

P21 AIB MEDIA AWARDS 2008

Winners and finalists of AIB's annual celebration of success

P46 TAKING AWAY HEADACHES

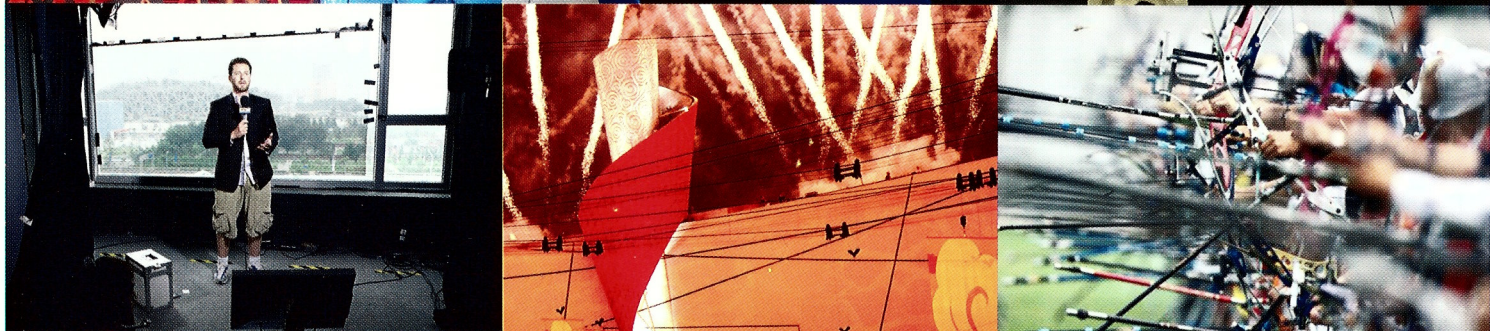
Wohler's passionate team is moving into new sectors

P52 SOUNDBITE AGE

Even in the age of YouTube, people need broadcasters

The Channel

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**Microsoft and
broadcasters**

Potential or threat?

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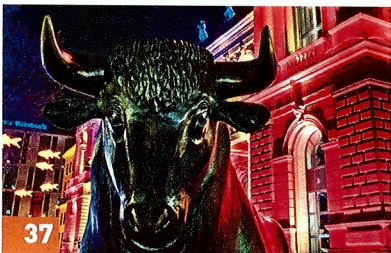
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The Channel is the magazine of the Association for International Broadcasting

PO Box 141
Cranbrook TN17 9AJ
T +44 (0) 20 7993 2557
E contactaib@aib.org.uk
W www.aib.org.uk

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Simon Spanswick
T +44 (0) 20 7993 2557
E simon.spanswick@aib.org.uk

EDITOR

Gunda Cannon
T +44 (0) 20 7993 2557
E gunda.cannon@aib.org.uk

ADVERTISING MANAGER

Oliver Kirkman
T +44 (0) 1727 739 184
E ollie@centuryonepublishing.ltd.uk

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T +44 (0) 1926 88 33 55

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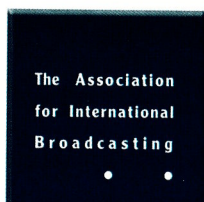
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“ The new browser generation can do five things at the same time ”



WELCOME

...phew, what a few months we've all had. It's not something one wants to repeat in a hurry. We're all leaner, but also more focused and more real. Perhaps some more good will come out of it.

At the height of the financial crisis in October a reader's letter published in Britain's Daily Telegraph said: "If the BBC sent the doom-laden John Humphrys and the panic-inducing Robert Peston on holiday for a month, the world financial crisis would end tomorrow." Was it crisis creation by the media with markets moving after stories broke in the news? We thought we'd ask a number of people. Well, we did ask a good few but many in the broadcasting field did not feel comfortable commenting on their fellow broadcasters' performance. Interesting. Understandable.

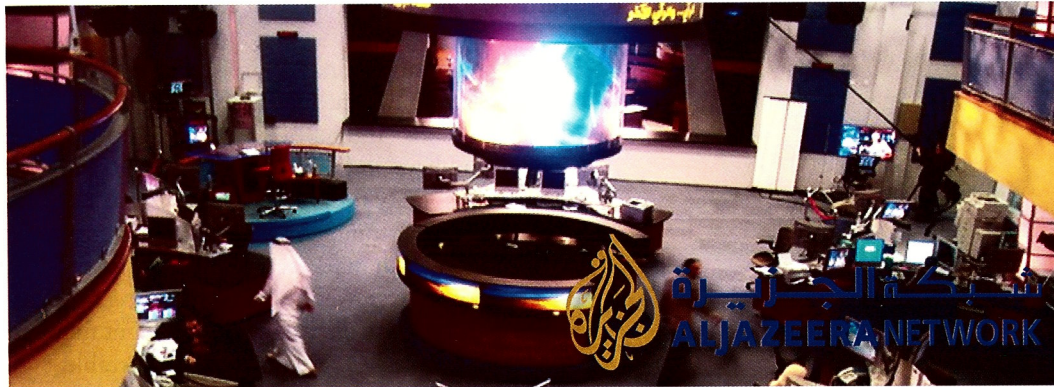
In the wake of financial meltdown, quite a few wondered too: "How on earth is Britain going to pay for the 2012 Olympics now?" A relaxed interview with Ma Guoli of BOB - the anguish of delivering on time and up to expectation is now well behind him. On contacting the London Organising Committee we were told that it is too early yet for an interview on broadcast lessons learned from the Beijing Games and on London's plans going forward.

Interesting talk with Microsoft. It seems there is no escape for the consumer – the advertisers and content providers will find him wherever he is once he is "directly addressable" – whether he's watching TV, on the phone, on the PC, on the Xbox. Watching and engaging in other things at the same time is a key characteristic of digital (wo)man – how does that work for those among us who are quite frankly bad at multi-tasking? Can I absorb a wildlife documentary and at the same time chat to my friends about whether they saw a similar documentary the other day and what they think of it, plus look for cheap travel offers for that destination - simultaneously? Apparently my generation can do 1.7 things at the same time but the new browser generation can do 5.4 - they have 2 or 3 messenger stations open, are listening to music, are doing their homework and still have capacity left. Wow. The quest is on to grab some of that capacity. The downside is: they are easily bored. And maybe we need to redefine what "at the same time/ simultaneously" means.

As ever, I hope you take some pointers, inspiration and information away from this edition of *The Channel*.

GUNDA CANNON EDITOR

Al Jazeera is leading Arab brand



Al Jazeera has been named the leading Arab brand for 2008 by Forbes Arabia who used the "Brand Goodwill" index to measure brand strength among 82 leading brands in the region from a range of categories that included media, communications, transport, fashion, food, cosmetics, real estate, and hotels. Forbes commissioned TNS Middle East and Africa to poll 1200 participants from Saudi Arabia, UAE, Egypt, Morocco, Qatar, Oman, Bahrain, Kuwait,

Lebanon, Jordan, Syria and Yemen. Al Jazeera's brand ranked first in the tough competition where five out of the first ten leading brands were media organisations.

