” award • Majority of European online content & Services audiences won’t pay by 2011 • Deutsche Telekom first

FM relays up and still counting

Radio France Internationale continues to move forward with its FM relay policy. In the first half of 2007, three relays were installed in Mali (Segou, Mopti, Gao) reaching a total of six. A second relay was installed in Guinea, in Labe, following Conakry. In Reykjavik, a 24/24 relay is working during the Franco-Islandic cultural season. RFI also opened a relay in Erbil, in the Kurdish part of Iraq, for its subsidiary Monte Carlo Doualiya. Launched On 21 May, RFI's Hausa programme now provides two hours daily by a team based in Lagos. And a new concept became reality in Belgrade: RFI and news agency Beta started a radio about international issues, broadcasting 12 hours in Serb and 12 hours in French.

Rolling news for Africa

Africa entered the era of rolling news with the launch of CNBC's 24-hour information network dedicated to coverage of news and business on the continent. CNBC Africa broadcasts from studios in Johannesburg, South Africa, and also takes feeds from bureaux in Lagos, Nairobi and London. The new channel has a heavy business bias with live broadcasts of the opening and closing of key African markets, including the stock exchanges in Johannesburg, Lagos and Nairobi. US-based CNBC already has networks operating in Europe, Asia and the Middle East.

WDR goes for EasyMedia PRO

S4M's Media Analysis System EasyMedia PRO has been introduced at the German public broadcaster WDR (Westdeutscher Rundfunk). EasyMedia PRO is a software system for importing, distributing and displaying TV audience measurement information. The system enables any number of users within a broadcasting company to autonomously and quickly call up ratings information. EasyMedia PRO provides the user with various television-viewing reports. For example market share is analysed daily, weekly and monthly, market leader reports are prepared and numerous report options are available with an array of competitor comparisons.

Heading to India

Viacom and India's TV18 Group are forming a JV for general entertainment business in India and plan to launch a Hindi-language channel. Viacom's existing channels in India – MTV, Nickelodeon and VH1 – will be part of Viacom-18. Its Indian partner will inject its motion pictures division. "India is one of our priority markets for expansion and we see long-term growth opportunities," said Viacom Chief Executive Philippe Dauman.



An exciting partnership with TU

BBC World Service's 24-hour English radio channel has launched on TU Media of Korea, one of the most advanced media platforms in the world. BBC WS is the first international radio channel available 24 hours a day, seven days a week on Korea's S-DMB (Digital Multimedia Broadcasting) platform. Neil Curry, BBC World Service's Head of Business Development, Asia and Pacific Region, believes this is an exciting partnership for the BBC. South Korean company TU Media launched the world's first satellite-based mobile TV service in May 2005 and now has over one million subscribers. It currently offers 16 video channels incorporating drama, sports, games, news, music and movies, as well as 20 audio channels.

Successfully launched

SES ASTRA successfully launched its new ASTRA 1L satellite into orbit from Kourou, French Guiana. The satellite will be made commercially available in early July after extensive in-orbit testing. ASTRA 1L will be located at 19.2° East, ASTRA's prime orbital position for delivering broadcast services to continental Europe, and will also transmit the increasing number of HD TV channels. SES



ASTRA Ceo Ferdinand Kayser said "ASTRA 1L will allow us to move our satellite ASTRA 2C from 19.2° East to 28.2° East to fulfil the high capacity demand from the UK and Irish markets. It will also extend the coverage from the Canary Islands in the West to the Russian border in the East and help us to further strengthen our unique in-orbit back-up scheme."

Growing to US\$102bn by 2015

Media Partners Asia's annual analysis of Asia's broadband and pay-TV industries has some interesting conclusions. A record 2.5m new digital set-top boxes were installed during 2006; net new digital subs will peak at 30m by 2010, driven by China, India, Korea, Japan and Australasia. Regional pay-TV penetration is expected to hit 50% after 2011 and 55% by 2015, with almost half of total pay-TV homes having a digital STB by 2015. Regional broadband household penetration is also expected to rise to more than 30% by 2015 with penetration levels at 80-90% in Korea, Japan and ASEAN and 40% in China. M&A levels, already at a record US\$8.7 bn in 2006, continue to grow, driven by activity in Greater China, India and Korea as consolidation and investment gains pace. Japan, China and India will lead in revenue; India will emerge as regional pay-TV leader but continue to lag in broadband;

No to pick and choose

In response to complaints from DTH firms that broadcasters were forcing them to carry all their channels, in return for giving them the ones they wanted ("bundling of channels"), India's regulator TRAI suggested scrapping the regulation that gives the broadcaster the right to insist that all its channels are carried by the DTH-service firm. This "pick and choose" solution met with opposition from TV broadcasters, including Star India, Zee Telefilms and SET Discovery. Star, whose Hong Kong parent also has a stake in Tata Sky, suggested that DTH providers be allowed choice in the channels they wanted to carry, but only if broadcasters are also given the choice to decide the TV delivery company they wanted to deal with.

major phone company to back VoIP with Jajah • IRIB to help develop Tajikistan radio • BBC News 24 streamed permanently online and to 3G mobile network • AIB Media Excellence Awards 2007 open for entry - Awards event on 20 November • NBC Universal limits ad length before online-video clips • Telco competition makes Europe IPTV leader • EuroNews increases African distribution • TVNZ-New Zealand offers video-on-demand • South Africa's SABC has another stab at an international, satellite-delivered news channel to Africa • Deutsche Welle joins "Europe TV" advertising platform • 46m mobile video subscribers by 2010 • Google is developing its own mobile phone • OSCE promotes media

Over 30% growth in less than 6 months

Russia Today TV has expanded its coverage in Europe by adding over 750,000 viewers in the Netherlands and Belgium through partnership with satellite TV operators Canaldigital (Netherlands) and TV Vlaanderen (Belgium). The deal brings Russia Today's total audience in Europe to almost 16m viewers - more than a 30% growth in less than six months. Sergey Lisnevsky, Head of RT's Distribution Department commented that the availability of RT both in the Netherlands and in Belgium shows the implicit growth of Europeans' interest in news coming from Russia. In May, Russia Today launched a new Arabic service called Rusiya Al Yaum which will focus on Russia's relations with the Middle East.

DW launches mobile video format

German international broadcaster Deutsche Welle is now offering one minute news headlines for mobiles updated hourly - in German and English. DW has been experimenting with special Internet services for mobile phones since 2005 - for the football world cup 2006 30 languages were on offer. German and English programmes of DW-RADIO were also recently launched for mobile reception. The new 'DW-TVNews' service is available free of charge from mobile.dw-world.de, for use with UMTS or EDGE-enabled mobile devices such as mobiles, PDAs or Pocket-PCs.

Access to North America

RRSat Global Communications Network has started operating a new multiple channels per carrier (MCPC) platform on the Galaxy 23 satellite located at 121 degrees West. The new C-Band platform, acquired through a deal with Intelsat, will serve a growing number of broadcasters wishing to enter the dynamic North American market by connecting to the leading cable operators and direct broadcast satellites (DBS) in the USA and Canada. RRSat also entered a 3 year partnership with Asia Broadcast Satellite to expand the Three Angel Broadcasting Network's coverage into Asia.

Asia Pacific going digital

Research published by Informa Telecoms & Media suggests that there will be 180m digital TV homes in Asia Pacific by 2012. This means 29% of TV homes in the region will receive digital signals in 2012, up from just 6% in 2006. China will overtake Japan as the biggest digital market during 2007 and will account for 43.3% of the digital total in 2012. While the Chinese government has recently become more cautious on some issues, such as satellite TV, it takes a proactive approach to converting analogue signals to digital. In the cable sector, some subscriber "apathy" towards upgrading from analogue to digital is slowing growth.

Global simulcast

RTHK-Hong Kong's Putonghua channel has launched a simulcast programme with Chinese language radio stations around the world to share stories about Hong Kong with the global Chinese community. RTHK is partnering with over 25 radio stations in China, Tibet, Japan, USA, UK, Australia, Taiwan, Germany, New Zealand, Singapore, Malaysia, Korea and Macau. The magazine show, called "Global Simulcast", covers news, social and current affairs, lifestyle, entertainment, local culture and music from different parts of the world. The simulcast project is part of RTHK's "Triplisation" initiative, which involves the localisation, nationalisation and globalisation of the broadcaster's programmes.



WorldTV in Europe

WorldTV - GlobeCast's DTH satellite brand - has expanded into Europe with the launch of a new TV bouquet of seven South Asian channels on the Intelsat 905 satellite at 35.5°E, giving a potential audience of hundreds of thousands throughout continental Europe access to quality channels produced in their homelands. WorldTV is already the leading distributor of international TV and radio in the US, delivering some 212 channels to viewers nationwide. Programming on WorldTV's initial bouquet in Europe will include a mix of popular Indian and Pakistani channels. The bouquet offers general entertainment, news, movie and music programming in Bengali, Hindi, Urdu and Punjabi. At NAB 2007, GlobeCast celebrated 10 years as a global service provider.

Free to NZ skies

New Zealand's FTA digital TV platform has launched in Auckland to a mixed reaction, as the content initially available was just a duplicate of analogue TV - hardly justifying the AU\$700 for box, dish and installation. Freeview's initial sales proposition is to appeal to those who suffer from reception difficulties, and those for whom this is a predominant reason to subscribe to Sky. New content will come in September, when TVNZ launches the first of two new channels, which will offer children's programmes and family themed shows. TVNZ's news channel launches in March 2008 and is hoping to get 20,000 households connected in the first year.

F*** letter words are thriving

The Swearing Monitor of the Union against Swearing found that coarse language on Dutch TV was up 13% in 2006. On TV, 112,000 swearwords, invective and cursing could be heard. Compared with 2003, the year in which the Swearing Monitor began, the average number of coarse language incidents has risen from 1,617 to 2,148 words a week. On both public and commercial stations, swearing occurs on average 0.3 times an hour.

Government propaganda

By employing special powers rarely used by democratically-elected governments, Honduran President Manuel Zelaya has ordered all the country's TV and radio stations to carry government propaganda for two hours a day. He says that the short-term measure is necessary because of unfair coverage of his government in the country's media. In interviews with him and his ministers the president hopes to explain a series of projects and measures which are underway, to counteract what he called misinformation about his government.

self-regulation in Armenia • Miklos Haraszti reappointed OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media • Yahoo creating mobile ad network • SPTI reaches 1m subs in Germany with AXN • Arqiva provides satellite communications system to connect CNBC studios across Europe • Brazil's leading broadcaster Rede Globo and SBT invest in DTT • World's first online SNG training course Slingpath launched at NAB • China: 133 pay-TV channels introduced in 2006 • EBU and T.E.A.M. Marketing AG stay partners in marketing until 2012 • Azerbaijan cuts ties with Paris-based media watchdog Reporters Without Borders • MCOT-Thailand launches two new TV channels • China and Zimbabwe to strengthen

Winning big time

International communications and information technology company Harris Corporation had 47 new product announcements at NAB 2007, among them the CENTRIO multi-viewer designed to streamline complex, large-system broadcast monitoring applications; the NewsForce, a complete, file-based newsroom solution built on the NEXIO XS server and the new H.264 broadcast encoding capabilities that enable lower-bandwidth operation of video services over satellite, terrestrial and IPTV delivery platforms. It came perhaps as no surprise then that Harris walked away with five prestigious industry awards. Harris won TVTechnology magazine's STAR Award for the CENTRIO multi-image processor; Broadcast Engineering magazine's Pick Hit award for the Harris Channel ONE integrated channel release solution; and Television Broadcast magazine's Top Innovation Award for the OPTO Test(TM) OFI-20B optical fibre identifier. The MPH (Mobile-Pedestrian-Handheld) in-band mobile DTV system, jointly developed by Harris and LG Electronics, was also a winner. Tim Thorsteinson, president of the Harris Broadcast Communications Division said the awards underscore the success of the company's strategy to be the ONE answer for customers across the industry.

A smooth transition

Autocue, leading provider of newsroom, automation and prompting solutions, has appointed Frank Hyman as CEO. The appointment marks the culmination of a six month succession plan, with outgoing CEO Kieran Smith set to provide consultancy to the Board for a number of months to ensure a smooth transition. Hyman has revitalised the sales organisation, adding significant talent to the team and establishing new channels to market throughout Europe, Asia and the Indian sub-continent. This expansion strategy has already unlocked significant revenue gains for the Group and further revenue growth is expected from the commercial launch of QNxt, Autocue's innovative application suite, including QMaster and QBox, the world's first IP-based prompting system.

Vizrt wizard

Among recent product introductions from Vizrt are the Viz/Video Hub media asset management solution, Viz/World 3D graphic mapping software, and the Viz/Quattro still and clip store workflow solution. Based on Ardendo's Ardome MAM software, Viz/Video Hub allows customers to easily access video clips, stills, graphics and audio clips from a standard PC. It provides users with direct access to the most powerful search options, most recent material, best search options, and pre-editing functions - resulting in a significantly faster workflow. Viz/World is based on the industry-standard Viz/Curious World Map technology integrated to Vizrt graphic solutions such as Viz/Artist, Viz/Trio, Viz/Content Pilot and Viz/Weather. An embedded interface in the client application allows users to quickly generate branded, animated maps. Viz|World was shown to customers for the first time at NAB and virtually every broadcaster that saw it was keen to have it. In its financial results for the first quarter of 2007, the company's revenue was up by 66%, of which 41% was organic growth.

Growing the business

A.R.G ElectroDesign has been acquired by a group of private investors led by Media Asset Capital. A.R.G is a UK based manufacturer of high quality line adaptors used to carry broadcast video, audio and data over standard telco circuits. Over the next 12 months, considerable investment will be made into both the UK manufacturing operation and worldwide sales. A.R.G opened a US office in February of this year as a prelude to a major sales effort in North America. Tom Wragg, CEO of Media Asset Capital said, "We are delighted to have found a well run company with high quality products that we can help find new markets and grow the business."



Covering all bases

RadioScape has launched the RS220 Media Pack, a software upgrade to a low cost range of DAB modules. RadioScape's Senior VP Sales Phil Smith says that increasingly, consumers are expecting digital radios to be capable of playing back their MP3 and WMA files. With RadioScape's new Media Pack, it is possible to connect an SD card directly to the module. By sharing the digital radio resources the decoding and playback can be done entirely in software, with no additional hardware. Additionally the Media Pack includes an optional iPod control interface, making use of the serial interface of Apple's iPod family. Together with infra red remote control this product directly targets the booming iPod docking market. Existing products can easily be upgraded to include these new features, without modification to the motherboard, minimising time to market and cost.

'The Business of Media'

The Office of Miklos Haraszti, the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media, has issued two publications which cover the challenges of privatisation, starting-up, and commercial operation of media in the OSCE area (which comprises 56 participating states). Topics include financial transparency and the competitive management of public television. The books are available in Russian and English on the OSCE web site.

Shabab news

The Arab world's first news service aimed at children launched in Jordan. Shabab News (Youth News) says its mission is to treat young people with respect - it offers a weekly half hour news and current affairs programme. The project received advice from experts at the BBC and the media development organisation, Jemstone, with funding from Jordan TV and the Dutch Foreign Ministry.

cooperation in broadcasting • AIB Media Excellence Awards 2007 open for entry - Awards event on 20 November • Iran orders all homegrown TV drama to feature prayer • Pakistan and Iran to cement bilateral media ties • Korean TV fully digital by 2012 • African NGOs urge Zimbabwean government to desist from wanton arrests, harassment and torture of journalists • Nokia & Siemens for IPTV deployment in Poland • Sarkozy aide to head France's top TV network TF1 • Bangladesh bans TV channels, including Fashion TV, for violating morality law • VoA-America launches training programme for Indonesian media • SMG and rival China Central Television have both won nationwide mobile TV permits •

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...of Moroccans receive satellite television channels in their homes via satellite antenna.

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You're about to launch Arabic TV – why is it needed?

There are a couple of reasons. The BBC has been broadcasting in Arabic to the Middle East since the late 30s. We moved into online Arabic in the 90s and that has been pretty successful. But the BBC recognised some time ago that, increasingly, if you are going to reach Arab audiences you need to be on television, so we actually launched our first Arabic TV project in the mid-nineties and I think people will know that in the end we failed, we fell out with Orbit, the commercial partners, and the rug was pulled from under that. This of course predated Al Jazeera and Al Arabiya and other Arabic TV channels. So it has taken us ten years to regroup and we are now going in on a publicly-funded basis. We have believed for a long time that the BBC's international news mission needed to be on TV for the Middle East and I am delighted to say we will be launching again towards the end of this year.

What about other platforms – people listening to radio on the move, and those now accessing broadband internet?

There is no question for me that TV is the predominant medium across the Middle East for news and information. Radio *is* very strong but TV is clearly stronger. The internet and of course mobile platforms are growing. But they are still some way behind the more traditional platforms. For us, new platforms will be part of the mix and when we relaunch it will be as a multi-media proposition across radio and TV and online and mobile. I think the BBC can do something quite unique by bringing all of those together in one service.

The BBC is not alone in targeting the Middle East with Arabic language TV services. Is there an opportunity to partner with local broadcasters and the big pan-Arab networks?

There may be – we are certainly not closed to that idea at all. What we are finding everywhere, not just in the Middle East, is that increasingly relationships between broadcasters are mixed and there will be some areas where you are very competitive and then

at the same time with the same organisation you can be partnering in a different area. We do have agreements with Al Jazeera and Al Arabiya and some others as well, but it is quite difficult to work out exactly those areas where you can partner as against where you are competitive. The second thing I'd say is I don't think it's a cultural invasion at all. Actually it's the reflection of what's happening across the world. Al Jazeera in English is now global, Iran is going to launch an English news channel shortly. What's happened is that the barriers of entry for global broadcasting have come down, everybody is getting into the game, everybody recognises that in this globalised world getting your voice and your message out is increasingly important. And I don't think it's any surprise that the Middle East is a particularly intense example of that because it is an incredibly important part of the world, it is where a lot of our modern history has been written in geopolitical terms, and public opinion in the Middle East is therefore incredibly important – so a lot of people are trying to serve that public opinion in a variety of different ways.

Given what the BBC has done with citizen journalism, is there going to be a big response from that region when you are on the air in Arabic?