Al Jazeera Network is opening a commercial sales office in Kuala Lumpur in early 2009 to focus on serving the Asia Pacific market. Al Jazeera's Dr. Al-Horr said "While we remain focused on bringing groundbreaking news to the world, we are venturing and expanding into new commercial areas. The Al

Jazeera family of channels which now includes Al Jazeera Satellite Channel, Al Jazeera English, six Sports Channels and Al Jazeera Documentary gives extensive market reach and advertising value for our partners."

Separately, Al Jazeera network has launched Sharek, a citizen journalism platform where users can upload videos recorded through webcams, videocams or mobile phones. Al Jazeera journalists screen the material before it is posted on the Sharek web site.

Multi-language

The team at Pharos have been busy since IBC where they launched Mediator 4, the next version of its unique content management and workflow platform, with integrated playout automation and new media distribution. Mediator and its Playtime automation option were shown with an all new multi-language user interface to help broadcasters deliver the next level of efficiency across their operations.

"Their multi-format digital assets are getting more complex and need to be better managed" says Russell Grute at Pharos. New advanced search tools, desktop browse and workflow in German, Russian and English were all used side by side during the show. The latest developments in IT are enabling Pharos to unify content management and file transfers whilst bringing all areas of broadcast operations and workflow to the desktop. Offering a single platform for content management and playout which integrates a wide range of third party storage systems and broadcast infrastructure is a winning formula: recent new Pharos customers include MTV in Amsterdam, HBO in Singapore and Ascent, GlobeCast, and BBC World Service in London who are all seeking to better manage complex media assets on their journeys to playout and publishing.



News channels soar in terror

The live coverage of the November terror attacks in Mumbai saw viewer numbers for 24 hour news channels jump 180%, according to data released by TAM. Aaj Tak had the largest gains among the Hindi news channels, followed by Zee News. Top in the English news genre was NDTV 24X7. As the terror unfolded, bloggers rapidly posted pictures and news, highlighting the role of user-generated content.

There is concern that the incessant live coverage of the attack may have played into the hands of the terrorists, with some Indian government officials now considering restricting live broadcasting during emergencies. The channels were

in fact banned for some time on the second day of the siege.

While the information and Broadcasting Ministry said that coverage of the Mumbai attack was carried out responsibly by the national media, it did issue an advisory to all private TV channels with guidelines on restraint.

The view of Anil Wanvari, CEO of Indiantelelevision.com, is shared by many: "A lot more homework could have been done by the news channels...they could have eased the panic and sense of hopelessness that they instilled in viewers...The news channels would do well to live up to their raison d'etre - to inform, analyse and investigate."



Russia expands broadcasting platform

According to Mass Communications Minister Igor Shchegolev, about 10% of Russians have digital TV at home. Analogue broadcasting will continue until the overwhelming majority of people have special digital TV decoders. Russia is currently issuing tenders for two new satellites, to increase the broadcasting platform to five satellites by 2010. The minister said the adoption of a digital TV programme is imminent. A government commission is looking into fundamental issues, such as how many and what type of multiplexes will be built, and whether they will be transparent and economically effective. Shchegolev said the new system should not undermine the existing market of cable and satellite broadcasting operators which is growing across the country. President Medvedev has

stressed the need to create conditions for developing new technologies, including mobile TV, Internet TV, HDTV, and expects the country to make the transition to digital in 5-7 years. He said it is essential to produce worthy content, and to 'preserve the integrity of the information space'. As reported by BBC Monitoring, Russia's broadcasters have to revise their financial calculations in the economic downturn, as wealthy proprietors focus on other parts of their business empires, and major corporate advertisers reduce their spending. There are reports of job cuts at the three leading networks, state-controlled Channel One and Rossiya and the Gazprom-owned NTV, and others. Some feel this may be an opportunity for a reshaping of business models and a more realistic appraisal of the market.

LED prompting

Autocue, provider of teleprompting and newsroom automation solutions, showcased a prototype LED backlit MSP20 at IBC 2008.

The new generation of LED backlit panels are said to make text easier to read even at lower levels of brightness, and to dramatically reduce the on-camera weight and power consumption.

Autocue CEO Frank Hyman says "We are ready to launch, but first we want to ensure these products can balance technical superiority with economic viability."

In the last 18 months Autocue has seen massive growth in the Middle East and Asia, and responded with a major development of QMaster/QBox IP-based prompting solutions for Arabic and Hindi, with more complex languages to follow.

IN BRIEF

GLOBAL ADS

According to Group M and ZenithOptimedia, TV will attract a record share of global ad spend from 2010 as advertisers look to brand-build as the recession gives way to recovery. TV viewing traditionally rises in downturns because it is escapist and becomes very cost effective. The growth of advertising spend in India and China will slow, and 89% of growth between 2008 and 2011 will be from developing countries.

RNW LAUNCHES ARABIC

Radio Netherlands Worldwide has launched 'Huna Amsterdam', a daily radio programme in Arabic aimed at the entire Middle East and the Maghreb. The programme is available via short wave, satellite, podcasts and audio streams on www.rnw.nl/hunaamsterdam and brings news, analysis and reports from the region and from the Netherlands and Europe, plus reports from migrant communities. RNW DG Jan Hoek says he hopes the broadcasts will encourage dialogue and help close the divide between the Arabic and Western worlds.

ZEE GOES WITH VOA

Indian TV station Zee News is teaming up with the VOA. Zee News has begun airing a five-minute segment named 'America Live' as part of its 8 a.m. news bulletin and will also carry relevant stories in the afternoon and prime time news bulletin. Zee News CEO Barun Das sees the alliance as a stepping stone to expand Zee's reach in the international market. VOA will be covering all the major events and news stories live from different parts of the US.

Joining Bloomberg

Former NBC President and Sony BMG Chairman Andrew Lack has joined Bloomberg as CEO of the company's multimedia group, responsible for expanding TV, interactive and radio operations. Lack works closely with Bloomberg News founder and Editor-in-Chief Matthew Winkler and Chief Content Officer Norman Pearlstine, and reports to Bloomberg President Dan Doctoroff. Lack said he decided "to return to news - my first love".

The multimedia group Lack is heading was created in July following a major reorganisation of Bloomberg L.P. Winkler continues to head the news group. It includes the wire service, which informs nearly 300,000 professional investors,

'Bloomberg Markets' magazine, and 'Bloomberg Press' books for investment professionals. Pearlstine serves as the liaison between the news and multimedia groups.

In November, David Rhodes, formerly VP of News at Fox News,

joined the Bloomberg Television network as head of the Americas region. His appointment caps a reorganisation designed to maximize the strengths of Bloomberg's global 24/7 TV network, with regional managers reporting directly to Lack.



IN BRIEF

CONTENT IS MONEY

YouTube has struck deals with professional content providers like CBS and YouTube's Jordan Hoffner says top priority for 2009 is getting that content in front of viewers. The vast library of user-generated content is the key and broadcasters should not be afraid of being alongside skate-boarding cats as that's what users want. YouTube is trying a number of approaches to monetise content: the site has introduced widescreen videos, fuelling speculation that YouTube will soon stream entire movies.

BETTER CONDITIONS

Good news for listeners to Radio Romania International's broadcasts on short wave: the National Radio Communications Company, Radiocom, has replaced old and increasingly obsolete transmitters. The new ones have a capacity of 300 kW (in Tiganesti, near Bucharest and Galbeni in north-eastern Romania) and 100 kW (in Saftica, near Bucharest). Since March 2008, many of RRI's programmes are also carried by UK transmission provider WRN.

ABU PAVES WAY

At the ABU's General Assembly in Bali in November, which brought together 500 delegates, Yoshinori Imai of NHK was elected as the new President. MNB-Mongolia and HUM TV-Pakistan were elected to the ABU Administrative Council. Indonesia's Information Minister stressed the importance of the convention for the advance of digitalisation in the area, which would also make early warning of disasters possible. Mongolia's national broadcaster, MNB, will host the 46th ABU General Assembly in Ulaanbaatar in 2009.

New York loves Russia Today

Recent Nielsen Media Research carried out among over 2,000 subscribers of major US cable TV operator, Time Warner Cable, has shown that the monthly audience of Russia Today among



those who have access or are aware of Russia Today's broadcasts exceeds the BBC America audience by 11%. The daily audience of Russia Today exceeds that of Deutsche Welle tenfold, within the same network. 18% of respondents were top managers, 14.7% were owners of companies or their own business, and 13% had an annual family income of \$200,000 or more. Russia Today was included in the Time Warner package in August 2007 while BBC America has been on the platform since 2000.

Evolution to Civolution

The business formerly known as Philips Content Identification has completed its spin-out from Philips Corporate Technologies and has a new name - Civolution. The spin-out included Teletrax, the world's first global broadcast intelligence company and former joint-venture of Philips and Medialink.

Civolution provides a unique and rich suite of solutions for identifying, managing and monetizing media content. It offers cutting edge watermarking and fingerprinting

technology solutions for forensic tracking of media assets in pre-release, digital cinema, payTV and online. Through its Teletrax and Mediahedge service portfolio Civolution provides broadcast and internet tracking services to help motion picture studios, news organizations, network and syndicated TV programmers, brand marketers, corporate communicators, and advertising and public relations agencies control their content and unlock new revenue streams.

Al Arabiya backs archive

In partnership with the International Federation of Television Archives, Al Arabiya News Channel hosted the 2008 International Audiovisual Archive Seminar in Dubai in November, to promote and encourage the use of digital archiving systems amongst regional news broadcasters in order to save more than a century's worth of audiovisual material.

"The Middle East film and audio archive is a goldmine of valuable history. Unfortunately, most of this material isn't indexed or stored appropriately," said Dorothy Donnan, Head of Libraries and Archiving at MBC Group.

The ultimate aim is to create an online mega-library which allows anyone to search and view the audiovisual archives of the world. Broadcasting since 2003, Al Arabiya News channel now has the largest video archive in the region with more than 30,000 hours of news footage from around the region and the world.



Post-Olympics China - not all good

China's French channel, CCTV-F, is joining France's CanalSat live broadcast platform to reach a potential audience of over 4m. On air since 2004, CCTV-F was first carried by IPTV services, reaching only a limited number of French households.

Talent shows are poised for a resurgence on Chinese TV after tough government restrictions and the Beijing Olympics kept them largely off air in 2008. Leading provincial broadcasters Hunan Satellite TV, Shanghai Media Group and Zhejiang

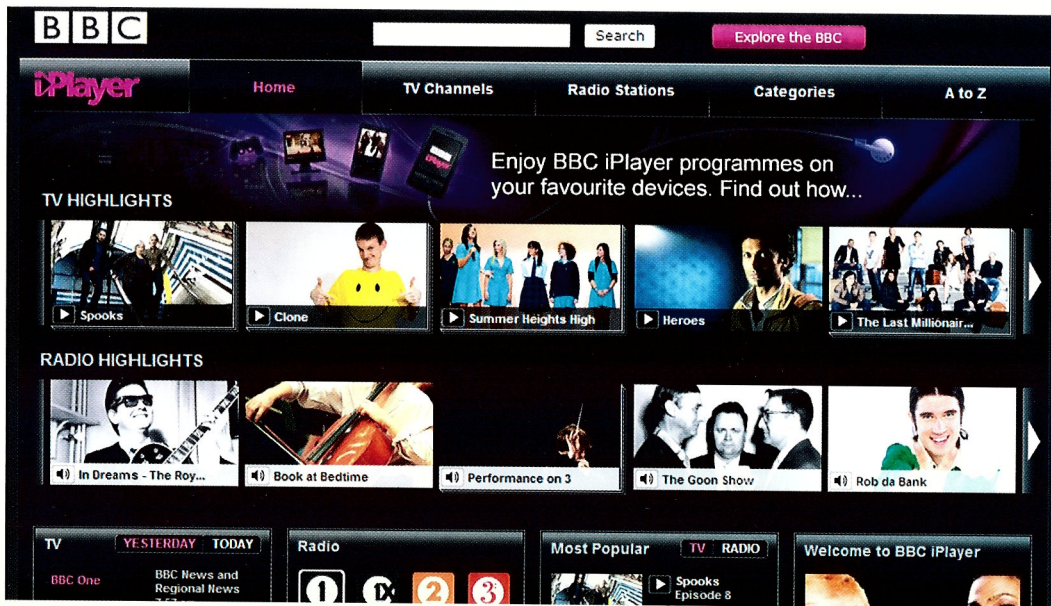
Satellite TV have all announced plans to launch new talent shows in 2009, in a bid to gain viewers and a bigger slice of the advertising pie. A spokesperson for Hunan Satellite TV said: "SARFT has banned voting via text message, fixed line telephone and online voting, but we will develop a new interactive

way for audiences to vote for the winner."

Meanwhile, although foreign journalists are now supposed to be able to travel and report freely in most of China, reports of an attack on a Belgian TV crew show that not all provincial authorities have taken this on board.



On demand – quo vadis?



It's been a successful first year for BBC iPlayer in the UK. In November, there were over 35m requests to view online and, on average, over 1m requests to view each day during the month.

Now Sky has launched a new online service, Sky Player TV, which enables consumers in the UK and Ireland to subscribe to packages of TV channels to watch live on their PC and Mac, without the need to subscribe to an existing TV platform. The Entertainment Pack initially offers access to Disney Channel, British Eurosport, National Geographic Channel, Sky News, and Sky Sports News. Customers can add on other packs, and more channels will launch in 2009.

In Japan, NHK started its on-demand internet pay-TV in

December. The service comprises recently broadcast programmes and archive material. Fees are per request or via a monthly package. NHK expects the service to move into profit in 2011 and recoup the initial investment by 2013. Most viewers are likely to watch on PCs because of the country's good broadband environment.

Sling Media, a subsidiary of EchoStar Corp., has launched online video entertainment destination Sling.com. Users can watch a selection of clips, TV shows, films, news and sports from over 90 content providers spanning 150 content brands - in high quality, for free, anytime they want.

In the UK, the main terrestrial broadcasters' plans for a profitable, shared online VOD

site have suffered a setback. Project Kangaroo, which will offer TV catch-up from the BBC (after the 7-day iPlayer window), Channel 4 and ITV, was due to launch late in 2008 but is delayed due to an ongoing investigation by the Competition Commission which is looking at the Project's implications for the TV market and sales of DVDs from TV series and shows in particular.

Critics ask whether in the light of rapidly evolving technology Project Kangaroo risks being out-of-date before it is launched.

The Competition Commission ruled Kangaroo's plans 'uncompetitive' and is now inviting comments on how to address the loss of competition and its adverse effects for viewers.