I hope so. I think all news organisations have to be open to the public and the audiences that they serve. Some people call it citizen journalism or user content or whatever – in some senses this is just coming down to production technique: how do you get close to your audience, how do you engage your audience. To do that these days you need to be using some of the material that they provide as well. We very much want that kind of relationship with all of our audiences including those in the Middle East.

Let's look wider than the Middle East, at public service broadcasting. It is moving from perhaps broadcast to access to intelligent thought. Is this something that the BBC is doing?

I think it's true certainly of public broadcasting, it's true of all broadcasting and

all media at the minute. The very basis on which we have existed for 70-plus years is being challenged by new technology. The internet is disrupting business models, disrupting our traditional relationships with the audience and the traditional nature of what we do. So all of us are very challenged to reinterpret and redefine what our purpose and what our role and remit is, and that's particularly acute for public broadcasters in order to justify public investment in their services. The BBC has been very much involved in that rethinking, indeed we have just secured a new Charter for the next ten years based on the notion of building public value. As a public broadcaster we can help support what we call public value beyond simply providing good programmes. I think to some extent that is true on a global basis as well, purely by extending the traditional World Service mission and providing high quality, independent information to audiences all over the world.

Is the strategy that exists within Global News – which comprises BBC World and BBC World Service radio – now set for the next few years?

We had a new strategy agreed last year which we are in the middle of implementing at the moment, but no strategy remains set in stone. We are facing a hugely volatile market, huge technology changes, audiences are changing their behaviour, competition is changing very rapidly, so you have to review and revise that strategy continually. But the kinds of things that you are seeing happening in Global News in terms of moving into language TV, re-prioritising some of our funding to enable us to do that, developing our online offers as fast and as dynamically as we can, is absolutely implementing that strategy. But we will continue to review it and revise it on an ongoing basis. Otherwise you get left behind. The mission of the World Service – the core remit – to be the best known and most respected voice in international news broadcasting remains unchanged. But how we achieve that changes because audiences change as does competition, technology and

The BBC's combined international news services attracted a record global weekly audience of over 233m during 2006/7 – the global audience figure for the combined services of BBC World Service radio, BBC World television and the BBC's international online news service *bbcnews.com* is up 23m from last year. Good news for BBC Global News Director Richard Sambrook



so on. We have to go on trying to get closer to our audiences around the world, and of course for the World Service that stretches from people in very rural areas of Africa or Asia through to the cosmopolitan businessmen in heavily-wired Manhattan. We have to find ways of being close and understanding the needs of a great range of audiences and serving them as best we can.

In Africa we see new channels serving the professional market, targeting TV viewers, high income, high net worth individuals across the continent – CNBC Africa is just one example. Will that overtake radio audiences in that part of the world or is there a move to regionalise BBC World for Africa?

We haven't got plans to regionalise BBC World at the moment. We are looking at whether we should or could do anything on TV for Africa. I have to say I don't think in the immediate term that is likely simply on the basis of resources. But it does feel as if there is starting to be a bit of tipping point for developed parts of Africa and I suspect what you will see is a slightly different uptake in urban centres from rural areas. Short wave audiences in Africa are actually growing in the rural areas but clearly in the cities, TV and online and mobile is going to become more important as it is everywhere. Across Africa, we do work in partnership with many broadcasters and FM redistribution throughout Africa is incredibly important to

us. And there is a question mark: might there be a television equivalent to that and how would we do that. We have a kind of aspiration there, we haven't developed that yet but I am sure we will get round to it. We are equally interested in distribution partnerships for mobile and online – I think there are opportunities.

One of the problems that arise when you are trying to get TV content produced by western broadcasters onto local markets in Africa is the noticeable difference in production standards. Is there a way round that?

I'd hope so. I'd point to some of the work that the World Service Trust has done in Nigeria where we have worked with Nigerian producers and a Nigerian cast to produce programming – soap operas and not just information programming – for that market. We have worked with people and trained them and developed the opportunity to do some high quality programming. So there are examples of how an organisation like the BBC can go in and support local production and work with local production in a different way. But that is done through the Trust rather than on a commercial basis.

International broadcasting is quite an expensive way of sharing ideas with people. What is going to happen in the next five years in terms of international broadcasting and their paymasters?

Firstly, it'll continue to fragment. I see no signs of the great explosion in international broadcasting slowing down yet. We have a lot further to go, there'll be a lot more channels and obviously as TV moves onto the internet – IPTV – that'll continue to happen. I think one of the interesting things is that some global channels do make money, not all of them do by any means, and most of the new entrants are in one way or other state-funded. A lot of the new entrants are basically government-backed or backed by wealthy individuals as opposed to being commercially viable. I would guess at some stage there will be a shake-down because the people who are paying the bills are going to want to be very clear about what they get in return. And of course that will have an impact on the style of broadcasting and what people can expect for it. There will be people who are making what they believe to be a long-term investment but if they lose faith with it, they will pull the plug. So I think in the immediate term we will continue to see an explosion of channels but at some time – I think it will be longer than five years, it could be more like five to ten – I think there will be some rationalisation.

Richard Sambrook, thank you

www.bbcnews.com

Critical thinking

It's the most sensitive region in the world, and broadcasters are clamouring to fill the airwaves with news and information. It's not always what's wanted, say some in the region, who would rather efforts were made to train people in media and in critical thinking. **Simon Spanswick**, the AIB's chief executive, reports from the Middle East

As you drive around major cities of the Middle East, watching the tower blocks rise from the desert, admiring the enormous shopping malls, passing billboards advertising the latest hit US TV series, you wonder why the region is the battle-ground it is for global media.

There's more money in play here than in just about any other part of the world. It's being spent with immense speed and there's no sign of this stopping soon. Abu Dhabi will soon have the largest, most advanced performing arts centre in the world, alongside immense museums, each a work of art in its own right. Dubai will boast the tallest building in the world. Doha will have its own share of world-class buildings.

Stretch your wings a little further, however, and it's a different story. Outside the major cities, and in the less well-off countries that make up the Middle East, you're often faced with poverty. The glitz of the UAE's shopping malls evaporates, the population has few diversions and there's little excitement, stimulation or indeed opportunity for the youth.

It proves difficult to reconcile the immense gulf that exists between the wealth and relative freedom of Dubai and villages of Syria, for example. Nonetheless, binding these disparate places together is a common language and a common religion, a feeling of belonging to a single race, and – strikingly – a belief that the world's against them.

These views were demonstrated recently at the third Al Jazeera Forum, held in Doha. More than once during the conference, speakers bemoaned the fact that new international channels from the west are beaming Arabic-language programming to the Middle East, without a comparable flow of information in the other direction.

Why, asked speakers, did Russia, France, Britain, Germany and America want to broadcast news to the region when channels such as Al Arabiya and Al Jazeera are already

providing viewers in the region with news from the Middle East and beyond? And why is no Middle Eastern country responding with channels beaming to audiences outside the region? Do they lack the confidence to engage on the same level?

What all the speakers failed to remember was that news has been flowing in a two-way street for many decades. All of the major international radio broadcasters from the BBC to the Voice of Russia have beamed Arabic-language programmes to the Middle East for well over half-a-century, while their equivalents in Saudi Arabia and Egypt, for example, have beamed English-language news to the west for almost as long. It's simply that the west is now investing in television, instead of radio, to reach audiences as they increase their consumption of visual media.

The worry about these new international TV channels isn't the only thing on people's minds at the Doha conference. Abdul Bari Atwan, the editor of London's Al Quds Al Arabi newspaper, is also concerned that out of around 300 TV channels in the Middle East, only ten are news channels. The remainder are religious, entertainment and sports channels. The funders of all these channels are limited – there's a lack of plurality – and often the religious channels are backed by the same people as those of the entertainment channels. Is this a conflict of interest and is it symptomatic of a lack of plurality in the region's media?

Plurality is key to the success of any free media environment and to democracy, and this is the reason that's cited by the western broadcasters targeting the Middle East. Look at the way the web is handled in the region. Freedom of access to many sites and services – taken for granted in the West – is something that isn't experienced in the Middle East. Skype, for example, used both personally and corporately is blocked in the UAE, except in Dubai's free zone, including Media City. Like China, many Middle Eastern countries routinely block sites that they consider to be



against cultural, religious or moral grounds. The Internet is not yet free in the region.

Circumventing the restrictions is something at which the Middle East's bloggers have become adept. Mahmood Al-Yousif is a Bahrain-based blogger who follows the electronic media closely. His blog, www.mahmood.tv, is avidly followed across the region, and beyond, offering an insight into developments. "Hundreds of thousands of blogs have been established in the Middle East," he says, "and this is an indication of the failure of mainstream media. There is recognition by the man in the street that they cannot trust the mainstream media but they can trust the blogs."

"However you look at it," Mahmood continues, "almost all newspapers are owned by governments. There are very, very few truly independent papers. In most cases, they are told what to write. Look at the Bahrain news agency. You'll see that the stories are reproduced verbatim in the papers. With blogs, you take that piece and dissect it and poke fun at it or show the inadequacies of

Photos (clockwise from top left): Al Jazeera's broadcasting complex in Doha; catching up with *The Channel* between sessions at the Al Jazeera Forum; Al Jazeera English newsroom; Wadah Khanfar, DG, and Sheikh Hamad bin Thamer Al Thani, Chairman, Al Jazeera Network

the language. People in the Middle East have found a breathing space in blogs.”

Trust and freedom of expression are both in short supply. It's because, say some observers, the Middle East's culture remains highly tribal, with the tribe leader – the sheikh – revered as a demi-god who can do no wrong and therefore cannot be criticised. If a criticism is levelled against a government



minister, it's a criticism that is levelled against the government and, by extension, against the ruler himself.

Al Arabiya and Al Jazeera already provide a sensible alternative to state media. But given the immense population of the region and the global political interest that exists, there is still a void to be filled with a wide range of news services that meet the needs of viewers across the Middle East. Independent media are still thin on the ground and that provides the motivation for the new international Arabic-language TV services.

The question for observers of the Middle East is what will bring independent media to the region on a grand scale. Based on what I have seen and heard, much depends on education and training. There is an immense shortage of trained journalists who can apply the same rules of independent reporting that is the norm in the West to the Middle East. There's also a widespread shortage of trained people across the entire spectrum of jobs in television in the region, which

makes recruiting staff a major challenge even for the established channels.

This is somewhat paradoxical, given the huge increase in activity around, for example, Dubai Media City. As the number of channels operating out of Dubai increases, so does the pressure on staff. Currently there's a relatively small pool of people with the experience needed to keep channels on the air or to launch new channels. As a result, salaries are being forced up and creating an inflationary situation in the region.

The electronic media in the Middle East is young. By contrast, in the West, the electronic media have had more than three-quarters of a century to develop training programmes and to grow the industry organically. There is a serious skill set shortage and this is where investment is needed to ensure that the growth that's occurring can be sustained. While broadcasters in the Middle East are aware of the problem, there's a question mark over whether any are prepared to take on board the challenge and start to deliver widespread training programmes that can secure the electronic media's future and provide a base from which truly independent media can grow.

The beauty of our organisation, the Association for International Broadcasting, is that it is a truly international platform for gathering intelligence, networking and the exchange of ideas. And

so the AIB has strong links with broadcasting organisations across the Middle East. The two key TV news players, Al Jazeera and Al Arabiya, are members of the AIB. We frequently contribute our expertise to conferences and meetings in the region.

From our conversations with senior editors and executives at Middle East broadcasters, it has become clear that many want help from Western broadcasters. Some seem to think that it would be better for the long term future of independent media in the region if the channels that are now spending tens of millions of dollars in launching new Arabic-language TV services were instead to invest in comprehensive training programmes.

While this is perhaps a protectionist view, it's not without merit. There is a tremendous need for training in this politically-sensitive area and it is probably established Western broadcasters that have the capacity to deliver this on the scale required. At present, there are piecemeal efforts from a number of international channels to train in the region. What might be more helpful is a more cohesive, large-scale training programme run in conjunction with the region's universities or secondary schools to help create a new generation of programme makers, journalists and technicians. Mahmood Al-Yousif sums it up: "the problem is that critical thinking isn't taught in the region, and that's what's needed to create democratic media."

Blogs, and the all pervasive mobile telephone, are providing a way for people to discuss issues on a wider scale than was possible when communication was limited to the tea shops of the souk. And it's clear that the growth of new technology is almost as fast in the Middle East as it is in the Americas or Europe.

In one large retailer in Abu Dhabi – away from the glitzy malls that expatriates and tourists tend to visit – we observed shoppers' behaviour in the consumer electronics department. A bank of fifty or so television sets – each tuned to BBC World – attracted some attention on a Saturday morning. The big crowds, however, were around the mobile phone counter and the computer displays. This is where money was changing hands, with people examining the latest mobile handset and, judging by the number of people buying, coming with the express intention of having the latest gadget.

Laptops were the other area of great interest, with sales made throughout the morning of these relatively highly priced goods. The interest in televisions was far less, and those that were buying were interested in the latest flat screen devices, with the largest screens possible. We suspect that these purchasers weren't interested in buying new TV sets to consume the local state TV, but instead to watch imported DVDs or movie channels on one of the two pay-TV systems targeting the Middle East. We did not see a single radio receiver purchased.

This was not a scientific study but, combined with our experience in other cities in the region, provides anecdotal evidence that the interest of consumers in metropolitan areas is excited by the latest gadgets and by goods that they can show off to their friends – in other words, items which can be used to start conversations.

A crowded, fragmented market

AP Television's Global Media Services has a unique unit providing bespoke video production services to Middle East broadcasters – it utilises the skills of its Arabic-speaking journalists and producers together with the extensive resources of the AP to provide broadcasters with customised news and current affairs reports from around the world tailored to their specific requirements. Here **Alla Salehian**, Director of Global Media Services, AP Television, gives his overview of the ME media market

The Middle East Services (MES) unit of AP has been in operation since the early 1990s and has witnessed a rapid change in the ME media landscape since the launch of the very first pan-Arab satellite television channel, the Middle East Broadcasting Centre (MBC) back in 1991. The desire to provide alternatives to the formulaic programme output of the terrestrial news channels gathered pace after the launch of Al Jazeera, and the emergence of new general entertainment channels launched in Egypt and Lebanon challenged the dominance of MBC. By the mid to late 90s new digital delivery platforms provided further growth potential which was seized upon by the likes of ART, Orbit, Star Select and Gulf DTH/Showtime. For example, ART developed from a single free-to-air analogue DTH channel to a full service of more than 20 popular channels including sport.

The growth in the number of channels was matched by the growth in the number of households with satellite receivers. From 1995 to 2000 the number of satellite households grew by 140% and the number of DTH and cable subscribers increased by about 120%. This trend continued and by 2005 the region had a staggering 200 satellite channels and a further 50 were being added on the Arabsat and Nilesat satellites. In addition to the number of new channels launched, there was a shift from general news and entertainment channels to niche or thematic channels targeting the youth market. Music channels such as Rotana and Melody focussed on the pan-Arab youth market with new music videos and competitions along the lines of MTV. Other niche channels catered for local tastes and interests such as Dream TV in Egypt and Al Rai TV in Kuwait.

To many observers the region was reaching saturation point with the number of channels at this time and, with the rise in production costs and limited advertising revenues, it was difficult to see how some of these channels could continue operating. The desire to create differentiation in an increasingly crowded market led to a

slow but steady growth in co-productions, consolidations, and more contracting out of technical and non-essential aspects of the business with a view to reducing production costs. Programme budgets were increased and producers told to develop new formats for light entertainment in what has become a fierce battle for audience share. It was in this climate that MBC decided to purchase the Middle East rights to the *Who Wants to Be A Millionaire* format. It proved an immediate success and, more importantly, provided the channel with valuable data on audience reach participation, not to mention a new revenue stream that provided better returns than the traditional advertising model. The success of this format on MBC, especially the potential for high revenues from audience participation, spurred many other channels to purchase other formats from Europe and the US, such as *Pop Idol*. In the rush to acquire new and exclusive programme formats costly mistakes were made. For example, the production of the Arabic version of *Big Brother* by MBC in Bahrain caused such an outcry from religious figures and the public that the show had to be taken off air. It was clear that not all formats would work in a mainly conservative Muslim society. Some broadcasters developed their own original formats such as the *Your Weight in Gold* show in Abu Dhabi.





funds (in the main) these channels have entered the market and have slightly skewed the distribution of Arabic-language news in the Middle East.

Middle East media has undoubtedly changed over the last decade and we are witnessing yet another shift in emphasis and direction. It is difficult to predict where the industry will go from here but there are signs that media companies are re-evaluating their long term strategies. There will be an increase in corporate consolidations, joint ventures, mergers and acquisitions over the next five years as channels look to reduce their cost and increase their margins from an ever-shrinking advertising pie. Alternative delivery platforms through the internet and mobile telephony may provide further opportunities for alliances with service providers although, as yet, the technical infrastructure to support video transmission over the internet and mobile network is limited and the revenue model from these delivery platforms is still unproven. The creation of an abundance of choice in channels has fragmented viewers and created niche channels and this segmentation of channels will continue for the foreseeable future. Companies like MBC and Al Jazeera have already created bouquets of channels offering a breadth of content from news to Hollywood movies and sports with a view to capturing as much of the niche audience as possible.

Keeping up with the ever-changing content requirements in the Middle East over the last decade has kept AP's MES department on its toes but it has also enhanced the unit's expertise in, and knowledge of, Middle East media. We have successfully adapted our product portfolio and now provide a vast range of bespoke video products ranging from news and current affairs to entertainment and sport.

For many broadcasters the MES department has become the extension of their foreign or assignment desk, acting as another source of content that helps achieve the goal of differentiation in a very crowded arena. We are not sure what the Middle East media landscape will look like in the future but we feel we will have a firm place in it.

www.aptn.com

The events of 9/11 and the subsequent war in Afghanistan and Iraq provided for a new type of news and current affairs channel: one that was aimed at changing or influencing public opinion. The US government launched the Al Hurra and the Al Hurra Iraq channels, the BBC announced that it was going to launch their Arabic service (for the second time), Al Jazeera has now launched its English service, DW in Germany, Russia Today, France 24 have all launched, or increased output of, Arabic language channels. These channels are entering a very crowded and fragmented market and it isn't clear whether they will ultimately have the desired impact of changing public opinion. The absence of reliable audience research data makes this analysis even more difficult. However, backed by government





The Middle East - not 'just somewhere on TV'

In 1991, Middle East Broadcasting Centre (MBC) group was established in London as the first satellite, free-to-air multi-channel media group of its kind in the Arab world. This turned into the Al Arabiya of today – how does the channel see its transformation and its present role?

MBC's initial offering focused more on entertainment but the need for a dedicated news gathering and dissemination capability prompted the launch of a daily news bulletin right from the start – MBC News at Nine. With this, MBC had succeeded in bringing Arab viewers, for the first time ever, their own independent media organization that provided tens of millions of people around the world with a balanced and comprehensive diet of news and information, far from the traditional restrictions of Arab official censorship. The success of the news service spurred the group on to expand this offering into a fully fledged, 24 hour dedicated news and current affairs channel: Al Arabiya.

Launched just before the invasion of Iraq in 2003, Al Arabiya quickly became a primary news source for Arabs seeking credible news and information about the Middle East and the world beyond, its position confirmed by independent surveys. "One of the reasons why our viewership figures rose so steeply very quickly after launch is the fact that we already had a fully resourced and very capable team of reporters covering events as they were happening on the ground," says Abdulrahman Al Rashed, General Manager of Al Arabiya. "2003 was a heavy news year, regionally and internationally, so there was a great thirst for first-hand news and information from Iraq, as well as a lack of

objective and balanced analysis of the global situation. This, coupled with our transparent and non-inflammatory editorial policy, really helped us establish credibility and set audience expectations right from the start."

Al Arabiya developed a reputation for sober and balanced reporting by carefully positioning itself as an independent news medium that seeks to inform and report, and not openly take sides. Its website, www.alarabiya.net, is the most visited Arabic language website as recently audited by ABC Electronic.

The channel's reputation now extends well beyond its natural geographic and cultural domain, the Middle East, with a number of international news organizations and research institutes regularly monitoring Al Arabiya. Observers of the Arab media scene hail Al Arabiya as a much needed departure from the previously prevailing media environment that has been characterized by emotional manipulation rather than sober journalism. Respect for life and human dignity were key issues which became cornerstones of Al Arabiya's professional best practice.

"To the rest of the world, the Middle is just somewhere on TV. But for us and our viewers, we **are** the Middle East!", says Al Rashed. The channel's editorial guidelines take into

account that it is covering a tumultuous region prone to conflicts. Al Arabiya says it tries to adopt an ethical approach, never unduly exposing or using human misery, especially innocent civilians in times of war and upheaval, in order to raise the profile of a news story or report. This was recognized by several regional and international awards, most recently the Trillion for Lebanon Journalism Award for Al Arabiya's coverage of the 2006 Israeli war on Lebanon.

According to Al Rashed the channel is "carefully and purposefully navigating the delicate, yet potentially dangerous path between the right of people to be informed and its own responsibility in helping to maintain social and political order, harmony and accord." He says that Al Arabiya's independent spirit, its determination to have staff on location as the story unfolds and its dedication to journalistic values has come at a human cost. But he is adamant that neither the bombing of offices nor the constant harassment and pressure from governments, groups and individuals will deter Al Arabiya from carrying on its mission.

www.mbc.net



The Atwar Bahjat Award

Since its launch, Al Arabiya offices and staff have been subject to bombings, murder, injury, repeated arrests, threats and harassment, and the closing down of its bureaux in several countries. Al Arabiya has paid the highest toll of any non-Iraqi media organization working in Iraq: the Iraqi government closed down Al Arabiya's offices as a "warning" to the channel's management, and many of the channel's staff were killed or injured in terrorist attacks, abducted, arrested and questioned by US forces, Iraqi and other Arab governments. Al Arabiya says its experiences reflect the growing tide of refusal to allow Arab media to continue growing its independence and freedom.

Atwar Bahjat (26), an Iraqi citizen, was a Sunni Muslim and one of very few women to work as frontline conflict reporters for Arabic TV – she was a well-known face reporting from Baghdad. On 22 February 2006, gunmen kidnapped her and two members of her Al Arabiya crew near Samarra, Eastern Iraq. Their three bullet-ridden bodies were found the next day.

In April Al Arabiya news channel launched the 'Atwar Bahjat Award' – the prize will be awarded annually to recognize outstanding achievements by female journalists. This year's award was presented by MBC Chairman, Sheikh Waleed Al Ibrahim bin

Ibrahim to **Samia Nakhoul**, Middle East Bureau manager at Reuters during this year's Arab Broadcast Forum in Abu Dhabi. Nakhoul has covered most of the conflict the ME region has witnessed in the past few years, from West Beirut during the final years of Lebanon's civil war to the 1991 Gulf war from Iraq, and moving to Cairo in 1992 where she specialized in covering Islamic movements. She received serious injuries on 8 April 2003 while covering the invasion of Iraq from the Palestine hotel.

Former BBC and Reuters correspondent **Mark Brayne** now specialises in trauma training and support for media organisations and individuals. He runs the Dart Centre for Journalism and Trauma in Europe from where he reports on journalism, trauma and the Arabic media



Arab journalists also hurt, sometimes badly

The taboos of addressing psychological trauma among journalists are gradually breaking down. News organisations in the West are beginning to recognise and address the emotional toll which constant engagement with war, disaster and extreme human distress can take on those who report it, as well as those in the story itself.



But what of the Arab media? Do Arab journalists and newsrooms somehow deal with trauma more easily, just because they've been covering and living with it all their lives? Is there anything in their culture which renders Arabs less susceptible to the impact of violence and tragedy?

I found those questions very clearly answered on the Arab world's first dedicated trauma training course commissioned last year by one of the region's principal new pan-Arab broadcasters. We'd been talking all morning about challenging stigma, and of the importance even as journalists of allowing for normal human emotions when dealing with violence and extreme grief – one's own or that of others.

After lunch, a newsdesk producer, a man in his early 40s from the West Bank, asked me rather sheepishly whether what I was saying might also apply to him. Like so many of his colleagues, he had witnessed and reported on terrible stories of distress and tragedy over many years, from the Intifada to the serial bereavements of the Iraq war, with its dozens of journalists, mostly Arab, killed in the past three years.

But trauma is personal. What this colleague wanted to know was how to cope with the death of his young son, killed by an incurable disease 18 months earlier. "My wife and I agreed after he died never again to talk of him," the journalist told our training group. "In our Arab culture, we thought and were told that if we didn't remind ourselves of him, then our pain would go away."

But Arabs too, for all the differences in culture, also experience trauma – articulated and understood differently from the way it is seen in America and Europe, but trauma nonetheless. Grief lining his face, my journalist friend described how since his son died, he had scarcely been able to sleep. Denied attention during waking hours, his dead son was visiting him every night. "Are you telling me," he asked, "that it's better to talk? That by talking I might begin to feel better?" I told him that, yes, on the whole, talking does help the brain gradually to put such tragic experiences safely to bed in the past, where they belong – not to forget, but to be able to feel feelings and to experience joy again, and of course to sleep.

I have rarely seen someone look as simultaneously relieved, excited and alarmed. "I will talk to my wife this very night," he said, "and we will try this."

Several months later, I received this simple email, in capital letters. HELLO MARK. SORY FOR DELAY. I LOST YOUR CARD. YOUR ADVICE HELPED ME DEFINITELY. NOW I FEEL BETTER... SPEEKING ABOUT MY SON FOR SOME FEW MINUTES WITH MY WIFE ONCE A DAY KEEPS ME MORE COMFORTABLE AT NIGHT. THANKS A LOT. HOPE KEEP ON CONTACT

So, are Arab journalists somehow different from colleagues in other cultures? Do they live on a different planet? Of course not. Arab journalists also hurt, sometimes badly, and can benefit as much as anyone else from the culture change around trauma that is now beginning in the Western media.

It's early days, but the Dart Centre for Journalism and Trauma has held that first week-long set of trauma workshops which the grieving father attended early in 2006, and in Palestine, the International Federation of Journalists (IFJ) recently held a weekend pilot trauma seminar with journalists in the West Bank town of Ramallah. Getting senior journalists to attend in any number at either event was not easy, and so far there has been no further follow-up. An important beginning has however been made, and it's worth recalling how long it has taken – and is still taking – to get Western broadcasters to take trauma seriously, and to recognise that – however important that backup service is – it's not just about packing journalists off to the psychotherapist.

Arab responses to this message of journalistic vulnerability as well as resilience are very similar to feedback we get from training with Western journalists. Scepticism at the outset, perhaps, but by the time we're done, few question any longer that this matters. "Journalists (in our region) are just a mass of neglected people," said one of the participants in the Ramallah training, newspaper editor Nael Mousa. "They stand alone. No-one helps them. The professional pressure is enormous." Monir Zaarour of the IFJ spoke of the physical pressure on Palestinian journalists. "But if they can learn to open up and talk, even once, to a colleague in a way they haven't before," he said, "that would be a success."

Journalists are by their nature resilient, whichever culture they work in. Indeed, research increasingly underlines the importance mainly of social networks in helping people get through trauma, rather than clinical intervention. That resilience will be all the stronger if based on an intelligent appreciation of the emotional as well as the physical risks that inevitably come with the coverage of extreme events.

www.dartcentre.org

www.braynework.com

35 years ago, RMC Middle East (RMC-MO) was set up by France to deliver alternative news and information to the Middle East. In 1996 RMC-MO became a subsidiary of Radio France Internationale and in January of this year changed its name to Monte Carlo Doualiya. MCD's director general **Philippe Beauvillard** on the station's mission today

RFI's voice in the Arab world

RFI broadcasts in French for the Arab world, as well as for most other parts of the world, on FM and via satellite. In the past RFI used to also have an Arabic service with a few hours of daily programmes, but in 1996 RMC-MO became the only Arabic service of the RFI group. It nowadays transmits 17.5 hours of daily programming on medium wave and round the clock on the FM frequencies. Thus Arabic is, after French, the most important broadcast language in the RFI group.



Launched at the beginning of the seventies – at a time when the media landscape was much less congested than today – “Monte Carlo”, as it is known in the Arab world, soon established an enduring reputation for reliable information. And in spite of increasing competition from different types of media – from local FM radio to international TV news channels of Arab or foreign origin –, this radio has always kept a privileged place among the Arab listeners, because of the diversity and pluralism of its information in Arabic and because of its historic legitimacy.

However, in today's media context where it is competing with other international media, Monte Carlo Doualiya has to make an effort to adapt to the new media landscape, with regard to both distribution and programming.

In fact, RMC-MO started transmitting its programmes on medium wave (1230 MHz) from the island of Cyprus. Broadcasting on medium wave is still pertinent as it

guarantees the regional character of programming for countries that have varied audiovisual laws. This regional dimension is complemented of course by satellite delivery which covers the Maghreb and the Arabian Peninsula. But for practical listening reasons it is important to broadcast on FM whenever possible. Nowadays Monte Carlo Doualiya has 12 FM relays in eight different countries: Jordan (Amman, Ajloun), Iraq (Baghdad, Basra, Mosul, Irbil), Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar, Djibouti, Sudan and Mauritania, as well as a rebroadcasting agreement in the Emirates. And of course we are always looking for further opportunities to extend our FM coverage to other countries.

As far as news and other programmes are concerned, there are two objectives. Firstly, we need to continue to give our listeners “added value” and provide a clear identity in the framework of a varied programme offering; secondly, we need to reach a younger audience – at present our audience consists mainly of male, well-educated listeners over 40. No doubt this requires an editorial outlook that makes the most of the trump cards that the medium radio has at its disposal – warmth, closeness, quick reaction and flexibility. This editorial concept also needs to include programmes specifically targeted at younger listeners, such as the new current affairs programme *Journal des jeunes*.

Extending our broadcasting on FM is naturally linked to an editorial presence in each country. The size and diversity of the correspondent network allow locally produced content as part of the overall programming. We have to make sure that our news and information, while focused on the international news, neglects none of the countries to which we broadcast. Each of our listeners must be able to consider our station as “his” station. In the same spirit, Monte Carlo Doualiya envisages local partnerships for rebroadcasting, programme exchange and co-production.

It is also important to mention that in its daily programming Monte Carlo Doualiya is putting together large blocks of news and information and a variety of magazine programmes. It is dealing with the inherent tension between the local and the international elements – the familiar and the larger view of the world – by presenting it as “another way of seeing the world”. The station's local presence is also expressed through “decentralisation” of radio programmes and news, as happened for example in early 2007 in Nouakchott, Damascus and Amman, and by covering many festivals and cultural events.

In the overall strategy of developing Monte Carlo Doualiya, the Internet plays a key role. This new medium has initially acted, quite naturally, as a complementary distribution platform. Today still, the Internet makes it possible for Arabs all over the world – Arabic speakers who sometimes live far away from their country of origin – to listen live to the radio. The radio's website www.mc-doualiya.com, available both in French and in Arabic, was completely restructured in 2006 and offers further listening options (access to recent programmes, archive material, podcasting). As part of the overall editorial strategy, it has become a means of offering, in synergy with programming on the radio, specific contents which take the analysis and in-depth treatment of subjects touched on even further.

In the pluralism of information, Monte Carlo Doualiya wants to be an element of the dialogue between peoples and cultures.

Antoine Schwarz, CEO, RFI and
Philippe Beauvillard



In terms of your global customer base, how important is the Middle East?

WORLDSPACE Satellite Radio is a unique global experience. The subscription service delivers diverse, commercial-free entertainment, information and education to virtually anyone, anywhere, anytime. Because the WORLDSPACE service is delivered by satellite, it is not constrained by the signal boundaries of traditional radio and can serve a variety of language and geographic needs.

population through dedicated Arab-language programming while providing a "voice from home" to the large expatriate audience that lives and works there.

Is satellite radio potentially bigger business than satellite pay TV?

WORLDSPACE is the only company with the global reach, management expertise and technology infrastructure to make satellite radio services in the Middle East a reality. Based on the company's successes in other

When we talk about media in the Middle East, we usually think of satellite TV. But how does satellite radio fare? We asked **Sebastian Matthewkutty**, VP and General Manager of WORLDSPACE Middle East

Substantial opportunity

WORLDSPACE attaches significant importance to its key markets of Europe and India. However, the Middle East is also an important region for the company. The Middle East, specifically UAE and Bahrain, is growing rapidly and boasts high disposable income levels, strong entertainment and media needs and a propensity to consume high-end products and services. These characteristics coupled with high car penetration and a large expatriate presence makes the Middle East an attractive market for WORLDSPACE. In fact, in the six GCC countries alone there is a target population of approximately 36m people driving eight million cars. Add Egypt to the mix, with a population of over 72m and an automobile population of about three million, and we have quite a substantial opportunity.

What is that opportunity?

WORLDSPACE delivers the latest tunes, trends and information from around the world and around the corner. With 50 channels of music, news, sports and information, WORLDSPACE offers something for everyone, in every community. This is a vastly different value proposition than is presented by traditional FM radio in the region. Given the Middle East's propensity for high-end services, it is clear that significant gaps exist in the range and quality of audio entertainment. WORLDSPACE seeks to fill these gaps with its satellite radio subscription services by offering high-quality content tailored to the needs and interests of those residing in the region. WORLDSPACE will serve the needs of the Middle Eastern

regions, we are confident that our offering will be well received there. However, satellite radio subscription service is a new concept for the region and it is too early to project whether the WORLDSPACE service will reach the magnitude of satellite pay TV.

How will you make satellite radio a success in the Middle East?

The real success of any subscription-based media service depends on how rich and compelling its content is to its audiences. WORLDSPACE is committed to ensuring that the content offered meets the aspirations of our subscribers in the Middle East. From a technical and regulatory perspective, WORLDSPACE has received licences from the Telecommunications Regulatory Authorities of Bahrain and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) to provide satellite radio services and operate the necessary terrestrial gap filler networks for ubiquitous coverage in those markets. We have also signed an agreement with Samacom, the largest uplink teleport in the region, to set up and manage our uplink facility, and we have an agreement in place with Al Futtaim Group for hardware sales and distribution in the UAE. Bahrain will be the first market to receive our mobile service, which we expect to be available to consumers in the second half of 2007. We have concluded an

agreement with MoFakhro Group in Bahrain, a leading business house to be our execution partner. The UAE will follow.

What content will be on offer?

WORLDSPACE delivers more than 50 channels of unique programming to subscribers in the Middle East and North Africa, in more than 12 languages, including genre-specific music, news, sports and general entertainment/talk. Our service offering has been designed to provide a comprehensive audio entertainment solution to subscribers by combining a compelling mix of Arabic, Asian and Western programming, addressing a wide variety of languages, geographies and personal tastes. We have recently added two Arabic-language music channels, *Ranin* and *Min Zaman*, and have an agreement with *CNBC Arabiya* to deliver news programming. WORLDSPACE also offers a variety of Western programming including 30 WORLDSPACE-branded channels, as well as ethnic Indian programming in nine languages, providing a 'voice-from-home' for the large expatriate populations living in the Middle East. Additional efforts are underway to introduce more Arabic programming in the region.

What is the company's preferred future?

To become a dominant force in the entertainment and content category across the Middle East that can be enjoyed both at home and on-the-go!



www.worldspace.com

3 Alhurra x

Viewers in the Middle East have more than 200 channels to choose from on a daily basis. So why should they tune into Alhurra, the US Government-funded Arabic-language television network, to get their news and information? Here **Brian Conniff**, President of Middle East Broadcasting Networks, tries to answer that question



The challenge for any network broadcasting to the Middle East is to discover how to stand out from the pack. Each channel needs to find its own niche and a reason for viewers to seek out and tune in. Alhurra is fortunate enough to have an edge over other regional broadcasters in its ability to cover America, its people and its policies, better and more thoroughly than any other Arabic-language news and information network in the region. But Alhurra is not just about US policy and politics. Through the network's hard news programmes and softer cultural offerings,

Alhurra provides a personal view of Americans, their participation in the democratic process, and their cultural diversity.

With its headquarters based just outside of Washington DC, Alhurra has unique access to press briefings, newsmaker discussions and debates over US foreign policy in the region. Alhurra has correspondents at the White House, Congress, State Department and the Pentagon to provide viewers the US Administration's reaction to the most prominent issues in the Middle East. The channel also has comprehensive coverage of news events around the US to inform viewers of the American people's perspective, not just the official government position. The network started a weekly series within its newscasts, *Islam in America* which reports on topics such as the International Museum of Muslim Culture in Mississippi, the first of its kind in the United States and the first Muslim Chaplin at Georgetown University.