The lost Olympics?

The International Olympic Committee has rejected the European Broadcasting Union's bid for the European broadcast rights for the Olympic Games 2014-16. EBU President Fritz Pleitgen said that EBU Members were surprised by the high financial expectations of the IOC. The EBU's offer reflected

the maximum price PSBs could pay for the rights. The decision does not affect the Olympic Games in 2010 and 2012, for which the EBU has already acquired the rights. The IOC will now negotiate with individual European broadcasters separately. Critics feel that, with the EBU out of the frame,

millions of viewers in Europe will miss out on this major sporting event.

The successful bidders for the rights, likely to be subscription and pay-per-view companies, stand to make a profit out of selling extra subscriptions and advertising around Olympic events.

IN BRIEF

UNHAPPY MIGRATION

Relations between Australian pay-TV and the FTA networks are at a low ebb, with a dispute brewing over the government's planned switch-off of analogue TV services by 2013. The pay-TV industry is complaining of not being consulted on the planning and marketing of the switch to digital technology. It fears consumers will buy digital set-top boxes and other devices to watch the new commercial multi-channels without realising they can also receive digital services through pay-TV platforms.

NEWSBOX HD

US broadcasting group New Vision Television has acquired Quantel Newsbox HD server-based news production systems for four US affiliates. New Vision was looking beyond short-term needs to satisfy long-term requirements. Quantel is now offering the latest version of Imagic's Primatte keyer as an upgrade to all existing Quantel Pablo, eQ, iQ and QEffects users running V4 software, and on all new systems. In October, Quantel won a HPA Engineering Excellence Award for its Pablo Stereoscopic 3D system which provides the first true, real-time, end-to-end post process for stereoscopic 3D films.

ONLINERS JAILED

More online journalists are jailed around the world than journalists from any other medium, the Committee to Protect Journalists reports. As of December 1, 125 journalists were behind bars, two fewer than at the same point in 2007. 56 of those are online journalists - bloggers, Web-based reporters or online editors. For the 10th consecutive year, China was the leading jailer of journalists, followed by Cuba, Myanmar, Eritrea and Uzbekistan.

IN BRIEF

NEW DAWN

Intelsat, in a \$250m joint venture with a South African investor group led by Convergence Partners, is building a new satellite to serve the African continent. "Intelsat New Dawn" will deliver wireless backhaul, broadband and TV programming from early 2011. Africa is one of the fastest growing regions for fixed satellite services, fuelled by demand for critical infrastructure from communications providers and TV programmers. Wireless telecom operators, broadband service providers, corporate network service providers and DTH operators have all experienced growth.

AHEAD OF 2012

Voice of Nigeria will beat the 2012 deadline for the switch to digital with the launch of its ultra-modern digitally compliant transmitting station in 2009. The new station in Lugbe, a suburb of Abuja, has two fixed-curtain antennas and one self-rotating antenna – the first in Africa – capable of transmitting signals to any part of the world at the touch of a button. Thomson Broadcast of Switzerland is installing the antennas and transmitters. To ensure uninterrupted transmission, two high tension standby generators have been installed by ABB Nigeria.

NEW RTI CHAIR

Radio Taiwan International's new chairwoman, former legislator Alice Kao, said the nation's desire to participate in international relationships needs to be voiced through RTI. In cooperation with RTI, a radio interview with Taiwanese President Ma Ying-jeou, in which he called for patience and tolerance in cross-strait rapprochement, was broadcast through Ifeng.com, the internet portal of Hong Kong-based Phoenix TV, to millions of mainland netizens in December – a first.

True multimedia from France 24

Winner of the AIB Editors' Award 2008 for its "true multimedia approach and excellent presentation across all three of its language services", international news channel France 24 offers mobile phone users worldwide the three versions of France 24 (French, English, Arabic) live and on demand. A special version of France24.com has been designed for the iPhone, presenting international headlines as text, photos and videos. The channel also recently signed significant distribution agreements. France 24 now airs live on NYC TV,

reaching 7.3m households in metropolitan New York. In the UK, potential audience is 98% of households via Sky and Freesat. New IPTV agreements include Comstar in Ukraine, OTE in Greece, DU in Dubai and IPTV.bg in Bulgaria. Several video sharing partnerships have also been developed with media such as the daily Publico in Portugal, Le Temps in Switzerland, MSN in Belgium, Fairfax in Australia and Canoë in Canada. France 24 COO Jean-Yves Bonsergent says opinion leaders no longer follow the news but expect the news to come to them.

Chapman leaves BBC

Nigel Chapman, director of BBC World Service since 2004, is leaving the corporation after more than 30 years' service. Chapman has presided over a turbulent shift in emphasis at the BBC World Service, as many radio language services have closed to make way for new on-line and TV activities. He is to become CEO of the children's charity, Plan International, early in 2009. The BBC is advertising for a successor.

Separately the BBC has announced that it is making its journalist training guides on the use of language available to non-

BBC journalists and the public. The guides are based on knowledge and experience built up by more than 75 years of BBC World Service broadcasting – they focus on language; in particular its usage and style when reporting and writing for TV, radio and online. Developed into six languages (Arabic, Chinese, Farsi, French, Russian and Urdu) by BBC World Service and BBC College of Journalism, the guides are available on BBC websites bbc-arabic.com, bbc-chinese.com, bbc-persian.com, bbc-russian.com, bbc-farique.com and bbc-urdu.com.

Texting for AIDS

One million free text messages will be sent every day for the next year in South Africa, in a bid to raise HIV awareness and encourage testing for the disease.

Project Masiluleke was launched in December as an initiative of Pop!Tech, a community of thought leaders who meet for an annual conference in Maine.

The pilot phase of the project

saw calls to an AIDS national helpline shoot up by 200%. The system sends the messages using a so-called 'Please Call Me' (PCM) service, a free form of text messaging common across Africa. It allows someone without any phone credit to send a text to a friend asking them to call.

In South Africa, more than 80% of the population have a mobile phone.

The top list

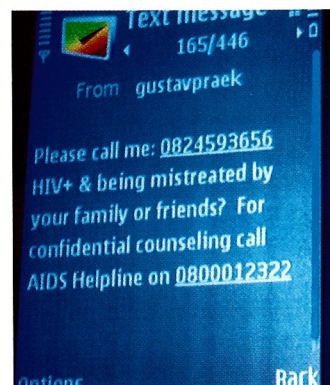
The World Teleport Association's ranking of top teleport operators provides a unique insight into the often unappreciated realities of the teleport sector.

The 2008 WTA 'Global Top Twenty' ranks companies based on revenues from all customized communications sources and includes operators of teleports, satellite fleets and fibre networks.

New to the list this year are EchoStar Satellite Services, Telecommunications Systems, RRsat Global Communications, Satlynx, and Measat.

In order from largest to smallest:

1. Level 3 (USA);
2. Intelsat (Bermuda);
3. SES Global (Luxembourg);
4. Eutelsat (France);
5. Stratos Global (USA);
6. GlobeCast (France);
7. EchoStar Satellite Services (USA);
8. Telesat (Canada);
9. Arqiva Satellite Media Solutions (UK);
10. CapRock Communications (USA);
11. Globecom Systems (USA);
12. Thaicom (Thailand);
13. Schlumberger (UK);
14. Hispasat (Spain);
15. Telecommunications Systems (USA);
16. AsiaSat (Hong Kong);
17. Spacenet (USA);
18. RRsat Global Communications (Israel);
19. Satlynx (Luxembourg);
20. Measat (Malaysia).