Alhurra is the only channel in the region that has programmes dedicated to the discussion of the rights of women and human rights. *Musawat* (Arabic for "Equality") has recently tackled topics such as the rights of women in politics, the impact of divorce on women in the Gulf, abusive relationships and the debate over whether women should have to wear veils. Another unique talk show is *All Directions* which is a weekly round-up of the most prominent events in the Middle East and discusses these issues with guests that can give the American perspective.

Although news plays a prominent role on Alhurra, its varied schedule also includes a variety of current affairs programmes including roundtable discussions and informational programming on topics such

as entertainment news, technology, health and sporting news. Programmes such as *I-TECH* and *Cinemazine* bring some of the more popular aspects of Americana to the Middle East. By highlighting the latest computer and information technology from the US and around the world, *I-TECH* is one of the most popular programs on Alhurra. Entertainment news takes centre stage on *Cinemazine* when viewers go behind the scenes of one of America's largest export to the region, movies. The latest entertainment news, interviews with stars and in-depth coverage of film festivals around the world makes *Cinemazine* a staple on Alhurra's programme schedule.

In addition to viewers' information gathered from independent research companies such as ACNielsen, Alhurra also gets anecdotal feedback from viewer e-mails. E-mails such as these are regularly sent to Alhurra, "hi ALHURRA I'm happy to talk with you I want to say that you are the best channel I saw you have a very good programs that can help us to be better educated. Thank you so much for you and for America for helping for you." "Thank you very much for interviewing Mrs Khadijah Al Salami. She is a freedom fighter and an inspiration to many Yemeni and Arab females," writes one viewer regarding an interview programme. A viewer from Iraq comments on *Inside Washington*, a weekly programme examining the political process in the US, "I would like to show my deep appreciation for your program and your efforts, you are so welcomed to be shown in our Iraqi houses and we really respect you and like your program."

When people talk about Alhurra, they are generally referring to the main pan-Arab network that broadcasts on the Arabsat and Nilesat satellite systems to 22 countries in the Middle East. However, there are three networks that fall under the Alhurra name. The second network, Alhurra-Iraq, is dedicated to challenges facing present-day Iraqis, with more than a third of its schedule devoted to issues in Iraq. Many of Alhurra-Iraq programmes and news reports originate from Alhurra's Baghdad bureau. Discussion programmes such as *Talk of Two Rivers* and *Between Generations* gives a voice to a wide range of Iraqis from members of the government to everyday people concerned about the safety of their family. Additionally, Alhurra-Iraq broadcasts two daily newscasts, *Iraq Today* and *News in Iraq*, that are directed to the Iraq viewer. Unlike the main pan-Arab network, Alhurra-Iraq is not only available by satellite to viewers, but it is also available terrestrially in Baghdad, Basra, Mosul and Al-Hilla. Following the success of Alhurra and Alhurra-Iraq, in 2006 a third channel was added bringing together the best programming of Alhurra and Alhurra-Iraq to Arabic-speaking viewers in Europe. Alhurra Europe broadcasts on the Hotbird satellite system to viewers throughout Europe.

As more countries begin broadcasting Arabic-language channels to the Middle East, an already crowded market becomes even more competitive. As the "American channel", Alhurra is carving out its place.



The Iranian blogger community belongs to the ten largest worldwide. Despite extensive online censorship, the internet is the only platform many Iranians have to express themselves freely. Deutsche Welle's **Rochsana Soraya** reports how Germany's international broadcaster seized the chance to reach a new audience and to support transparency on the Web

I fight with my pen and my spirit

Deutsche Welle launched its extended Farsi online programme in April 2007: DW-WORLD.DE/persian has become the eighth language with its own online editorial staff. At the same time, DW-RADIO continues to offer programming in Farsi, one of its 31 broadcast languages. Deutsche Welle wants to reach the young people in Iran, a country of 75 million of which 70 per cent are under thirty. Only one tenth of the population has access to the internet.

Young Iranians are eager to inform themselves and engage in discussions on pressing cultural and political issues. DW-WORLD.DE/persian offers up-to-date content with interactive elements plus audio-on-demand and video and flash graphics.

The DW site focuses on offering extensive background information on current affairs in Iran and the Middle East from a German-European perspective. DW-WORLD.DE also provides an in-depth look at political and social developments in Germany and Europe. To understand the context of these developments, users can consult the interactive political dictionary on the site, which gives detailed explanations of the political system in Germany. Readers looking for

general information about Germany can learn about the country, its culture and people. The site also offers a wide range of information about living and studying in Germany. Those interested in learning German can take advantage of Deutsche Welle's easy-to-

use interactive German language course. DW-RADIO broadcasts in Persian and DW-TV programming in English and German are also available on the site. A user-friendly design makes the search for information easy with a few clicks.

"The European perspective in the news coverage and information about Germany are our distinctive characteristic in the Persian-speaking online world", said Deutsche Welle's director general Erik Bettermann.

As a result of censorship it is virtually impossible to find co-operation partners in Iran itself. But DW.WORLD.DE does cooperate with sites from abroad, such as gooya.com. Also, according to the new Iranian online team, the site will speak for itself: "Iran has a lively and creative internet scene. Either the users find us via search engines like Google, or pass information on by word of mouth, recommend us, or bookmark us. A good address does not need too much advertising."

"I am writing because I am against lies and suppression. I am committed to fighting tyranny. I fight with my pen and with my spirit."

Last year, Deutsche Welle attracted the attention of the active blogger scene in Iran. At Deutsche Welle's third international Weblog-Awards, the annual *Best of the Blogs Awards* (www.thebobs.com), two Iranian nominees won the Reporters Without Borders Jury Award for their Blogs.

"Windows have been opened in a dark room that had had a few rays of light – windows through which fresh air and light comes in, windows bringing refreshment and joy. These windows are Weblogs..."

DW-WORLD.DE/persian was officially launched with a kickoff event in Berlin on April 16, 2007 with the slogan "Virtual Freedom – Counter-Realities on the Web in Iran". German and Iranian experts discussed the role and impact of the internet as a platform for free expression in Iran.

Deutsche Welle sees itself as a mediator for free expression. Uta Thofern, editor-in-chief of DW-WORLD.DE emphasizes the importance of keeping the dialogue with Iran alive: "With our new online programme, our aim is not confrontation, but dialogue and understanding across cultural borders."

www.dw-world.de





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“The AIB is increasing its momentum and responding to the needs both of its members and the industry”



And the latest...

It's a period of growth at the AIB, the industry association and international network organisation of over 25,000 communicators and media professionals.

Since the last edition of *The Channel*, the BBC's Global News division and Russia Today have joined the AIB as Gold members - demonstrating their strategic support of the international broadcasting industry and of the AIB. Dubai-based Getin Media has become a Corporate member.

The reasons for this continued growth are several fold. First is intelligence. The AIB researches trends and opportunities in the specialised area of international electronic media - in other words among organisations that share information across borders with all its cultural and technical implications. We profile the decision-makers of tomorrow.

Secondly, we connect. Our network of contacts means we're able to offer access to a wide range of key figures in all areas of international media. In this context we're increasing our networking activities through an online group on *Facebook*, enabling media executives to keep abreast of developments in international electronic media and to exchange opinions as well as start conversations.

Thirdly, we report on innovation, strategy, people and content in *The Channel*, the only magazine dedicated to international broadcasting. The publication is distributed to more than 6,000 senior executives in broadcasting organisations, regulators, transmission and service providers, manufacturers, consulting firms, investors and analysts in 120 countries. Together with our regular electronic news briefings we reach more than 20,000 media executives, broadcasters, journalists and technologists in all parts of the world. Change and progress here, too: we're redesigning this magazine with a fresh, bold look from our fourth edition of 2007. We're also increasing the magazine's reach by offering an online version as well as print copies.

Fourth, we promote and celebrate excellence. The AIB's annual awards reward success in this specialised sector of the industry. The closing date for this year's entries is 3 August 2007 with the Awards ceremony taking place in London on 20 November.

As we move into our 14th year as the industry association for international media, we offer increasing value-for-money through specially-negotiated discounts on a range of activities that help our members' businesses. Expert support, dialogue, exchange, stimulus, research, promotion - that's what the AIB is all about.

And we are allergic to monologues, so let's talk.

SIMON SPANSWICK CHIEF EXECUTIVE

www.aib.org.uk

The Association
for International
Broadcasting



AIB Media Excellence Awards 2007



Now in their third year, the **AIB Media Excellence Awards** recognise the special skills and needs of international broadcasting. The AIB Awards are non-commercial and offer peer review of output, personalities and technology - they are the only awards that celebrate excellence in international, cross-border broadcasting.

Importantly, the AIB Awards are not only for broadcasters who operate in the English-language - we recognise that 90% of the world's population lives in a country where English is not the mother tongue. We actively encourage programme makers who produce programmes in languages other than English to enter and have their work recognised.

The 2007 AIB Media Excellence Awards will be judged by an international panel of independent judges, including previous years' winners and international media practitioners.

We'll be celebrating the award entrants and winners at the AIB *Diner Pensant* and Awards in central London on Tuesday 20 November 2007.



the categories

International TV channel of the year

Which international television channel has had the greatest impact in the year? The judges will be looking for the most innovative programming, visual identity, marketing and reach. They will take into account the way in which a channel has launched or has ensured that it is visible in the increasingly competitive market for international broadcasting.

International radio station of the year

Which station has reacted most effectively to the challenges of operating internationally, delivering the most appropriate content to its target audiences in the most appealing formats? The judges will be looking for excellence in radio broadcasting and a station's recognition of the different markets in which it operates.

International TV personality of the year

News, information, entertainment, business, technology – there are many genres of international TV and an equally diverse range of presenters who work to explain and inform viewers about the subjects under discussion. The judges will be looking for the international presenter who enthuses about his or her subject, remains calm under pressure, provides the context that's needed and with whom international audiences can identify.

International radio personality of the year

Engaging with audiences throughout the world is immensely challenging yet every day, radio broadcasters go on the air and explain, provide context and offer unrivalled amounts of information. Who is the best on-air talent of the year? The judges will be looking for enthusiasm, personality and an interesting voice among other attributes.

Clearest coverage of a single news event

With two awards, one covering audio and the other video, judges will be looking for the most appropriate way that a major news event has been covered for international audiences. Has the context been provided so that the audience can fully understand what's happened, and why? Have the reporters dealt compassionately with the people affected by the event, and reported the event sensitively? We're looking for best practice in this important award category.

Best programme dealing with a topical issue

One award for video, and another for audio, looking at the way international broadcasters and media houses have handled an issue that's of interest to global audiences. The judges will look at the way in which the programme was structured, the amount and relevance of the information included, the context provided and the way in which it was presented.

Most creative new strategy or marketing concept by an international broadcaster

International broadcasters face far greater challenges than their domestic counterparts in the area of reaching audiences and convincing them to spend time with their output. This award will reward the broadcaster that has developed the most creative new strategy for reaching audiences, or that has found the most creative marketing concept that has successfully raised the broadcaster's profile in one or more of its key international markets.

Most innovative partnership between a local and an international broadcaster

The days when international broadcasters could simply acquire rebroadcasting on a local station in another part of the world have gone. Today's most effective international broadcasters – both radio and television – are those that work in partnership to develop programming that meets the precise, and often varied, needs of each party. Whether it's co-productions across continents, placing producers in partner stations, or transfer of skills, this award will provide the most effective partnership with the recognition it deserves.



Download the complete entry form and rules at www.aib.org.uk

Best realisation of a cross-border, cross-media production

As more and more people in almost every country adopt different ways of consuming content, broadcasters must ensure that they address all audiences on every platform. That means effective production that recognises the different needs of different platforms, rather than simply trying to use the same material with a different badge. The judges will be looking for the way the production has harnessed the power of traditional broadcast and new media to deliver effectively to audiences on one or all platforms.

Gear of the year

What has been developed or implemented this year that allows international broadcasters to reach their audiences effectively and efficiently, or to create programmes across borders with the least cost without sacrificing quality. It's an open-ended Award, that might be for television production, programme distribution or audio.



entry form

One copy of this form must accompany each entry. Use photocopies where necessary.

Organisation _____

Contact Person _____

Address _____

Town/City _____

Post/Zip code _____ Country _____

Telephone _____ Fax _____

E-mail _____

Entry Category

- International TV channel of the year
- International TV personality of the year
- Clearest coverage of a single news event
- Best programme dealing with a topical issue
- Most creative new strategy or marketing concept by an international broadcaster
- Most innovative partnership between a local and an international broadcaster
- Best realisation of a cross-border, cross-media production
- Gear of the year
- International radio station of the year
- International radio personality of the year
- audio video
- audio video

Programme/project title _____

Original transmission date _____

Original language _____

- I have read and understood the rules applying to these Awards.
- I understand that my entry becomes the property of the Association for International Broadcasting and will not be returned.
- I am enclosing my entry fee of £50 payable to "AIB" drawn on a UK bank.
- Please charge the credit card shown below with £50.

(note: AIB members are exempt from all fees)



CSV*

Cardholder's name _____ Expiry date _____

Credit Card billing address _____

Post/Zip Code _____ Country _____

Cardholder signature _____

**CSV: the last three digits on the signature strip on Diners, Mastercard and Visa cards, and the four digits printed above the card number on American Express*

Signature of entrant _____

Name in print _____

Job title _____

This form and accompanying media and documentation must be submitted to:
 AIB Media Excellence Awards 2007
 Room G105, Little Sandrock, Cranbrook Road, Hawkhurst, CRANBROOK, TN18 4BD, United Kingdom



Iraq remains one of the most dangerous places for journalists to work. **Asta Banionis** reports on the reality of correspondents working there for Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty

Danger & hope

RFE/RL's Radio Free Iraq (RFI) journalists have faced extraordinary dangers beginning with the 18 November 2005 bombing of their Baghdad bureau when two truck bombs smashed through street barricades and then found their mark in the walls of the Al-Hamra Hotel. Fortunately, the staff was out on assignment, so only the physical office and its equipment was destroyed that day.

The correspondents had grown accustomed to extra security measures as they crossed the country reporting widely on local issues as well as national concerns. All have experienced some form of



personal threat for working for RFI, and many have sent their families to live outside Iraq to keep them safe. But, RFI's luck ran out on April 3, 2007 when Khamail Muhsin Khalaf, a correspondent with RFI since 2004, was abducted while trying to get home after work in the bureau. Her body, showing signs of torture,

was found by police in the Al-Jamaia'a district of Baghdad just two days later. The police who arrived to retrieve her body based on a telephone tip were ambushed by snipers.

Khamail's final report, broadcast days before her death, was about the importance of the oil lamp, or "Lala," in Iraqi homes throughout the generations. The report exemplified the deeply personal style of journalism that endeared her to audiences. She was a popular broadcaster with a background in television journalism, and was determined through her engaging and informative reports to give back to the Iraqi people the culture and history they nearly lost under the long, brutal regime of Saddam Hussein. Khamail is survived by three daughters.

Upon learning of her death, representatives of the Office of the President of Iraq wrote to RFI, "With profound sorrow and sadness we have learned of the martyrdom of the journalist Khamail [Muhsin Khalaf] in a heinous terrorist crime. Conveying our condolences to you and her relatives on this tragic loss, we condemn in the strongest terms these cowardly acts targeting free journalists. Our solidarity goes to you and all honorable journalists committed to serving the new Iraq, promoting the principles of tolerance and acceptance of other views as well as fostering genuine democracy. We pray to God to have mercy on her soul and give her relatives strength and comfort."

Her colleagues continue their work as a tribute to her; they share her belief that the people of Iraq deserve a peaceful and prosperous future. The lives of RFI broadcasters have been difficult from the start of the service. Before the fall of Saddam, RFI broadcasters working from Prague were threatened by regime messengers to stop working for

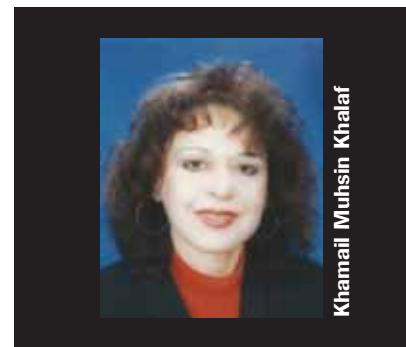
the radio; their families still in Iraq were harassed, and in at least one case tortured, another died under suspicious circumstances.

Established by the US Congress in 1998, RFI began broadcasting on 31 October 1998 on short wave. Within a few months the station was producing 6 hours of daily programming focused on Iraq and Iraq-related issues. In January 2002, RFI increased its programming to Iraq to 12 hours a day, with a staff of 16 people. Two Radio Free Iraq reporters embedded with US troops during the war to liberate Iraq, and six stringers in-country provided breaking news coverage. Throughout the war broadcasts continued to be heard on SW frequencies. With the fall of Saddam Hussein, RFI quickly expanded its network of stringers across six Iraqi cities. Currently, RFI has 26 correspondents throughout Iraq, and an additional 11 outside of Iraq mostly based in Middle Eastern capitals. Its bureau is a modest 2-room office based in the Al-Hamra Hotel in the Jadriya section of Baghdad, rebuilt after the 2005 bombing. Since May 2003, Radio Free Iraq broadcasts have also been available on FM transmitters in Baghdad, Arbil, Kirkuk, Mosul, Sulaymaniyah, Basra, Nasiriyah and Southern Iraq.

Radio Free Iraq's small team of editors and broadcasters who assemble the daily programme remains in Prague at RFE/RL's broadcast centre. This structure follows the model of other RFE/RL surrogate radio services recognizing that the countries to which a RFE/RL broadcasts do not have a free media environment. Free of political and commercial pressures, the RFE/RL editors can produce news and information programming based on the best standards of US reporting serving as a model and a competitor for other broadcasters, many of whom are state-controlled entities.

The political climate for journalists in Iraq also carries the added danger of armed conflict among competing ethnic and religious groups. Some RFI in-country correspondents have fled to Syria in the last year, and most have moved their immediate families outside of Iraq. But, Iraqi journalists do not lack for courage, and RFI has been able to keep a core of correspondents who adjust to the dangers and continue to file important stories – stories their fellow Iraqis need to hear. They believe in their country and its future.

Radio Free Iraq's nation-wide coverage of the meetings of local town councils has been popular with Iraqi audiences, as has its coverage of the Iraqi parliament's deliberations. The station has always been strong in reporting on Iraqi history and tradition, much of which was banned during the Saddam dictatorship. The most recent national audience survey (December 2005) conducted by InterMedia Survey Institute found that Radio Free Iraq has a weekly listenership rate of 21.6%; its highest listenership is among those aged 25-34 (25.6%).



www.iraqhurr.org

www.rferl.org

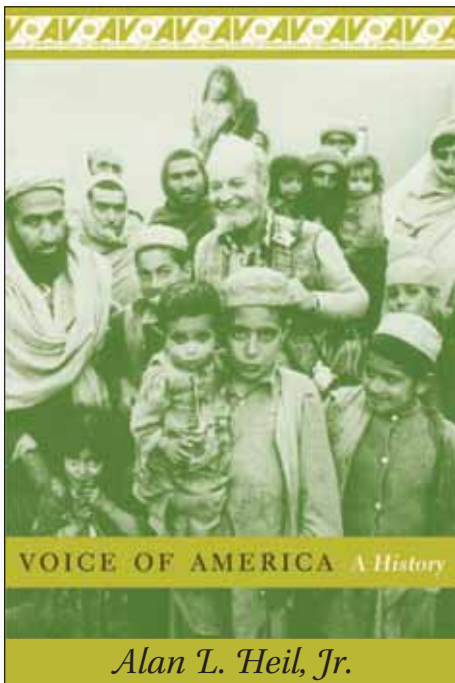
EuroNews is the most watched international news channel in Europe. Now other target areas beckon, says **Olivier de Montchenu**, Managing Director EuroNews Sales

Brands plus decision-makers

Africa's continuing development means that it needs strong communication links and, more importantly, an independent view of world events. EuroNews is a strong medium for Africa. At MIPCOM 2006, the channel signed an agreement with Bahrain-based DTH platform Orbit for carriage in 25 countries across the Middle East and North Africa. Orbit broadcasts EuroNews in Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Kuwait, the UAE, Jordan, Lebanon, Egypt and Cyprus. It is available to all Orbit digital subscribers in English and in French within the basic *Alfa* package. Viewers can select their favourite language version via their remote control.

In Africa, EuroNews is also expanding its distribution and has launched on MultiChoice, South Africa's DTH platform. EuroNews is available on channel 61 to more than a million homes in five language versions: English, French, German, Portuguese and Spanish. As a result of its agreement with MultiChoice, EuroNews is now available throughout the African continent to 13m homes. EuroNews remains the only international news channel to have a full time terrestrial frequency in Africa - in Kinshasa since 2004 - as well as carriage on every satellite platform in the continent.

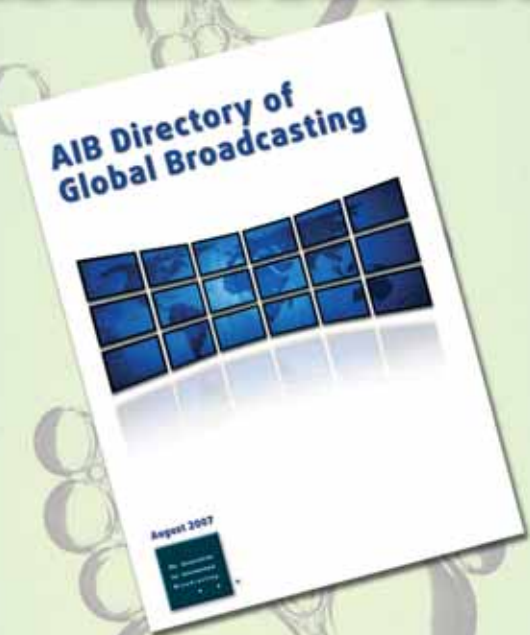
The Middle East and Africa are significant markets in terms of our international advertising growth. Since 2003, and following on from its coverage of the war in Iraq, EuroNews has gained strong recognition from decision makers in the region and the growth of Dubai as an advertising hub has been a fantastic booster for EuroNews' development. More and more international brands that originate in the Middle East want to communicate to world decision makers. They see in EuroNews a perfect vehicle for the digital world: capacity to access the channel in seven different languages, fast and reliable information, and multi screen presence (TV, internet, mobile). The latest results from the Arab Advisors Group (January 2007) show that 83% of Saudi Arabians consider EuroNews as a trustworthy source of information, thus positioning the channel as a good alternative to regional news channels. The absence of a national viewpoint enables EuroNews to act as a perfect bridge between world cultures. www.euronews.net



"For those wondering why, in the presence of global commercial news networks, there is still a need for the Voice of America ... Heil's comprehensive history of America's largest publicly funded overseas broadcasting network surely provides a most comprehensive answer."
— *The Economist*

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The Arab Press Freedom Watch documents events and incidents that violate the freedom and independence of the press in the Arab world, publishes information about these incidents, and liaises with the authorities concerned to correct the conditions that lead to the incidents. **Ibrahim Nawar** is APFW's CEO – here is his personal assessment of media in the ME

On the freedom watch

The Saudi owned Middle East Broadcasting Centre (MBC), established in London right after the war to liberate Kuwait from Saddam's troops in 1991, was the first pan-Arab satellite TV station to employ satellite technology to spread its message. The success and influence of CNN during the first televised war in history motivated Saudi officials to push for the MBC satellite TV project. You could say MBC was the first offspring of the marriage between Arab Gulf oil money and the technology of the satellite age. Others followed, among the most important ones channels established by the Al Maktoum (rulers of Dubai) and the Al Nahiyani (Abu Dhabi's rulers). The Al Thani of Qatar decided to join the race by establishing Al Jazeera channel in 1996.

The formula of what can be described as 'Arab satellite TV age' was based on three main pillars: Gulf oil money, the Lebanese advertising industry and Western satellite technology. Saudi Arabia has been the dominant market, providing most of the capital and generating a majority of the income. Other markets such as Dubai, Jordan, Egypt and Lebanon were important in as much as they provided incentives for production companies through Media Free Zone projects (such as Jebel Ali in Dubai and October City in Egypt).

As new powers emerged in the Arab satellite TV age, the cultural role that Egypt had held for centuries in the Arab world diminished. Egypt's TV viewers were captured by new fashionable satellite TV channels. The main battle ground for competition between players in Arab satellite TV proved to be news and drama and Egypt gradually lost out: news and political programmes to Al Jazeera (Qatari), Orbit and Al Arabiya (both Saudi), drama to the Saudi Rotana and ART, and sports to ART. With the retreat of the Egyptian role in the satellite TV market, different cultures with different social values came to the fore.

After 9/11, a more diverse picture appeared as music, sports and religious channels bombarded the skies in huge numbers. The emergence of Rotana and its satellite channels has fuelled the competition in the music market. Rotana is owned by Saudi billionaire Walid ibn Talal ibn Abdelaziz. Arab Radio and Television (ART), owned by another Saudi billionaire, Sheikh Saleh Kamel, and transmitting from Italy, Egypt, Lebanon and Dubai has taken the lead in the battle for sports and drama. Egyptian Satellite Channel (ESC), although it has

lost some of its shine, is still seen as one of the main players in the field of Arab drama.

The most interesting phenomenon that appeared after 9/11 was the explosion of religious satellite TV channels. Although ART's religious Iqraa channel was launched years before 9/11, dozens of aggressive religious TV channels funded by oil money have appeared in the last few years. Sadly, most of these channels provide their audiences with very conservative and traditional cultural and social discourse. Weak programming and management have resulted in jamming their screens with talk show programmes and readings of the Holy Quran. Such content would be more suited to radio and does not need satellite TV technology.

Two new factors have fuelled the competition between religious channels to win viewers. First is the influence of Iranian conservatives and ultra religious leaders. This is taking two forms: firstly backing the Lebanese Al-Manar satellite TV channel and mobilising the Iranian-run Arabic-language Al-Alam satellite TV channel. The second factor is the war in Iraq. The explosion of the number of satellite TV channels in Iraq (and Iraqi channels beaming from outside Iraq) has resulted in a huge increase

of religious satellite TV channels, or political ones of a religious nature.

Religion and politics are mixed together in post-Saddam Iraq. One example is Al-Furat satellite TV channel, mouthpiece of the Iraqi Supreme Council for Islamic Revolution in Iraq (SCIRI) that holds the majority in the Iraqi parliament. The most damaging result of the explosion of the number of Arab religious TV channels is the spread of hate speech, turning the heat on "others". Differences between Shia and Sunnis are highlighted to feed into conflict within the same society. Differences between religions are portrayed in a way to create a new war between people of different religions. Religious TV channels backed by oil money are playing a very dangerous role in pushing back human values and promoting traditional ways of uncreative thinking. They also illustrate the divisions in the Arab world, between those who look to the future and those who want to return to the dark ages. Sadly, technology is a double-edged tool. Not all of those who can buy new technology can be trusted to use it for the right purpose.

www.apfw.org



Arab journalists form Free Media Workers Union Journalists from five Arab countries – Egypt, Syria, Morocco, Saudi Arabia and Libya – are setting up a media watchdog group. The Free Media Workers Union was formed in response to increased government repression of journalists and media workers in the region. In addition to advocating for press freedom, the group plans to offer financial support for jailed journalists and their families. The project, fully funded by the founding members, is supported by Egyptian-American sociologist and human rights activist Saad Eddin Ibrahim. Ibrahim served a year in jail in Egypt for publishing a report that was critical of Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak. The organisation will be based out of Ibrahim's Ibn Khaldun Center in Cairo.

Leveraging convergence trends



The Arab World's telecom liberalisation momentum has been steadily rising. After countries like Egypt, Morocco, Jordan, Bahrain and Iraq, Saudi Arabia's telecom market – the Arab World's

largest by revenue – is set for full liberalisation in 2007. But, finds **Nadine Usta**, Senior Research Analyst with Arab Advisors Group, convergence of media and telecoms in the Arab world is still in its infancy

During the past five years, the Arab world's mobile industry has been booming. The liberalization of the sector has led to a large increase in the number of operators in the competitive landscape, and accordingly the region's subscriber bases continue to grow.

Lately, different types of Arab companies including technology providers and TV stations have also begun to search for revenue-generating mobile services. Various business models are evolving, and the broadcasting model known as interactive TV is perhaps the most prevalent example of media and telecommunications convergence in the region. This model has taken off in the Arab world in line with global trends; at a time when TV programmes featuring SMS voting, chatting and the like are still quite popular worldwide, Arab TV stations for their part offer a multitude of avenues through which viewers can interact with their TV screens.

The Arab world's free-to-air (FTA) satellite TV market currently comprises over 300 channels on the Arab satellites Arabsat, Nilesat and Noorsat. Approximately 30% of these channels are fully interactive, while others have varying degrees of interactivity. Music channels, for example, tend to be 100% interactive and customarily have a continuous scrollbar for messages and dedications running across the bottom of the screen. Conversely, partially interactive channels generate revenue from interactive TV only through some of their programmes – usually reality or game shows. Some FTA channels also run play-and-win quizzes and contests inviting user participation via SMS and IVR.

When the massive mobile subscriber bases in the Arab world are coupled with a tariff of approximately US\$ 1 per SMS message to a TV station (each operator's tariffs differ according to localized pricing, taxes and legal frameworks), the potential of TV interactivity to generate revenues for broadcasters, operators and content providers

in the region becomes more apparent. These new business models also create the need for reliable research and analysis on new trends and their component telecom, media and technology markets.

Arab Advisors Group is a Jordan-based company that conducts such research. Since its establishment in 2001, the company has produced over 765 reports on the Arab world's communications, media and financial markets, serving over 410 regional and global clients. The company covers 19 countries in the Arab world, including: Algeria, Bahrain, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Mauritania, Morocco, Oman, Palestine, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, Syria, Tunisia, UAE and Yemen. Its scope of services include providing primary research based analysis, market sizing forecasting, the competitive landscape, the regulatory landscape, market research, technology developments, market opportunity and risk assessment.

In September 2005, the founder and president of Arab Advisors Group, Mr. Jawad Abbassi, sold 55% of the company to Arab Jordan Investment Bank, an established Jordanian bank. The acquisition made Arab Advisors a subsidiary of AJIB and enabled the company to introduce a new functional area of research – financial – to complement its previous focus on media, telecom and IT. The company also moved to a new location and increased its staff to 25, a big leap from its 2001 staff of four, operating out of small offices of only three rooms.

Arab Advisors Group focuses on both supply and demand-side research. In addition to regular reports on communication projections, internet landscape, satellite TV and radio, the company also produces major comprehensive surveys including, most recently, surveys in Saudi Arabia and Morocco. These surveys provide insights into the telecom, media and internet usage habits of Arab populations; for example, the survey of cellular users in Saudi Arabia reveals that 93.9% of Saudi Arabia's households have satellite TV, while 78.3% use the internet and only 26.5% of internet users use it for video/audio streaming and 21.2% use it to download movies and series. Additionally, when asked where they get their daily news updates, 90.2% of respondents cited the TV, while very few cited the internet or other means. This provides an indication of how consumers are accessing content; TV remains the prime source of information and there has not yet been a massive move away from TV towards other ways of accessing content, such as via the internet or mobile phones.

The convergence of media and telecoms in the Arab world is still in its infancy. With many more service models evolving, and the next generation of interactive TV services seeing the live streaming of TV programmes onto mobile phone devices, the revenue potential of value added services will continue to attract companies of various types to the content and technology provision business.

www.arabadvisors.com



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Your Best Connection to Taiwan

Arab women meaning business

The Channel looks at the **Arab International Women's Forum** which provides a voice for Arab women to promote cultural diversity and create greater public awareness of the challenges of involving more women in the economic life of the region

Building Bridges – Building Business has been the guiding principle of the AIWF since its inception in 2001 as the first non-profit organisation of its kind, harnessing its network of women from 40 countries across the globe in key positions throughout business, politics and public life.

Over the past six years, AIWF has collaborated with leading Arab and international organizations such as The Arab League of Nations, the UK Foreign & Commonwealth Office, and the European Commission and Parliament, as well as forging valuable partnerships with many global organisations to carve a role in public policy, and contributing to the gender equality debate in the Arab World. AIWF events and reports have encouraged women's involvement in a whole range of activities from corporations – political and public office – to SMEs, rural projects and entrepreneurship in all sectors.



From left
Lubna Al Olayan, MD,
Al Olayan Group,
Haifa Al Kaylani,
Chairman, AIWF and
Latifa Anbari Debar,
Shell UK

The general western stereotype that women in the Middle East are not business leaders or entrepreneurs is still prevalent and can be found in much of today's media. However, the fact is that there are a number of women that provide inspiration to many.

Sheikha Lubna Al Qasimi, the former managing director of Tejari, a forward looking IT company, now holds the key cabinet post of Minister of Economy in the United Arab Emirates. She has said: "In the Emirates, women are on roller blades. They're moving fast in banking and business." Saida Agrebi, a member of the Tunisian Parliament and chairman of the Tunisian Mothers' Association is also a much respected consultant to UN organizations for women in development and a major influence in the World Family Organisation.

Starting her career as a lecturing assistant in the Economics Department at Qatar University, Sheikha Hanadi Nasser Bin Khaled Al Thani went on to found the Qatar Ladies Investment Company – now rebranded as Amwal – of which she is vice chairperson and managing director. Hers was the first investment company to receive a licence to conduct

investment banking, asset management and wealth management in Qatar. Two years ago, this young entrepreneur founded Al Waab City, a development with an initial cost of USD 1.8 bn.

The AIWF's 2007 programme, 'Globalisation, Trade and Entrepreneurship' focuses on women entrepreneurs as a driver for growth and stability and the impact they can have on their countries' economies when taking significant roles in the global marketplace. In 2006 and 2007, two successive Lord Mayors of London have provided the opportunity for AIWF to hold business networking dinners at their official residence, the Mansion House, and enable the organisation to bring together the business communities of the City of London, the Arab world and the international arena.

In launching the 2007 programme, the Chair of AIWF, Haifa Al Kaylani highlighted the reason why the theme of 'Globalisation, Trade and Entrepreneurship' is so important when she said "We believe that the future growth of the region must be built on making better use of all its resources, human capital with women as an integral force. Women's entrepreneurship is expanding around the world. Cooperation between the Arab world and the international community is vital to encourage this trend. AIWF is well placed to facilitate the link and put forward an agenda for positive change. The timing for the Arab women to make a real and tangible difference has never been more opportune nor the demand for their contribution greater."

In some countries in the Arab world, women comprise 65% of the university population but rarely make it into the workplace. AIWF promotes the idea that by empowering women, the Middle East will benefit but this will also enable women to develop a stronger role in society. A role in which women – as bridge builders – can encourage economic development, international understanding, prosperity and peace.

This connectivity is one of the strengths of the AIWF. The organisation has built a strong profile in the international media, also acting as a conduit to provide media outlets with access to key members of the organisation. Haifa Al Kaylani, who was recently named as one of the Muslim Power 100 Awardees winning the Education Excellence Award, is positive that the AIWF is delivering the crucial message that Arab women are playing important roles in business and public life. The mission remains to inspire even more to succeed to positions of influence.

A first for Saudi women A Saudi civil court has heard the first ever case brought against the Kingdom's religious police, the Muttawa, founded several decades ago. The unnamed woman is seeking compensation after she and her daughter were allegedly wrongfully arrested in 2004 for "not wearing decent clothing" while shopping. Women in Saudi Arabia must be covered from head to toe when they go out in public. Earlier an Islamic court rejected the complaint, ruling "a member of the religious police cannot be judged".



NTV IN WONDERLAND



A curious tale from Uganda

When NTV Uganda started its TV broadcasts on 18 December 2006, viewers in Kampala cheered the arrival of its programmes, broadcast with a clear strong signal that included regular local documentary programmes and news in both English and the Buganda language. In a country with a barely functional government broadcaster and only one serious private channel, NTV was welcomed as a new source of information and entertainment. But then, as **Roger Collins** reports, it turned into a sad and curious tale

Only five weeks after NTV Uganda started broadcasting it disappeared again from the TV screen, shut down by the Uganda Broadcast Council which staged a raid and seized critical transmitting equipment. In April, the House of the Uganda Parliament overwhelmingly voted to order the Broadcast Council to allow the channel to broadcast. But Parliament's power in Uganda is fragile at best. The NTV saga is clearly representative of the freedom of the press issues which hover over media in many countries in Africa.

Ugandans have expressed little surprise at these events. After all, said one, the TV station is just metres away from the room that Idi Amin used as a dungeon and torture chamber. The fact that NTV has been economically tortured by the government is absolutely consistent with the way Uganda's leaders treat people or organisations it doesn't like.