Thomson boost for IPTV performance

Thomson's fast channel change, personalised TV and targeted advertising solutions are examples of some of the latest ways for operators to enhance user experience, maximize revenue opportunities and optimize their network bandwidths. A key feature for TV consumers, Thomson's patented new fast zapping system allows the reduction of channel change time by up to 50%, even for HD video. Thomson's ViBE encoders allow simultaneous compression and encoding of two streams of the same channel - in full and low resolution. The low resolution version is quickly

decoded and displayed, before seamless transition to the full definition picture - without disrupting viewing. For improving user experience and raising revenue possibilities, Thomson SmartVision video service platform now offers features for personalised TV services and targeting advertising. Each viewer has their own home screen, with recommendations for live and on demand content based on their preferences and viewing history. SmartVision also optimises performance of advertising campaigns, by efficiently targeting them to user profiles or watched content.

Mobile sign language

Texting via your mobile works fine to instruct, remind or arrange a meeting time. If you want company or context, you use the phone the old-fashioned way and speak. It's no different for the deaf and hard-of-hearing who sign. That has spurred University of Washington researchers to work on developing software with processing power great enough to support real-time, two-way video on mobiles that allow signing communication. The main obstacle is low data-

transmission rates on US cellular networks and limited processing power on mobile devices.

In Japan and Sweden mobile users are already able to use sign language effectively because of higher bandwidth networks. As a way around the limits, researchers have employed video-compression technology that devotes more 'bits' on what is important in sign language - the face and hands - while allocating fewer bits on the rest of the image.

Talk without frontiers

Since March 2008, DW-TV ARABIA has successfully been co-producing talk shows with Arabic partners in North Africa.

"Youth without Frontiers" focuses on day-to-day issues of young people in Egypt and Germany - the show is the first of its kind on international TV and has a market share of 12.5% in Egypt. Ten young people meet every month in a studio in Berlin or Cairo to talk about their lives, a real "dialogue between cultures".

"Between North and South" follows a typical political talk show format and is co-produced with Algerian station EPTV - it was voted best talk show in 2008 on Algerian TV. "Culture Salon" is jointly produced with SNRT in



HD golden jubilee

Linx Productions covered the Aga Khan's Golden Jubilee Year as he travelled the world, visiting Ismaili Muslims - of whom he is the spiritual leader - and inspecting the many projects funded by the Aga Khan Development Network. The journey started in July 2007, when Linx coordinated a global feed to the 15m Ismailis worldwide, via seven satellites and three fibre links. Linx covered every step of the way in HD. Among other projects in late 2008, Linx arranged for the UN-led anti-human trafficking alliance www.ungift.org to feature at the annual gathering of senior TV news executives, NewsXchange.



IN BRIEF

HD MUSIC & KIDS

Viacom's MTV Networks International is launching its global 24-hour HD service dedicated to music and children, MTVNHD, in 10 new countries including the UK (through Sky), Israel (HOT), and across Latin America in Argentina, Chile, Colombia, Venezuela, Peru, Ecuador, Caribbean Islands and Uruguay (DirecTV Panamericana). SES ASTRA has signed a long term contract for the broadcast of MTVNHD in France.

CLIPJOCKEY BY S4M

Solutions for Media's new studio production tool 'ClipJOCKEY' focuses on existing core workflows in control rooms as well as (post-) production houses, covers the needs of TV broadcasters and production companies for ingest and playout and supports migration into a file-based environment. (Analogue) video content is easy to digitise and content can be played out from the video server to distribute the material on tape or to manage a TV broadcaster's whole tapeless playout process. ClipJOCKEY can also be used for "live on tape" productions - without tapes!

WHAT DRIVES HDTV SALES

A survey from Kelton Research found American football to be the most popular sport to influence HDTV purchases among sports fans in America. More than 54% of all football fans would most likely purchase a new HDTV for the start of the football season if their budget allowed. HDTVs are now the leading TV product on the market in terms of global shipments, outstripping SD sets. Based on iSuppli Corp.'s data, HDTV shipments could reach 241m units annually by 2012 (97m in 2007).

CV

NAME

Ma Guoli

DATE OF BIRTH

April 1953

CAREER

Ma Guoli was born in Beijing, China. He studied TV production at Beijing Broadcasting University, graduating in 1982. In the same year he joined China Central TV's Sports department. In 1988 he was appointed Head of CCTV Sports, rising to Deputy Director in 1989 and Director in 1993. In 1995 he founded CCTV Sports Channel (CCTV-5). From 1993-2005 President of the China Sport Broadcaster Association and Chairman of the China Sports Broadcasting Academy. When the CCTV Sports Channel set up by Ma celebrated its 10th anniversary in 2005, he made a bold move and took the position as COO of Beijing Olympic Broadcasting Co., Ltd. (BOB). Ma is also a member of the TV commission of IAAF (International Association of Athletics Federations). From January 2009 Ma Guoli is the new CEO and Managing Director of Infront China.

MEDIA USE

Does not have time to read newspapers in the morning but reads them in the evening back home. On the way to his office listens to sports radio, and before he leaves the office checks websites about news. Watches mostly sports channels

FAVOURITES

Loves to play golf and some tennis – sadly in 2008 did not have much time to practise! His real hobby is to watch sport on TV



A MAN FOR ALL GAMES

In his post of Chief Operating Officer of Beijing Olympic Broadcasting (BOB), **Ma Guoli** has become a household name the world over. He is one of the most experienced sports broadcasters in China and a veteran of Olympic reporting who has witnessed China's Olympics broadcasts develop from very little to the recent memorable spectacle in Beijing. [An interesting aside: the Olympic Games were first mentioned in a Chinese magazine in 1908. In 1984 China re-joined the Olympic family – the Los Angeles Games were the first to have athletes from Taiwan and from the PRC participating in the Olympics at the same time and China won its first gold medal.] Ma Guoli, in 2000 named as one of the top 50 "Most Influential People in Sport" in a survey by the UK's Guardian newspaper, was responsible for China's television broadcast of the 1990 and 1994 Asian Games and has worked on six Summer Games and four Winter Games in total before becoming the Chief Operating Officer of Beijing Olympic Broadcasting Co., Ltd.

BOB is the Sino-foreign joint venture funded by BOCOG and the Olympic Broadcasting Services (OBS), to perform the role of Olympic Broadcasting Organisation (OBO) for Beijing 2008 Olympic and Paralympic Games. Officially established in September 2004, it provided international TV and radio signals for some 200 broadcasters across the world; designed, constructed and operated the International Broadcast Centre (IBC) and the necessary broadcast facilities in other venues, and provided related services for the rights-holding broadcasters during the Beijing Games. The highest building in the Olympic Village was the Ling-Long Tower, the multi-functional broadcasting tower that served as the hub for international broadcasting. It was an exquisite structure: 132 meters high, made up of 7 pyramids, with glass covering a large part of its surface. Figures for the worldwide audience for the Beijing Games were around 40 billion.