For most Ugandans the disappearing act of NTV is a case of 'strange things always happen here'. But for the leadership of civil society, the media, business and government it provided a clear example of how the government increasingly wants to control the media, **fragile** as President Yoweri Museveni heads into his 17th year as leader of this East African nation. Victor Ngei, general manager of the channel, got an early taste of how difficult the media business is in Uganda almost from the moment he started to put the channel together in the summer of 2006, at a cost of more than \$4,000,000.

There is very little media in Uganda. There are two newspapers, *New Vision*, owned by the government, and *The Monitor*, owned by the Nation Media Group [NMG] headquartered in Nairobi, Kenya. In addition to the two TV channels, there are several smaller channels that broadcast religious programmes or music. The radio sector is more crowded, but most stay away from news and current affairs programmes lest they incur the wrath of the government. *The Monitor's* relationship with the government is contentious because the paper is considered anti-government. NTV is also owned by the Nation Media Group. The president's chief media advisor made it clear that from his perspective it was one company that needed to be fought as an enemy of the state. Complicating this situation, Nation Media Group's largest shareholder is the Aga Khan, spiritual leader of the Ishmaili Moslems, and perhaps the biggest single investor in Uganda through hotels, media, power plants, insurance and schools.

NTV is perhaps the most modern and technologically advanced TV station in East Africa, based on digital equipment and with a staff extensively trained for more than six months. Ngei invited government officials and diplomats to visit, but few did, declining to get caught in a cross-fire between the government and NMG.

In Uganda there is a second regulator, the Uganda Communications Commission, which visited and pronounced it splendid. The **bizarre** UCC is responsible for all technical issues, while the Broadcast Council issues licences and has broad but not well defined power over content. The infighting between these two agencies is constant, because the Council's chairman, Godfrey Mutabazi, often refers to himself as the man who controls TV in Uganda, regardless of the regulatory setup.

In May 2005 when NTV, incorporated as Africa Broadcasting (Uganda) Limited, applies for a licence to the Broadcast Council it is told there is a "moratorium" on licences. However it is suggested it should talk to a company called Gentech, which has recently been issued a licence. Gentech was formed by close friends of Mutabazi. Gentech is only too happy to transfer the licence to ABUL for \$35,000. Before the money changes hands, ABUL seeks clarification on the entire matter from Mutabazi and a licence is issued, but the actual paper is held up according to Mutabazi because they haven't yet been printed. At this point the \$35,000 changes hands. The one-year licence is due to expire in July, 2006. All broadcast licences in Uganda have been routinely reissued each year.

ABUL commissions the construction and the training in the spring of 2006 and recruits its staff in a newspaper advertisement. Realising that it will not begin broadcasting before the licence expires, and that it would have to request a renewal in any event, ABUL requests a renewal.

Concurrently, from the language in the newspaper advertisement, people at the highest level of government realise that the majority shareholder in ABUL is the Nation Media Group. Of course, this fact is clearly stated on the original application for the transfer so it is not a surprise to Mutabazi, assuming he read the application.

But in the Uganda government there is consternation because of the ill will between the president and *The Monitor*. The TV channel is chastised by the government for having used the Nation Media Group name in the advertisement for staff, and not the legal name of the company. The channel is then told its renewal cannot proceed because the forms they filled out for the transfer “were the wrong forms.” Of course, these were the forms provided by the council. By mid September, NTV went ahead with the training of more than 100 Ugandans who were excited at the prospect of working for a new TV channel.

When the Broadcast Council cashed the application fee for the licence renewal, but refused to issue or to deny it, NTV’s lawyers threatened court action. The irregularities in the process continued. The licence contained a condition that the transmitter and antenna be installed in Kololo Hill, the site where the state broadcaster owns the only towers. NTV asked why it could not pick any location as other broadcasters had done. It was told by the Broadcast Council that it wanted Kololo used even though it could not point to any written policies or regulations to the effect that it could direct the location of the company’s transmitter.

NTV had no choice but to negotiate an annual \$36,000 tower space rental from the state broadcaster, which at that time was managed by a man who had been one of the owner’s of Gentech, the company that sold the original licence to NTV. The Broadcast Council then presented NTV with a list of “conditions” that it wanted attached to the licence, including the right of the government to demand time on the channel at any time for any reason. Mutabazi, the **difficult** council chairman said this was part of his new policy to ensure fair treatment for the government. In response to a question of how the council has passed this set of new rules, Mutabazi made it clear that he had made the policy himself. NTV watered down the language and sent it back, but no licence was forthcoming. In December, 2006 a licence was issued, signed by the government minister to whom the Broadcast Council ostensibly reports.

Back at Kololo Hill, NTV commenced installation of its antenna on the smaller of the two towers after asking a structural engineer to look at the tower as well as at the method of attaching the antenna to the uppermost level. On December 18 NTV began broadcasting with no fanfare. Whatever pleasure Uganda viewers got from this new channel was short-lived. On 24 January someone vandalised the microwave link that connects the broadcast operations at the Serena Conference Center to the tower. The only people with access to the tower at Kololo are government employees or staff of the TV station. To stay on the air, NTV broadcast video tapes from within the transmitter building at the base of the tower. It took two days to locate replacement parts.

On 25 January the Broadcast Council, which is supposed to encourage as well as regulate broadcasting, sent a letter to the 3rd Deputy Vice President of Uganda, who is responsible for “information,” claiming that the state broadcaster did not comply with

technical requirements for the mast. The letter further ordered the state broadcaster to shut down NTV, but it did nothing about the other seven companies transmitting from the same tower.

Two days later Uganda Broadcast Company (UBC), the state broadcaster, sends NTV a letter saying that NTV is being shut down. UBC admits under pressure that the letter it received from the regulator claimed that NTV had not complied with industry technical standards and had altered its studio location without permission, an apparent reference to the temporary playout from Kololo **contentious** after the sabotage. Two days later NTV asks for clarifications about what is happening. At the same time UBC begins to remove some unused cables from the mast, which it believes is what has caused the regulator’s ire, although clearly there is more to it than that.

The station remains dark. On 30 January the regulator writes to UBC stating again that the allegedly defective mast be fixed. No one at UBC can determine if any structural analysis was done as part of this and the regulator takes no action to remove any actual equipment from the tower. Later that same day a letter to UBC changes the issue completely, stating that the mast is OK but that it is NTV’s failure to comply with technical standards that is the reason for the shut-down.

Of course, from Victor Ngei’s perspective this is bizarre. The general manager of NTV says no one from the council has ever visited the station, built with state-of-the-art gear never before seen in Uganda. The transmitter is brand new from a major Italian manufacturer who sells all over the world. On 31 January UBC put the NTV signal back on the air. The next day it got a warning from the Broadcast Council. Without any further notice to anyone, officials from the Broadcast Council came to the transmitter building on 1 February and removed the station’s microwave receivers.

Parliament began to take an interest and is the only group that has tried to come to NTV’s rescue. The state broadcaster is economically and technically bankrupt despite a huge grant from the government **irregular** in return for giving up land for a hotel project. It turns out most of the grant never got to the channel. It cannot afford to antagonise anyone in government, least of all a broadcast regulator who regulates on the spot based on how he feels.

The only private channel is worried about losing revenue to a new channel. It sees no commonality of interests regarding independence and transparency in regulation. Perhaps surprisingly, the government-owned newspaper’s reports on the situation have been reasonably balanced even if sometimes incomprehensible as far as the facts are concerned. But that may be more a case of the facts themselves being so obviously illogical. As Alice said in the *Alice in Wonderland*, “Curiouser and curiouser!”

On **30 April**, NTV Uganda returned to Uganda’s airwaves. The relaunch followed a memorandum of understanding between the station and the Broadcasting Council in which technical matters that resulted in its closure are to be resolved amicably at a later date. Separately, the Freedom of the Press 2007 report released on 1 May shows that Uganda’s global ranking in press freedom has declined from the 111th position among 169 countries in 2006 to 114th in 2007.



Fact file

Margarita Simonyan,
Editor in Chief,
Russia Today

My career

My career in journalism started very early—which was quite common in Russia in the 1990s. For many older correspondents, it proved a difficult task to adapt to the new environment and start writing in an independent and interesting way. Thus, companies were looking for new blood. This is how, having started at 18 in a small TV company in a southern Russian city, by the age of 20 I was the chief of VGTRK's Southern bureau, Russia's largest broadcaster. For the next couple of years my life was full of helicopter rides to warring Chechnya, floods, airplane crashes and the political intricacies of southern breakaway republics. Then Rossiya TV channel invited me to Moscow suggesting I experiment with political journalism. Both the channel and I were happy with the outcome. I have covered G8 summits and dozens of international meetings at the highest level; I have interviewed the President of Russia. In 2004, I was among the first group of journalists that arrived in Beslan after hostages were taken. I was awarded a medal from the Defence Ministry and a credit from the Women of Beslan Foundation. In 2005, I was appointed head of the Russia Today channel.

On Russia Today

The chance to tell people about your country in a foreign language is both a great honour and a great challenge. Russia Today aims to keep English-speaking viewers informed about what is going on in Russia and the former Soviet republics. We do our job in an unbiased, frank, prompt and solid manner. Currently, we are the only TV channel that broadcasts daily Russian news to the whole world in English. Every day we air dozens of stories that you cannot find elsewhere. We have more than 1,000 employees and dozens of correspondents in Moscow and around the world. Our company is really multicultural: we have Russians and British, Americans and Georgians, and many other nationalities. Russia Today is available on major satellite platforms and through major cable networks in Europe, Asia, North America and Australia. Also, wherever you are, you can watch us online—we broadcast through the Internet 24 hours a day at www.russiatoday.ru.

Achievements

Although our channel is only 18 months old, we already have some things we can be proud of. RT extensively covered the G8 summit in St. Petersburg in 2006. Our correspondents reported from protest rallies in the Kyrgyz capital Bishkek and pro- and anti-government meetings in Ukraine's capital, Kiev. We've also covered stories from the self-proclaimed breakaway republics of Abkhazia, South Ossetia and Transdniestria. We were the only channel to have three crews working in Tallinn in Estonia, when protests against the dismantling of the Bronze Soldier shook the city. Russia Today was among the first to report in English about the death of Russia's first President

Boris Yeltsin and the renowned cellist Mstislav Rostropovich. We were the first channel to broadcast the Victory Parade live in English and the first to install a satellite dish on Krasnaya Polyana in Sochi during the visit of the International Olympic Committee. RT was the first channel to break the news of Alexander Litvinenko being taken to a hospital in a critical condition—long before this became a hot topic in the foreign media. Also, we were first to have Andrey Lugovoy (considered a suspect by some and a victim by others) as a guest in our studio. We have dozens of exclusive interviews with high-ranking socio-political newsmakers under our belt, hundreds of direct transmissions from action scenes, and millions of viewers are discovering new Russia with Russia Today.

Plans, results, prospects

In two years, a tremendous amount of work has been done: we have staffed the company, set up the equipment (the most sophisticated and modern of its kind in Russia), opened nine bureaux and arranged broadcasting through major cable networks in Europe and North America. Both Western and Russian colleagues often turn to us for exclusive video material, interviews, or simply our expertise. In our view, this really proves that Russia Today is recognized by the journalistic community. Each day Russia Today receives hundreds of letters from its viewers in South Africa, Australia and New Zealand. Our channel has expanded their vision of the world and helped them to discover a new Russia. For instance, now they know that the value of some Russian companies has surpassed that of major Western companies, or that the city of Sochi has a good chance of hosting the Winter Olympics in 2014. However, we are not going to stop there. We intend to grow and develop. Launching new programmes, expanding our broadcasts to new territories and establishing new bureaux is just a small part of what we are planning to do before the end of 2007.



www.russiatoday.ru

that ALL important contact



In the last 12 months, the architecture of prompting systems has been completely rewritten, moving the level of intelligence away from the central system out to the prompter itself, adding a new layer of resilience and accessibility in the process. **Kieran Smith**, CEO, Autocue explains

Let's start with a brief history lesson. Current prompting systems comprise a central PC that conveys a composite signal, which can be split for multiple prompters so that the script is displayed on each prompting device. If the PC dies there is one single point of failure, which is why broadcasters often have two PCs. However, although this method is as reliable as technology has previously allowed, there is very little flexibility for the presenter because each prompter receives exactly the same signal, which is always controlled by the operator in the production area. Autocue's new technology not only adds greater resilience to the mechanics of prompting but also gives more flexibility to the presenter for a number of programme styles and genres.

QMaster, Autocue's new IP-based, networked prompting solution, is part of the QNxt product suite. QMaster is a software application on the control PC that communicates via an Ethernet link (amongst other connection options) with the QBox to scroll the script. The Ethernet link means that the QBox can be located with the prompter. Although the central operator will tend to be the master controller of the scrolling script, the prompter can be individually controlled by the presenters using a discreet local hand or foot control attached to the QBox. An extension of this capability is the Multi-Head function, which allows presenters to read their script ahead of time while a colleague is presenting their own Piece To Camera (PTC).

This simple yet revolutionary change in the architecture means that instead of having a composite video signal linking the central control PC to the prompter, you now have a control signal that requires significantly less bandwidth. Information passed to the QBox across a LAN uses very low levels of data, which means broadcasters can achieve the ultimate in prompting: a wireless connection without additional weight to the prompter. The Ethernet link also provides broadcasters with the facility to control the prompter over any distance, for example a global news broadcaster can scroll a prompter

in the US from a central control in London, or in fact anywhere around the world, enabling seamless handovers between presenters across structured shifts throughout the day for 24/7 worldwide transmission.

The QBox provides a fall back for the PC, automatically storing a copy of the current script or running order. In the event of a PC failure, prompting continues via the QBox, with the presenter (or operator with a preview screen) taking local control of the prompter. This means the presenter can retain eye contact with the camera even if the system in the central location has failed. With all other prompting systems there is one single point of failure and if that breaks down, the presenter has lost the script for several minutes, immediately losing rapport with the audience. In the event of a catastrophic power failure, the QBox reboots in under 30 seconds (much quicker than a PC), returning to the exact point in the script where power was lost.



The benefits of this revolution in prompting are not limited to the studio. QMaster lends itself just as well to field reporting. Picture a news journalist reporting live from a war zone. The reporter and cameraman will usually be introduced by the anchor, who in a conflict situation will often be seen transmitting from a hotel roof in the capital city. The news team in Dubai can email or SMS the script to the correspondent who then can make their own additions to the script and upload it to the QBox via a number of methods including USB key, Bluetooth (e.g. mobile phone) and Ethernet. The cameraman then simply connects the QBox to the prompter, slings it over his shoulder or attaches it to his belt, and off they go. It's a fairly well known fact that although journalists can remember every detail of the story, they very often forget the names of the people that they are introducing. The anchor in the field will often look down at his piece of paper before he introduces the correspondent, which disturbs the natural interaction with the audience. Now, with the script uploaded to the QBox and under his control he can confidently deliver his PTC whilst continuing to maintain that all important eye contact.

At this point the presenter has wireless control of the prompter and the cameraman is entirely un-tethered, which gives complete freedom in delivery – the cameraman can walk around the presenter and vice versa – achieving more interesting and informative camera angles.

QMaster opens doors for a number of PTC situations such as red carpet and other outside broadcasts where unlike the news journalist and cameraman – a two-man team – larger numbers of crew can be involved. Picture the presenter at the Dubai International Film Festival last year, who interviewed the actors as they arrived at the Al Sahara Desert Resort. During the interview, the presenter has to continue their PTC whilst trying to sustain the interview with the actor, she needs a third party to operate the prompter because she is already holding a microphone but she also needs that all important script to continue her PTC once the interview is complete. QMaster allows an operator to accompany the crew, but at a distance, using a wirelessly connected PDA to scroll the prompter, unattached to the cameraman so as not to hinder his angles.

Archaeological digs are another excellent application for QMaster. An operator can sit away from the presenter and the cameraman, with a standard laptop, wirelessly scrolling the script as the production team move around freely.

Prompting is an essential tool for broadcasting that sits silently in the background and is quite rightly rarely considered by the audience until it is clear that the system has failed and the presenter has lost his rapport. QMaster brings huge potential for live broadcasts in the studio and in the field by delivering a portable and mobile high-brightness prompting system that can be used under any conditions and provides both operator and presenter control with supreme resilience, previously unseen in prompting systems.



www.autocue.com

Autocue customers in the Middle East include:

- MOI (Oman)
- Ministry of Health (Kuwait)
- Greenline Productions (Lebanon)
- Amiri Diwan (Qatar)
- Future TV (Lebanon)
- Phoenix Pictures (Lebanon)
- MBC (UAE)
- Royal Commission for Jubail (Saudi Arabia)
- Emirate Group (UAE)



Today's fast changing media environment makes it progressively more difficult for organisations to keep track of their video. But help is at hand, says Teletrax president **Andy Nobbs**

The fragmentation of television audiences has led to rapid and unprecedented change in the broadcast industry. Additionally, the proliferation of new delivery and viewing platforms such as online video has radically transformed the means through which audiences receive and gather information. A variety of industries, including the advertising, news, entertainment, programming and sports markets, are impacted by these changes, and each faces a unique set of issues associated with content protection and measurement.

Apple Chairman Steve Jobs' recent public criticism of digital rights management (DRM) as too restrictive a protection system for digital content creates the opportunity for an alternative – digital watermarking systems which do not restrict the flow of content but provide precise tracking and measurement of where, when and how that content is aired. Digital watermarks are imperceptible and indelible codes that are inserted into video, enabling the content owner to keep track of its whereabouts.

News organisations face their own set of challenges brought on by the changing media environment. Because there is such a large amount of content generated by the news industry, organisations need to have a sense of which stories are distributed to what specific affiliate stations, as well as what portion of each segment aired, or even if it aired at all. Given all of these variables, the news sector in particular can benefit from deploying broadcast intelligence services that utilise digital watermarking technology as a means of monitoring and tracking broadcast video.

In the past, news organisations had no way of knowing how their broadcast inventory was used by clients, or if it was being used illegally by non-clients. They used air checks and surveys as a means of understanding who was using their news segments and packages, but could not identify what percentage of a client's newscast used their video. There was no way to tell if archive footage provided to clients was used once during a newscast or twenty times in a promotion. Business decisions and investments were made based on best judgments, rather than scientific evidence of proof-of-airing.