The Beijing Games have a special place in Olympic history because it was really the first major sporting event that was seen in HD by viewers all over the world. How do you as COO of BOB feel the move to HD went?

Compared with my previous jobs in sport television where the spectators and the viewers are the most important people, at BOB my main responsibility were the broadcasters covering the Games. And of course, it was High Definition that was most significant. We talked for four years about HD coverage of the Beijing Games, but it was only at the start of the Games, during the opening ceremony, that people realised what HD really meant. We made sure that giant 100" HD screens were installed in the lobby of the IBC [International Broadcasting Centre] so that everyone passing through could see HD for real.

Three years ago, we still worried about HD and the special technology – whether the equipment could cope with the demands of Olympic broadcasters, such as the super slow-mo, such as the mini camera, such as the tracker camera. But at the end, I can tell you every piece of special equipment for HDTV was so perfect. Maybe you remember the super-super slow-mo from the Olympic pools. After the athletes got their medals we showed the super-super slow-mo and you saw a monster come slowly from the water. Also in archery, we saw the super slow-mo, the move of the arrow was really fantastic.

From my point of view the move to HD went very well, that was also what I heard from every rights holder. When they left Beijing they came to my office and thanked us for the coverage. The big regret and disappointment for me was that we were producing in High Definition but there are currently not many people who can receive the HDTV signal.

Did all the equipment that BOB

“People only realised during the opening ceremony what HD really meant”

installed live up to expectations and to the manufacturers' claims?

I think every manufacturer knew that the standard of production for the Olympics should be 100% in HD. So they sped up their research and production, also for the mobile equipment. Altogether there were 59 OB vans, around 40 came from Europe and 16 from Chinese TV stations. Two of these they came from CCTV and one from Beijing TV and also Shanghai and other regional TV stations. So overall one third of the HD OB vans came from China.

How is HD progressing in China – clearly there has been a lot of investment by broadcasters in the country?

I think it will spread very quickly. When I came back from IBC I had ten HD panels in my office already. One third of TV sets on the Chinese market are HD already. Altogether four HD channels are on air in China via digital platforms. According to SARFT [State Administration of Radio, Film and TV], the whole system of TV production and TV broadcasting in China will change to 100% digital around 2012. So after digitalisation it should be much easier to get HD signals to the viewers. In the area of sports, the organisers of sporting events in China already provide HD output. I remember the transition from black and white to 100% colour TV took more than 10 years in China but for SD to HD I think the transition will be much shorter, another five to eight years.

Going back to the Olympics, what was the biggest challenge that you had to overcome?

Personally, I did not worry about anything – not about the production, the technical side or the quality. We had very good people who had Olympic experience, we had a very good production team and technological equipment. I think maybe what made my job quite hard ▶

was that there are different operating practices between China and the rest of the world but the BOB is a totally international operation so I needed to guarantee the entire Olympic operation can move smoothly and on time. I think that was what I spent most time on. For example, we had more than 40 OB vans together with another 20 big trucks, they were transported from Europe to China. That was the first time in the history of China that so much broadcasting equipment arrived together – we needed to cooperate with the customs, police, security and quality control and also the highway control.

How many people were involved in BOB?

We had 6,200 staff. For the broadcasters we had 12,000 accreditations for the rights holders. That's why BOB needed to start three years ago, there was a lot of planning involved to guarantee that everybody could get food, accommodation, transport and so on.

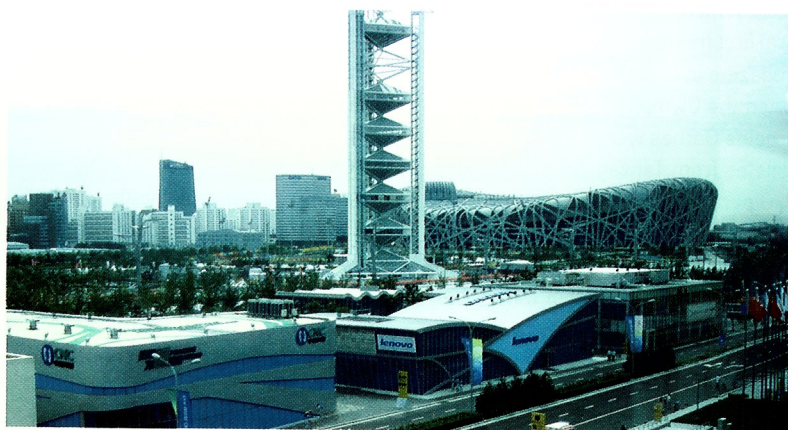
Looking forward, what advice would you give the organisers of the 2012 Games?

I think in London the situation should be much easier. After Beijing, OBS – Olympic Broadcasting Services which was created by the IOC – will take care of the whole of the broadcasting issue in London. So the heart of broadcasting is Olympic Broadcaster Services London (OBSL). You must realise that for each city's organisation this job is a "once in a lifetime" job so everyone is very passionate to do their best but they don't have the experience of how to organise the Games. But as far as TV broadcasting is concerned, the IOC and OBS have the experience, they know everything about Olympic broadcasting. So my advice is: just trust them and let them do their job.

What's your most memorable moment from this year's Olympics?

Maybe for me the most incredible memory was the first day that I saw the helicopter fly over the Olympic complex! It was the first time that a civilian helicopter was flying over

Ma Guoli in the Bird's Nest stadium



It took 18 months to get permission for a civilian helicopter to fly over Beijing

Beijing. It took me 18 months to get to that point, to get the permission. It took a lot of time, a lot of energy, but finally we got it.

What will you do now – will you go back to CCTV Sports?

No. At present I am still the chief operating officer of BOB and I am waiting for the company to close. I just won the bid as the host broadcaster for the Guandu Asian Games 2010, most of the BOB local

employees will relocate from Beijing to Guandu. It is a kind of legacy of BOB. From January on I will be the CEO of Infront China, the Chinese branch of the Swiss-based sports marketing firm which has acquired the exclusive rights to represent China's two most popular sports, soccer and basketball. I was asked by Infront Sports & Media to be their Managing Director from 2009 on.

Ma Guoli, thank you and good luck. ■

AIB MEMBERS

Gold

demonstrating strategic support of international broadcasting and the AIB



Bloomberg
TELEVISION

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THOMSON
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Corporate

demonstrating an active role in international broadcasting

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

WIN AN AWARD: INSIDER TIPS FOR 2009 "AIBs"

It's over for another year – but what a year 2008 was for the AIB Media Excellence Awards! A massive three-times increase in the number of entries resulted in more judges, more quality, more subjects and more difficult decisions. As you'll see from the supplement in this edition of 'The Channel', the Awards were presented in London on 12 November at our largest-ever gala dinner – and the feedback we've had has been incredibly positive.

What sets the AIBs apart from other awards is that we look at cross-border, cross-media productions as well as programmes for domestic markets and that we have a truly international and completely independent jury.

We keep the results a secret until the night of the awards and our celebration is not a heavily choreographed pageant, nor is it a TV show. It's all about the winners and celebration within sectors of the industry that are not often recognised for their achievements. The surprise is genuine!

We'll be opening the 2009 AIB Media Excellence Awards at the end of March, and the Awards dinner will take place on 11 November 2009.

Here are some insider tips from our judges for 2009:

- Have you entered your best work? The AIB's global network of monitors and specialists has spotted some great productions that seem not to have reached marketing departments.
- Will your entry look great on the awards night? Making a short professional video is the best way to explain a multimedia project – it's difficult to project a poster or multi-page brochure on a big screen.
- Does the accompanying material explain what's on the tape? Judges told us that notes from entrants didn't explain how the production was different or why it should be considered for that award category.
- Is your entry complete? We had entries incorrectly labelled and found more than 10 blank Digibeta tapes in submissions!
- Don't leave reserving your places at the Awards dinner too late. We were oversubscribed in 2008 and had to turn away people who booked at the last minute.

You can find our complete "insider tips" guide at www.aib.org.uk.

So get ready to enter your very best work in 2009, and mark Wednesday 11 November in your diary - we look forward to seeing you.

The Association
for International
Broadcasting

KNOWLEDGE, SAVINGS, RELATIONSHIPS

The AIB, the industry association for international TV, radio and online, knows that for its members around the world – and the wider AIB knowledge network – relevant information is key to success.

That's why the AIB's regular **market intelligence briefings** are so highly valued as they highlight opportunities and warn of threats. The briefings are delivered electronically and include information not available from other sources. The AIB's new **online video and audio archive** offers access to exclusive interviews with media leaders and a range of other content. It's impossible to be in all places at all times - this is a clever way to catch up.

Besides intelligence, it's building relationships that's important, not only within the media industry, but in sectors alongside. That's why the AIB is at events like the **Mobile World Congress** to start conversations and make sure that AIB members know what's happening in mobile, and can harness new technologies and devices.

In these tough financial times, AIB membership provides **significant cost-savings** at events and conferences around the world. Through a number of strategic alliances, we're able to pass on a range of exclusive discounts so you can stretch budgets to the max.

To find out how you can access these AIB services, call us on +44 (0) 20 7993 2557.

CHALLENGE BEIJING

During the 2008 Beijing Summer Olympic Games, **GlobeCast** provided an array of services to rights-holders and non-rights-holders for worldwide distribution. **David Justin**, CEO GlobeCast Asia, and **Graham Smith**, Sales Director, Global Contribution Services look back on their Beijing experience and ahead to the World Cup 2010 in South Africa, the Commonwealth Games 2010 in Delhi, and then London 2012



The main challenge in Beijing was that it was in China. It was the first time that China saw so many international media flocking to Beijing so from their side there was a bit of a learning curve how to handle these journalists and service providers all arriving at the same time. That probably was the most complicated thing. I think we managed to help our rights holders and non-rights holders in this quite well thanks to our presence in Beijing – our office there has been up and running for several years and we have long-standing contacts with the main telcos, and the BOB. On the technical side, it was the first Olympics where the production was done completely in High Def.

How many broadcasters were originating or transmitting in HD?

In terms of production quite a few, in terms of transmission many less. I would say the broadcasters who had unilaterals, maybe one third of them sent over their content in HD, whereas the live position ad hoc bookings and transmissions were fully in SD.

How much of a change is that from Athens?

[Graham Smith] HD hadn't really exploded in Athens, people were dipping their toe in the water. In advance of Athens everyone had talked about it, had expected it to be a watershed, yet HD has taken a lot longer to take off. Really a big change was that you did MPEG-4 for ATV (Hong Kong). I think that is almost bigger than HD in a way, the change from MPEG-2 to MPEG-4. I think that the GlobeCast Asian office was the first to do transmissions for a major rights-holding broadcaster in MPEG-4 out of a major event, which went extremely well.

[Justin] All our HD transmissions on satellite were done using MPEG-4 and in terms of modulation, DVB S2. [Smith] We always build our systems, particularly at major events, with a considerable degree of redundancy and diversity in path as well. A lot of broadcasters are coming out of these major events actually via fibre and satellite so that there is not a single point of failure.

Take us through what you offer for non-rights holders at an event like the Olympics...

[Justin] Non-rights holders didn't

“
Beijing confirmed that if you don't have long-standing relationships you have great difficulties in getting things done in China”

have access to images coming from inside the Bird's Nest. What we did in Beijing, we built a complete broadcast base for non-rights holders which was just outside the red line but probably had the best view of the Bird's Nest and the Water Cube. And there in this broadcast base you find pretty much the same type of services that you find in the IBC – work space, studios, live shots - and we go as far as providing logistics like hotel rooms or translators or cars.

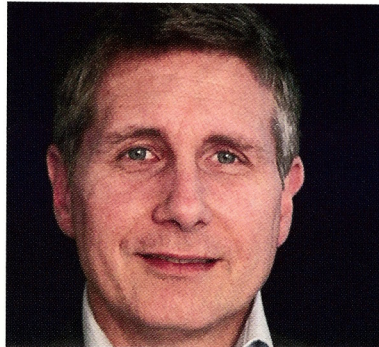
So essentially a N-RH can do talking head reports?

[Smith] It's very strictly limited. Traditionally what we've tended to offer is a position with an iconic view – for example, in the case of the Olympics, of the Olympic flame. In Turin we rented an apartment and offered the view from the balcony as a viewpoint on the Olympic flame in Turin.

[Justin] N-RH concentrate on slightly different things. The Olympics is about sports but it is also about discovering a country, about countries coming together, so there is quite a bit to say even if you cannot show live the sports events themselves.

What about the issue of piracy?

[Smith] We address the piracy issue



by using a conditional access encryption system whereby we individually address a decoder and therefore only that decoder is authorised to take a particular signal. We do that for all our distribution for any major sports material.

[Justin] The piracy does not take place in the stages where GlobeCast is involved.

How did you find working with the BOB?

[Justin] We worked together quite a bit on the rights-holders side to understand what will be available, to make sure we had everything we needed to answer the needs of our clients. I think we tried to have a common understanding of what was allowed and not allowed and how you should apply to get things done.

[Smith] There was a lot of dialogue on the N-RH side as well because in China the control was a lot tighter than Athens in terms of where you could film and where you could feed from. Any permits that we had to get with 7 BMC were done in conjunction with BOB in order not to break the rules.

What are the key things you have taken away from Beijing?

[Justin] I think it is our biggest Olympics ever in terms of number of clients and breadth of what we offered. The difficult part was working in China but we do about 300 sports events in Asia per year, so we already had quite a bit of experience. I think the Beijing games just confirmed that if you don't have long-standing relationships at different levels and in different organisations you have great difficulties in getting things done in China. Luckily we had these relationships with major telcos, with people in the different administrations, which helped a lot.

Let's look forward to the World Cup 2010 in South Africa and then the Commonwealth Games 2010 in Delhi, and then to London 2012...

[Smith] I think HD will be the norm by 2010, MPEG-4 possibly will be more common as well, and more and more fibre.

[Justin] If you have good quality fibre available, as you will have in London for example, the vast majority of the transmissions will be fibre-based, maybe with one or two satellite backups here and there.

I am still a bit sceptical about the South African fibres so broadcasters will probably take a

▲ Clockwise from left: a GlobeCast non-rights holder studio with a view of the Bird's Nest; GlobeCast master control; David Justin; Graham Smith

much more cautious approach on that one.

[Smith] South Africa is a much bigger challenge all round as the telcos haven't got the experience of the major European telcos. - London will be relatively straightforward because the interconnectivity is there, you've got a major POP in London, it's a tried and tested route. - For the Commonwealth Games we are getting requests in HD.