The deployment of broadcast monitoring solutions can solve these problems, and provide organisations with valuable media intelligence detailing how their video is being used, resulting in a better understanding of client needs. They can determine exactly what news stories are being used, and as importantly, what stories are not being used.

Real world experience in the newsroom

Reuters Television, a worldwide news service that provides video news reports to the world's leading broadcasters, decided to implement watermarking technology as a means of ensuring it operates in the most effective and efficient manner possible. It is crucial for an organisation of such size and caliber to take steps to ensure all of the video content processed remains manageable, which can be a very difficult task given the amount of video created and fed through the newsroom. Reuters had a need to receive timely information on usage of the news footage it supplied to broadcasters around the world to gain a better understanding of its served markets, and called upon Teletrax's media intelligence service to keep track of its news stories and streamline the planning process.

Teletrax, a global broadcast intelligence company, is used by Reuters to monitor and track news video disseminated to broadcasters around the world, and determine which news stories are used by specific broadcasters. The Teletrax service provides Reuters with scientific evidence of what broadcast content is aired, aiding in the planning of relevant news gathering and marketing initiatives. Reuters uses the information received as a management decision tool, allowing the organisation to determine which types of stories generate the most interest in specific markets. The results are used as a marketing tool to fine-tune the planning process and determine the types of stories that should be fed to particular broadcasters, resulting in increased efficiency and greater return-on-investment.

As an example of how Reuters uses watermarking technology to its advantage, consider the following scenario. Every January, hundreds of people gather in Rome to jump into the river Tiber – an Italian

New Year's tradition. Each year, Reuters would allocate resources to produce a news segment on the ritual, telling the complete story of the tradition and background behind it, ending with footage of the participants jumping into the river. Once the organisation starting using Teletrax, they found that their affiliates were editing the footage to exclude the background information and would concentrate on the more dramatic footage, for instance, of youngsters jumping into the river.

By using Teletrax, Reuters is able to determine which news stories are being used by their customers, as well as what portion of the video ran. The intelligence received by tracking its news video allows the organisation to provide its customers with stories better suited to their audiences. Instead of producing unnecessary content, Reuters is able to better determine the needs of its broadcasters and tailor news segments accordingly. Reuters Television has relied on Teletrax since 2002 for the accuracy and precision in reporting on the broadcast usage of its news videos. Teletrax has a strong commitment to Reuters' business development, which is further evidenced in its recent build-out of additional monitoring sites worldwide.

Media organisations have a need to protect their assets and determine proof of airing. Digital watermarking technology is an essential tool that can work to their advantage. The fact is, broadcast intelligence services are increasingly becoming an intrinsic part of the broadcast chain and help deliver increased revenue and improve return-on-investment.

www.teletrax.tv



Tracking it



We focus on organisations that share information across borders.

We offer access to inspiring minds.

We stimulate platforms for informed debate.

We research trends and opportunities.

We brief our members with market intelligence.

We publish a quarterly journal, *The Channel*.

We report on innovation, strategy, people and content.

We profile the decision makers of tomorrow.

We accept commissions for specialised reports.

We lobby on behalf of members' interests.

We promote excellence.



The AIB is the international network organisation for over 25,000 communicators and media professionals

Are the days of satellite video delivery numbered? Linx Chief Executive Faridoun Hemani says not. "I reckon there's still several years' life in traditional satellite delivery. Wars and disasters have a habit of breaking out in places where broadband is not heard of. A satellite feed is still the safest and fastest way of sending a story from the field back to base. It's still the best way of going live in a news bulletin. And it's still the only way of providing high-quality live coverage of, say, a football match. And sports events are a big part of our business, with demands for live HD delivery being something our trucks can deliver, but our computers cannot".

So why the move to FTP delivery? HyperLinx is really about enabling content providers to target their video at content users with greater ease. For example, Linx is working with a number of United Nations organisations, charities and NGOs – all of whom have great stories to tell, and often exciting video to offer, but who until now have relied on the cluster bomb approach of shipping tapes to broadcasters or offering a single expensive satellite feed that just gets lost in the ether, unnoticed or ignored by the broadcasters who might have been interested in using it had they been given more notice and been invited to get involved earlier.

HyperLinx means content providers' video will be available for broadcasters to preview and download from the Linx website as well as from partner websites such as www.tvz.tv and even from Linx clients' own websites via a hyperlink to the broadcast-quality video hosted on the Linx servers. Linx is not developing this technology in-house. Its primary technology provider is Quicklink – considered to be the best in the business right now, and used by many major international broadcasters including the BBC, NHK, and Al Jazeera. To access Linx video via Quicklink, all a broadcaster has to do is download a free file converter. But Linx is also working on partnerships with other video compression providers – the technology is moving so fast that it is wise to stay in touch with a range of providers. And news broadcasting is no longer just about TV. For example, we're looking at platforms that can help our clients deliver video to podcasts and mobile phones using providers such as Forbidden Technologies.

There are other, bigger companies, offering a similar service. So what makes HyperLinx special? I would say the difference between us and most of our rivals is that we are a TV News company, not a PR agency, or just a distribution specialist. We work with international broadcasters every day of the week, often on the biggest breaking news stories of the day, and we know what makes them tick. HyperLinx is about more than just online on-demand video delivery. We want to work with

Going hyper is good

Linx Productions, best known to international news broadcasters for its fleet of uplinks trucks and satellite flyaways, is going HyperLinx. **James Thomas**, Linx London Bureau Chief and HyperLinx Project Manager has the details



Faridoun Hemani and James Thomas

our clients, and with the broadcasters they are targeting, to make sure they provide the video and the backup broadcasters need to tell a good story in their own way. That means providing valuable footage not just stock shots. It means making people available for interview, not just providing canned soundbites.

Consider the dreaded and invariably rejected Video News Release: we want to re-invent the whole VNR concept via a one-stop-shop 'boutique' service. VNRs do have a place, at least as a guideline on the story an organisation wants to tell. But we work with our clients on connecting them with targeted broadcasters and programme-makers before and during the production process. We urge our clients to understand that one size rarely fits all. The broadcast universe is so diverse and so competitive that you can very rarely just churn out a VNR and some B-roll, then sit back and wait for results.

Why the focus on humanitarian organisations? The Linx senior management team are all front-line experienced international broadcast journalists who have spent most of their careers covering wars and disasters. We work in the field with the UN, charities, and NGOs. They already help broadcasters tell the stories which affect us all. We want to help them and the world's broadcasters tell those stories even better. Good news as well as bad.

As for the satellite trucks and flyaways... Hemani says, "We were there for the Balkan wars, the invasion of Afghanistan, and the Tsunami. We are there for everything from the IAEA's deliberation

on Iran's nuclear ambitions to the European Soccer Championship qualifiers. But now our editors, engineers, and producers can help clients send a story from their laptop as well as from our satellite dishes, and those stories can be seen by audiences watching a giant High-Def Plasma screen, their computers, or their phones. Linx built its reputation by providing first-class service at competitive rates on traditional uplinks, often achieving

the 'impossible'. With HyperLinx, we hope to do the same. And I expect the two technologies to complement each other. Sometimes a satellite feed will make most sense. Sometimes FTP will be more efficient. On the operational side there's already a sense of déjà vu. Mobile uplinks sometimes break down at critical moments, and, as we all know, so do laptops. Satellite paths go down, and, as we all know, so do broadband connections! But the possibilities are very exciting, and we're looking forward to pioneering online video distribution just as we did with the trusty trucks and flyaways".

www.linxproductions.com



RADIO GOES THE OPEN ROUTE

Running a radio station in Europe or North America can be hard work. But, says **Peter Whitehead** of the Media Development Loan Fund, imagine trying to do it in sub-Saharan Africa or South-East Asia on a budget of less than \$100 a day, with software designed – and priced – for Western commercial stations. To make matters worse, the authorities might be looking for an excuse to close down the station for criticising an official or reporting on corruption

An impossible task? Almost, yet somehow thousands of dedicated journalists and community broadcasters still manage to produce effective, informative and entertaining programmes in the harshest conditions. It is for these radio stations that the Centre for Advanced Media-Prague (CAMP) – the new media arm of the Media Development Loan Fund, a non-profit organisation supporting independent news outlets in emerging democracies – has released Campcaster, the first open source play-out software designed specifically for broadcasters in developing countries.

As radio stations in Sierra Leone, Senegal and elsewhere are finding out, Campcaster turns a PC into a studio, enabling both automated broadcast at preset dates and times, as well as allowing “live” play-out from the studio. It also lets users exchange radio programme material both online and off-line, and provides a secure archive server for storing, searching and retrieving programme content. And like other CAMP software, great emphasis has been placed on making it user-friendly; Campcaster has been designed to be used by journalists and community broadcasters, not technical experts.

Open source Almost as important as its functionality and stability is the fact that Campcaster is open source, which gives it major advantages over its commercial counterparts. First, it is free, in the sense that there is no cost to download the software. This is a huge benefit to stations running on small budgets, whether in the majority

or minority world, which otherwise would have to pay costly licence fees, typically \$1,000 or more per computer – not to mention upgrades every few years.

Second, and perhaps more significantly, it is free, as in “free speech”. Anyone who downloads the software has

immediate access to the program code and so can hire a local programmer to add and change features to suit his or her own needs. This makes Campcaster incredibly flexible compared to commercial play-out software whose codes – and therefore features – are locked and non-adaptable.

Not only that but open source etiquette – and the open source General Public Licence – demands that any features added or improved are fed

back to CAMP, which incorporates them into the next program release so all users can benefit. This means that Campcaster is constantly being upgraded and improvements circulated freely. One area where community involvement is particularly strong is in language localisation; it doesn't take a computer programmer to translate Campcaster into a local language, and has even been done in less than one day.

Following the initial rolling out of Campcaster in December 2006 in Freetown, Sierra Leone, an upgraded version was launched in Kotor, Montenegro, in February, incorporating new user-designed features. The next upgrade is scheduled for the summer and will include enhanced networking abilities, so stations can more easily share content.

While stations such as West Africa Democracy Radio are already powered by Campcaster and the 500-station network KBR 68H in Indonesia is deciding which of its affiliates could most benefit from it, outlets in the developed world are also customising the software to fit their own needs. Campcaster is modular, meaning stations can choose to work with the entire system or individual components, so in Vienna, Radio Orange is adapting Campcaster's play-out system to work with its digital archive. And in Hungary, a network of independent radio stations is integrating Campcaster's storage server into a project to develop a public website engine for radio stations.

Campware has also been working on what it calls the “Radio Package”, which combines Campcaster with its Campsite content management system for newsrooms and other leading open source tools. This enables stations to offer audio on demand on their sites, live streaming, legally-mandated broadcast archiving and news broadcast preparation. The Radio Package is being installed and tested at Radio Skala in Kotor.

Piracy protection Although Campcaster's automated play-out feature was originally developed for stations broadcasting in crisis situations, it also provides protection for outlets operating in less extreme but still oppressive countries. When authorities want to close a critical radio station, they often look for an excuse that has nothing to do with the content of what has been broadcast. Using pirated software – as many stations do in developing countries – is almost an invitation to a government to clamp down on an outlet it doesn't like. Being open source, Campcaster provides users with a legal play-out system and so sidesteps the threat of fines and closure.

www.campware.org



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The state of Africa's media

Fostering a stronger media in Africa is an indispensable part of tackling poverty, improving development and enabling Africa to attain its development goals. Arising from the 2005 Commission for Africa, the African Media Development Initiative (AMDI) provides a unique set of insights showing how donors, investors, media and media development organisations can collaborate in supporting and strengthening Africa's media sector. **Stephen King**, Director of the BBC World Service Trust, sums up the findings



This 2006 Initiative was the most extensive research programme on the media in Africa, and has been recognised as the foundation for the first comprehensive information resource on African media. In total, the state of the media in 17 sub-Saharan African countries was examined. The study included: Angola, Botswana, Cameroon, Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Mozambique, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Senegal, Somalia, South Africa, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

AMDI aimed to: assess the key changes and developments in the media sector in Africa over the past five years; show how media development activities and interventions have contributed to the development of the media; and identify future priorities with the greatest potential impact on the development of the media sector in Africa. The project was delivered by Ahmadu Bello University (Nigeria), BBC World Service Trust, Rhodes University (South Africa) and a network of researchers from the 17 countries. In total, more than 300 individuals – from researchers to interviewees – participated in the project. The project was funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, the UK Government's Department for International Development (DfID), the International Finance Corporation (World Bank Group) and Irish Aid.

a booming
media sector

The research from the 17 countries reveals a booming media sector in Africa, with growth fuelled by democratic reform, globalisation, economic progress and the availability of new technologies. Over the last

five years, there has been a staggering growth in mobile phone use, far outstripping uptake of the internet. In Nigeria, for example, there has been a 66,000% growth in mobile phone users since 2001.

professionalism
remains low

Despite the adoption of mobile telephony, radio remains the dominant mass media channel across the continent with the fastest growth being in regional commercial FM stations. There is also a large growth in TV channels although this remains primarily an urban phenomenon. Newspapers remain focused on urban centres whilst community media, including non-profit small-scale private enterprises, are playing an increasingly important role in giving local communities a voice.

State-owned broadcasting media still have the widest reach of all players but a shortage of resources and trained staff can result in poor-quality programming, pro-government bias and an over-concentration on urban issues.

The study also found that while in some cases legislation exists to protect media independence, it is not being implemented. Often, this legislation has lain on the statute books for many years, waiting for final government approval.

Despite some examples of great journalistic practise, levels of professionalism in journalism and production still remain consistently low. This is partly due to a combination of insufficient or poor-quality training institutions. The increase in media

outlets has also meant an increase in untrained staff. Also, the low salaries and status of journalists leads to a skills exodus, with staff poached to better-paid jobs in development organisations.

There are some harsh lessons for those organisations working to help strengthen Africa's media too. Training and other projects are ad hoc and vary greatly in quality. Many of the projects are short-term and unsustainable and there is unnecessary competition between donor agencies at a national level with little co-ordination, resulting in wasted investment. Despite these concerns, the research found reasons for optimism throughout the region.

training varies greatly

In Angola, for example, Radio Ecclesia, an independent Luanda based FM station, continues to play a major role as a peace builder between conflicting parties and is educating the population on matters of governance, health, politics and human rights.

In Ghana, Simli Radio is demonstrating the benefits of broadcasters being firmly rooted in the communities they serve. Located in Dalun, near Tamale in the Northern Region of Ghana, this non-profit community station serves 280,000 people in one of the country's poorest areas. Simli Radio has 15 community-based producers who are located in their communities and bring news from them. The producers also mobilise Listeners' Clubs as a way of engaging communities with the station's education output.

African media are also succeeding in challenging entrenched social issues and changing behaviour. Our researcher in Tanzania reports on the campaigns run by the Tanzania Media Women's Association (TAMWA) to create public awareness of the link between high rates of HIV infection and violence perpetuated against women through such traditional practices as forced marriage, polygamy and female genital mutilation. A 2005 TAMWA campaign built around TV advertising spots and press features generated a major public debate. A clan head in Nyamongo subsequently pledged to ban female genital mutilation and

the media coverage helped to overcome a backlash by some elders who had arranged to mutilate 500 girls.

Parallel to the AMDI research was a UNECA consultation project entitled Strengthening Africa's Media (STREAM), funded by DfID and the Open Society Institute. This project included electronic and in-person consultations that focused primarily on what individuals thought about the potential role of the media in Africa, the current state of African media, and recommended priorities to strengthen African media.

STREAM's findings are strongly consistent with those of the AMDI research, namely focused around the challenges of media freedom, policy, capacity and standards, sustainability, and quality content.

The AMDI study identifies four main priority areas for future investment: support for training, at all levels, including academic courses, in-house journalism and management training; support for local production – to stimulate the creative industries and to foster local production skills; support for the implementation of media legislation to create an enabling environment in which media can flourish; support to the media infrastructure – from the upgrading of equipment, to the development of innovative and flexible funding mechanisms. The encouragement of inward investment into indigenous media industries and the development of supporting agencies, such as market research companies, will be an important component.

reasons for optimism

So what are the next steps? With a range of African and international partners, work is being carried out to scope out a pan-African initiative to strengthen Africa's media.

To address this consensus, a Steering Committee of respected Africa media owners, operators and policymakers has formed to guide future efforts. The Committee brings together some of the key players in the AMDI and STREAM processes, including Eric Chinje, (African Development Bank); Kaitira Kandjii (Media Institute of Southern Africa); Wilfred Kiboro,

(former CEO, Nation Media Group, Kenya); Arlindo Lopes (Secretary- General, Southern Africa Broadcasting Association and former Director of TV, Mozambique); and Amadou Mahtar Ba (President & Director, AllAfrica Global Media).

The group is currently working through a six-month intensive work plan to conduct the technical work necessary to detail and cost proposals based on the research findings. It has also laid out a plan for high-level outreach to potential partners and funders, and for a Stakeholders' Forum to invite further feedback on the eventual proposals.

creating an enabling environment

The hope is that the initiative will boost funding for the sector, developing higher professional standards and help turn state broadcasters into public service entities. It will also co-ordinate the activities of donors working on African media to eliminate duplication.

Through this additional investment in skills and resources, the media in Africa can be enabled to play a more central role in their nation's development.



Copies of the African Media Development Initiative Research Summary Report, and individual country reports on the 17 sub-Saharan African countries surveyed, are available at www.bbcworldservicetrust.org/amdi

Crazy for mobile TV



With his goal in the finale against Iraq, during the 15th Asian Games in December 2006, Bilal Mohammed Rajab became a national hero in Qatar. Some 1,400 sports fans were able to watch that momentous kick live and on-the-go on their mobile phones, as **Roger Homrich** reports

The year 2006 may go down in history as the breakthrough year for cell phone TV. In numerous pilot projects from Finland to Spain, England to France and also at the 2006 FIFA World Cup in Germany, mobile TV has proven very popular with test participants. Broadcasts of sporting events, in particular, have met with great interest. Only recently an Australian TV station and the telecommunications provider Telstar used the Commonwealth Games in Melbourne as an opportunity to show what mobile TV can do with live broadcasts. Italy then launched the first commercial cell phone TV offer worldwide for the soccer World Cup. The soccer and cell-phone-crazy Italian fans were able to watch the world cup champion's games live from any location. And finally, cell phone TV premiered on the Arabian Peninsula at the 15th Asian Games in Qatar.

Uniform standard There is one thing that all these pilot projects have in common: the providers all used DVB-H (Digital Video Broadcasting-Handheld). The standard seems to have enabled mobile TV's final breakthrough. Viviane Reding seems to agree. At this year's CeBIT, the EU Commissioner for Information Society and Media announced that if market participants were not able to agree on one single standard by 2008, the EU would introduce measures to regulate the market. Ms. Reding herself favours DVB-H, which is already being used in 17 EU member states. The EU commissioner is certain of mobile TV's golden future. According to Reding, the market is expected to generate a volume of around 12bn euros by 2011. In Hanover, Reding added that she would only intervene if the market developed too slowly

or in an uncoordinated way. "Demand is high; the only thing missing is the offer."

Market researchers at Frost&Sullivan are also convinced of the growing interest in mobile TV. According to a study published in the fall of 2005, DVB-H demand will pick up speed in Europe in the next year and will take the leading position. After that, researchers even expect a DVB-H boom. "Mobile TV via DVB-H will go through the roof," says Pranab Mookken, analyst at Frost&Sullivan. "Revenues will rise to 6.8bn euros by 2011." The analyst adds that DVB-H is already utilising the well-established DVB-T (Digital Video Broadcasting-Terrestrial) network. This will result in a reduction in costs for the installation of cell phone TV infrastructures in large parts of Europe. Lower energy consumption and simple operability are additional arguments for a broadcasting standard.

Fast implementation "From a technical point of view, the wide-coverage installation of mobile TV on the basis of DVB-H can begin," says Karl-Heinz Beleke, DVB-H expert at T-Systems, Media&Broadcast. The company sets up and operates multimedia broadcasting platforms for TV and radio both within Germany and internationally. Beleke was the project leader in Qatar, where Media&Broadcast installed its first DVB-H project outside of Germany. Together with the hardware supplier Rohde & Schwarz, they set up the network within three months, despite the sometimes difficult organisational conditions and the hot and humid weather.

T-Systems, Media&Broadcast integrated the entire base station and the network on site and optimised the planned reception area coverage on the basis of data obtained with Media&Broadcast's proprietary coverage planning tool. Six transmitters and six repeaters provide the city of Doha and surrounding areas (population of around 600,000) with area-wide, in-house coverage including stadiums and shopping centers. The entire system has an additional reserve capacity of around 30% and can integrate additional decoding systems as an open platform. "This basically means that all DVB-H-compatible end-devices will be able to use the network," explains Beleke. Wireless devices by Samsung and Nokia are currently being used.

Mobile TV expands The commissioning party for the first DVB-H project on the Arabian Peninsula was the local telecommunications company Qtel. The company referred to the cell phone TV pilot as a "fascinating innovation for television and entertainment." "Visitors will be able to watch the track and field competitions live on Al Jazeera's sports channel and watch the cycling races on location at the same time," Qtel CEO Nasser Marafih said in November 2006 shortly before the start of the 14-day sporting event. Users were able to choose from 13 TV channels during the competition. The choices included seven channels from the Arab broadcaster Al Jazeera as well as CNN International and a cartoon channel. The network is set up to transmit additional video channels.

Continued on page 48

Roadmap to digital

Broadcasters in the Asia-Pacific region have been grappling with the myriad of implementation issues surrounding the introduction of digital broadcasting services. *The Channel* reports how the ABU helps plan the journey



The ABU's bi-annual digital TV and digital radio symposiums were launched two years ago to help broadcasters – especially those in developing countries – to plan their own 'roadmaps' to implementation. "DTV will provide opportunities for broadcasters to enhance delivery of services to their audiences, and as DTV take-up increases, it will be inevitable that all broadcasters will move onto new digital platforms," said David Astley, Secretary-General of the ABU. The 2nd ABU Digital TV Symposium, held in Kuala Lumpur in March 2007 focused specifically on the implementation phases of DTV services and the experiences of broadcasters already involved in implementation processes.

Sharing content At one of the symposium's plenary sessions, Aljazeera English said that by sharing more programmes, broadcasters could access content more cost-effectively and boost the value of their digital channels.



David Astley

Other speakers agreed that good content is key to the success of digital channels in the Asia-Pacific region, and that it must differ from the content available on existing analogue platforms.

According to Kordia, some broadcasters who wanted to introduce digital services were being held back because their regulators and governments had not begun to develop a transition plan. TV Globo said that digital TV services would succeed in the developing world only if governments subsidise broadcasters.

Digital content protection The Motion Picture Association of America (MPAA) expressed the view that broadcasters worldwide must have the option to restrict the redistribution of their programming in the digital era. According to the MPAA, there are various

technological solutions to protecting digital content which exist for the various digital broadcasting standards, but each region or country had to select the method of protection which best suited its needs. In addition, broadcasters had to work with content producers in order to protect their intellectual property from illegal redistribution.

During the session, the advantages of content protection systems such as High-bandwidth Digital Content Protection (HDCP), Conditional Access System (CAS), and Digital Transmission Content Protection (DTCP) were highlighted.

The European Broadcasting Union said FTA broadcasters should not be held responsible for the illegal duplication and distribution of content aired on their networks by their viewers. "We cannot restrict viewers from making home copies of programmes and movies aired by FTA broadcasters and keeping or circulating them. However, content protection should be widespread so that honest customers can be kept honest," said Phil Laven, Technical Director of the EBU.

HDTV In the HD Implementation session there were presentations from opposing camps on the format war for HDTV. The French HD Forum described the HDTV scene in Europe where the HD-ready receiver numbers are expected to rise above SDTV receivers this year. Sports is a major draw for HDTV and broadcasters capitalise on such events to further popularise the medium via high profile sports events.

Singapore has already begun HD trials and licensed IPTV services. There are also three operators for DVB-H services. MediaCorp Technologies said that the HD trials, funded by Singapore's Media Development Authority, began in June 2006 and ended in March 2007, with the aim of launching commercial HD services this year.

Mobile broadcasting Malaysia's Astro announced plans to trial DVB-H in Malaysia. It said that the Malaysian population has an increasing mobile lifestyle with a very high penetration of mobile phones, with the majority interested in subscribing to commercial services. Two UHF channels have been allocated to Astro for mobile services.

KBS provided an update of DMB in Korea. It said that significant investments had been made to date with little return. Studies have shown that user preferences for programmes are, in the following order: news, drama and entertainment for T-DMB and drama, movies, sports for S-DMB.

DTV roadmap The ABU is launching a DTV roadmap project where the ABU will conduct country specific surveys in which Chief Executives in TV organisations from ten countries will be invited to evaluate the DTV implementation situation in their respective countries. From the findings, the ABU will help the broadcasters to prepare a list of preparatory steps to be taken in each country and a roadmap for implementation of digital broadcasting. This project, which will provide two experts to assist the CEOs, is funded by the ITU.

Embracing DTV For ASEAN members, the broadcasting fraternity has made a significant leap of faith in recommending DVB-T as the common standard for digital terrestrial broadcasting across the region. The recommendation was put forward at the 9th Conference of the ASEAN Ministers Responsible for Information (AMRI) in Jakarta in May.

More than 50 delegates comprising policy makers, regulators and broadcasters, most of whom are ABU members, from all ten (10) ASEAN countries – Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Indonesia and Vietnam – and representatives from the ASEAN Secretariat attended the 4th ADB Meeting which was hosted by the Malaysian Communications and Multimedia Commission and convened at the fringes of the ABU's 2nd International Digital TV Symposium in end-March 2007.

The decision signifies a big step forward for ASEAN as countries can roll out their digital broadcasting planning and implementation chain in their respective countries and facilitate the ADB Meeting's goal of a common digital Set Top Box (STB) for the region - and consumers in this region are expected to be able to enjoy DTV at very affordable prices.



Phil Laven speaking

Among the other issues addressed by the 4th ADB Meeting was the importance for ASEAN countries to also plan and announce their respective analogue switch-off schedule, even if as a preliminary target.

This would send a positive signal and provide consumers, the digital broadcasting equipment and digital television display panel manufacturers, and the media content industry with sufficient notice to make preparations to adjust to the new era of digital broadcasting. This would also minimise uncertainty by the industry on investment decisions, including bearing the added costs of simulcasting in analogue and digital broadcasting transmission during the migration period.

The International Telecommunication Union (ITU) has proposed 2015 as the latest global analogue broadcasting switch-off date.

www.abu.org.my

During the Asian Games cell phone TV reception was limited to the capital of Doha and surrounding area, but Qtel intends to expand the network over the next few months and begin commercial operation sometime this year. This means an additional six transmitters and repeaters as well as additional components such as a network management system. "A commercial operator needs an interactive channel, for example, for pay-TV, pay-per-view and video-on-demand services," explains Beleke. He adds that Media&Broadcast has already conquered this technological hurdle, and has been able to incorporate the playout network for cell phone TV into the wireless network.

UAE catches up Mobile television has earned itself a fan base on the Arabian Peninsula through the Qatar project. "In other Arab countries, word has gotten around about our first DVB-H project outside of Germany," says Bertold Heil, who coordinates the international mobile TV activities for T-Systems, Media&Broadcast. "We're currently implementing another DVB-H project in the United Arab Emirates together with Rohde & Schwarz. In Dubai, we're planning to install a transmitter on the Dubai World Trade Center for Tecom, the investment company there. We're also planning to set up a playout center that will enable the transmission of up to twelve TV programmes." The mobile communications network operator "du" is expected to launch its commercial offer in early 2008. The service via the network will be free for users during the testing phase.

"During the Asian Games, visitors were crazy about mobile TV," Beleke says, referring to the Qatar project. "Since only selected individuals were able to enjoy the special cell phones, people kept asking us where they could buy them." This would seem to indicate that the fact that the introduction of mobile TV is coming along so slowly, at least in Europe, cannot be attributed to a lack of interest on the part of customers. According to a survey conducted by market researchers at TNS Infratest, users would be willing to pay up to 25 euros per month for a cell phone TV and Internet flat rate. The results of a study conducted by the institute in 2006 show that only 10% of those surveyed would not only use cell phone TV, but also be happy to pay for the service.

When it comes to content, both information and entertainment are in high demand, especially when users are looking for something to do while they are waiting. The market researchers have little doubt that cell phone TV will develop into a model for success. However, for this to happen companies need to develop a target-group-oriented product with simple rates, attractive content and an effective marketing strategy for the new technology.

www.t-systems.com



Unless you've been vacationing on a desert island or living in a cave, you probably heard Apple's second big announcement of 2007: the iPhone, the converged device that will let you search the web, make phone calls and listen to music. Amdocs' Chief Marketing Officer **Michael Matthews** says it displays Apple's trademark design innovation and is considered by many as a watershed in the mobile industry

Compelling customer experiences



Wait...second biggest announcement? This device is being hailed as a real game changer. Isn't it what everyone's been waiting for? If it's the second big news, then what was the first? Somewhere hidden in the hype around the iPhone was the fact that the company officially changed its name from Apple Computer to Apple.

Okay...So what? Why should I care about that? It's the most significant move since the introduction of the Macintosh itself. You see, Apple knows it's not a *computer* company anymore. It is now focused on something else, something much bigger and wide-reaching.

Right, like movies and music? Not exactly but Apple has seen rapid growth in its entertainment businesses across the board. Since the service launched, Apple has sold more than 2 billion songs via iTunes—this equates to about 40 songs sold a second in 2006. In 2005, Apple was the fifth largest music retailer, which when you consider the competition from the likes of EMI and Sony BMG, is no mean feat. In 2006, it was number four, surpassing Amazon. In America, only Target, Best Buy and Wal-Mart sell more music than Apple. And in the first four months of offering a video service, the company sold downloads of more than 50 million TV shows and 1.3 million movies after striking smart deals with big studios for shows like *Lost*.

So, should Apple now be considered a retailer, like Tesco? Or a content provider, like

Disney? Well, neither is the "something bigger" I'm referring to. Neither defines Apple currently nor explains how it can so rapidly dominate market sectors when facing established competitors that have been doing business for years.

So the question is what *does* define Apple? Answer - the customer experience. Apple doesn't sell iPods or music or movies or computers. It sells *experiences*. It understands that simplicity is the key to consumer adoption, and that a user's first, simple, experience drives reuse, repurchase and word-of-mouth. Apple understands that customers value the entire experience, not just the technology which facilitates a music download or movie purchase. It is the feeling they get from using the technology or listening to music that holds the true value.

Apple's focus is on providing an integrated, innovative and intentional customer experience at all points of service and in every customer engagement. It is embedded in everything the company does and it strives to provide a consistent level of excellence and style throughout its business. Customers with the odd glitch can make a private appointment at an Apple store with a real person who knows what they are talking about. They can download movies in seconds and watch them on their computer or TV using AppleTV, or simply take videos with them on their video iPod. They can even create and share their own content with friends and family, sharing the positive customer experience and creating entire communities of loyal Apple consumers. All via the sweet simplicity of the Apple user interface: the cherry (or apple?) on top of the Apple experience. Even Steve Jobs waxed poetic about it in his Macworld presentation, talking about the new iPhone's ease of use versus other smartphones currently on the market.

Apple has been able to change the game not only because it has great technology but because it provides a compelling experience. In fact, Apple seems to think first about the end-user experience and only *then* develop its products, from the outside in. This may seem strange to some organisations, but it works for Apple.

This is in stark contrast to the traditional, utility-minded communications industry. It is no secret that communications is not the first industry you think of when it comes to exemplary customer service. The customer experience, if thought of at all, was typically a by-product of internal processes. Add to that, the fact that the industry is rife with messages of mediocrity, like "few dropped calls." In Apple said its iPod "most of the time" consistently" than Microsoft Zune. The need to rethink business and really focusing on the customer experience will drive adoption as it has in other industries.

Suddenly the customer experience is an issue for service providers. Clearly, there is a transition happening in the industry. Business models are shifting, and new competitors are moving in on providers' territory. They should take a lesson from the Apple playbook and find ways to deliver a compelling experience to their users which will engender loyalty and avoid the constant switching often associated with telecoms. They must shake free from being mere providers of voice, video or data service providers to become *experience companies*.

www.amdocs.com



"Our partnership with FTV goes beyond a basic customer client working relationship," says David Rivel. "Over the years we have worked together, jointly identifying new ways of cooperating and expanding to mutually promote and grow each other's business, all with a view to offering the best service and experience for each of our customers. Fashion TV, one of our longest served customers, continues to expand its services to new audiences worldwide through our network, with each new channel, broadcast or service launched by us. As they continue to grow, we will meet their growing content management and distribution demands."

RRSat Global Communications Network, based out of Omer, Israel, is one of the fastest, up and coming providers of global content management and distribution services to the TV and radio broadcasting industries. The company went public on the US NASDAQ stock exchange in November last year. Through its proprietary "RRSat Global Network," composed of satellite and

largest 24-hour, 7-days a week, fashion network broadcasting globally. Over the past three years, the two companies have developed a strong, mutually beneficial partnership. This partnership, and advanced product offering, has driven growth at both Fashion TV and RRSat.

Over the years Fashion TV has steadily increased its channel offering to include a wide variety of channels including Fashion TV, F Man, F HD (High Definition) and F Diamond, a floating fashion cruise ship. With each channel addition, RRSat met FTV's new requirements by broadcasting the new channels to diverse geographic markets, in addition to expanding the global coverage of other, currently broadcast channels to new regions and viewers. RRSAT currently provides distribution and broadcasting services for all Fashion TV channels, with eight different signals, broadcast on a network of 24 satellites worldwide and hundreds of cable networks.

What a star

When Michel Adam, founder of Paris-based Fashion TV met **David Rivel**, RRSat Global Communications Network's CEO, it was his lucky day. David made it possible to increase FTV's advertising revenues through automatic advertisement insertion and playout to target audiences. Today, Michel has a demand for HD broadcasting...



Fashion TV's President and CEO Michel Adam says, "Over the years, the provision of additional channels, as well as the expansion of our geographic footprint through RRSat's broad distribution and broadcast network, have fueled growth, enabling us to expand our innovative channel to new audiences all over the world. From Paris to London to Milan, and every fashion capital in between, you can see it first on Fashion TV, the world's largest 24-hour fashion network. We offer you the best seat in the house at exclusive fashion shows, go behind the scenes with leading photographers, meet top models, and follow the lives of the young, the beautiful and the jet setter." RRSat is their key supplier of content management and distribution services.

terrestrial fibre optic transmission capacity and the public Internet, the company offers high-quality and flexible global distribution services for content providers. RRSat's comprehensive content management services include producing and playing out TV content as well as providing satellite newsgathering services.

RRSat leverages its unique geographic location in the Middle East to develop its "Star System". This system enables the company to concurrently provide broadcasting services to over 365 channels covering 150 countries, offering TV and radio channel distribution services to a wide audience on all continents. This system allows for significant customer cost savings by reaching any geographic market in just one satellite hop and provides dedicated versions of TV channels to each regional market.

It is this unique system that lies at the base of RRSat's very successful and long-term cooperation with Fashion TV, the world's

Fashion TV, similar to other commercial channels, seeks global channel management with localised content – a local touch to a global network. RRSat, through its Star System and playout capabilities, offers the ability to manage global distribution, modify content to local preferences and time zones and offer dedicated advertising without increasing distribution costs. The result: a significant increase in revenue and profit. RRSat now distributes six versions of Fashion TV and two versions of F-MAN. The long-term partnership with Fashion TV is one of the key factors behind RRSat's meteoric growth in recent years.

www.rrsat.com



David Rivel

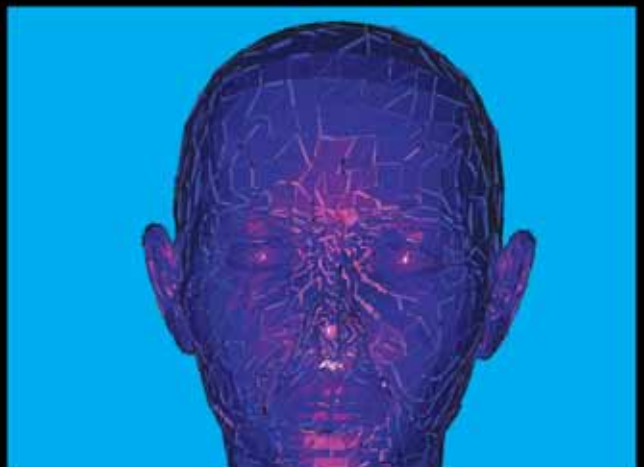
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