These Games are a little bit of a mess - a lot of things are still undecided and it's very difficult to plot a road map.

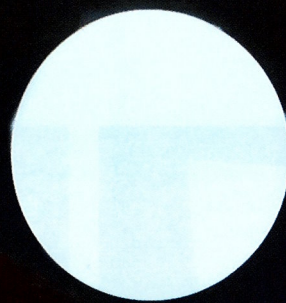
[Justin] In Asia we are definitely very used to that. A few months ago we did the Cricket 20-20 from India where we were awarded the contract one week before the start of the event, and we managed to cover the 59 games in eight different cities over about a month without any technical problem, even though they changed the venue for the final at the very last minute.

Well, you have to think in the Asian way of doing things, and GlobeCast definitely has this experience. There are probably few people who can say that.

David Justin and Graham Smith, thank you. ■

www.globecast.com

euronews



pure

PREPARED TO DELIVER

In June 2008 **Euronews** rebranded with the focus on 'pure news'. MD **Michael Peters** says many people disliked the TV news channel's revamp initially – it is only now that they understand the message behind it. Has the rebranding made it easier to market the channel in a very competitive environment?

I think so. Everything on the channel, on the web, is in accordance with the message, we are consistent everywhere. We are not saying that we are the best, we are saying that we are different. On Euronews we just give you the news and we are not commenting it, and that's it.

Talk us through your audience figures.

It is an amazing and interesting story – to have such good audience results and nobody knows about it. Through an external company called Peaktime we are measuring real audiences based on all the national audience studies. This model gives

us more than 6m people watching Euronews every day, as compared to less than 2m for CNN and less than 1m for BBC World.

Is this because of the local terrestrial relays by the shareholders of Euronews?

It's part of the explanation. But the other part is of course the multi-lingualism - we are very strong in markets where people don't speak much English. A lot of our competitors choose to put all their money in reporters, permanent correspondents around the world, big studios, etc – we are making the strategic choice to put the very small amount of money that we have in multi-lingualism. Ours is a modest

model where we play the same video all the time and it is just a question of audio. At Euronews we have a news team, an economics team, a sport team, cultural team etc – each team has one journalist for each of the 8 languages.

So when we talk for example about German elections, the story is the same for all the different languages and everyone in the team benefits from the expertise of the German member. This cross-expertise within the teams give us a competitive advantage. We also work with eight different press agencies.

You have moved further East – how difficult has it been to establish Euronews in Russia?

We want to be more central in Europe. It has been relatively easy because in Russia we are working with RTR, the national public broadcaster of Russia, through a local partner called EVK – it is probably our first local joint venture. EVK is the representative of Euronews in Russia, they have the exclusive distribution rights for the channel in Russia and for selling local advertising. One Moscovite out of two watches Euronews at least once a week, and one Russian out of three watches Euronews at least once a week. That's a pretty impressive statistic.

Are you going to add other languages?

We are in discussions with a lot of partners. But business is business, and maybe the next language will not be in this region. To launch a language, we need a partner.

One of your partners is the European Commission which has funded the launch of Arabic. How easy was it to work with the EC over this?

It's very easy and interesting to work with the Commission. They have a very intelligent strategy of communication for Europe. They want us to be independent, so Euronews has an Editorial Charter

that guarantees our full editorial independence.

Take us through the Arabic launch and what happened in the last six months...

Things are going well. It's a totally new story for us because for the first time a language is not linked to a particular nationality but it is linked with a number of countries with different cultures. On the external side the returns are very good – many in the Arabic audience have discovered a channel which is totally different from what they had until now. The Arabic audience is very sensitive as to whether the news is balanced. This is where our impact is quite impressive – Euronews is neutral, and they are not used to hearing news without a particular perspective. Well, we launched in July, and it's only the beginning. We have plans to establish a permanent correspondent in the Middle East – at the moment we only have one permanent correspondent in Brussels.

Are you looking to broaden your editorial agenda – instead of it being mostly news about Europe – with news from the Middle East?

This is the question that everybody is asking us. Of course if we have a correspondent there we will focus more on stories happening in this part of the world. But we have only one feed everywhere in the world, and we don't want to make local stories for local people. We don't think that a channel like Euronews can speak better on Arabic issues to the Arabic people than the other broadcasters. We are very honest on that. So the idea is really to put much more Arabic content within our worldwide feed as we think the Arabic people have a lot to learn about Europe, and probably Europe has a lot to learn about Arabic countries. And this is why the European Commission retained us.

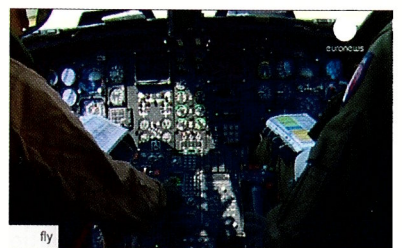
Where do you see Euronews in five years' time?

In five years' time it will not be the

“
Euronews
is the
biggest
video-on-
demand
platform
in the
world”

same world. I think Euronews will be multiple platforms of content. We need to make a big revolution internally first – changes in the newsroom, journalists working for several media, etc. Two things are important. In five years' time the question will not be how we broadcast – what will matter is what you watch when. Sitting on your sofa, you'll want to watch long stories like movies or in-depth reports, but if you are watching on your computer at work or on your mobile on the move, you'll watch very short stories, maybe just texts. We need to be prepared to deliver to the consumer different things for different places and different times. If you look at Euronews today, Euronews is the biggest video-on-demand platform in the world. Euronews today is a succession of VODs. Let's take an example: take the first news item of our news bulletin, duration 1.5 minutes – put it on the web, mobile, etc – it's a perfect VOD. You'll tell me that CNN, BBC, CNBC can do the same – but it's not the same because in Euronews the introduction of the subject is within the video and on the other channels the introduction is made by the presenter. We don't have presenters. Going even further, the maximum duration for our magazine format is 8 minutes - take whatever magazine you like – for example we have one about space produced in partnership with the European Space Agency -, in any of our 8 languages, put it on a multi-platform and it is a VOD in itself. It's very easy and it works. I always say that the people who created the Euronews model back in 1993 never imagined that they were creating a multi-media channel.

Michael Peters, thank you. ■



PROFILE



NAME:

Lior Rival

JOB TITLE: CEO & VP Sales and Marketing

COMPANY: RRSat Global Communications Network

MY CAREER

I graduated from the Open University of Tel-Aviv with a BA in Management and Communications. I had been involved with Ham Radio since I was 12 years old. I first started to work for RRSat in 1996 as an SNG Operator. At that time, in 1996, RRSat was a small start-up company with only one teleport and four SNG trucks. Later on I became Head of the Sales Department for both local and international markets while still managing the SNG department. From April 1998 I was Marketing Manager, and was then appointed Vice President Sales & Marketing in January 2003.

ABOUT RRSAT

RRsat Global Communications Network is a global satellite and fibre distribution service provider

of Uplink, Downlink, Turnaround services and end-to-end transmission for TV, radio and data channels, and Playout services including a new HD Playout centre. Through its proprietary "RRsat Global Network," composed of satellite and terrestrial fibre optic transmission capacity and the public Internet, RRSat is able to offer 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 (SNG).

GROWTH IN 2008

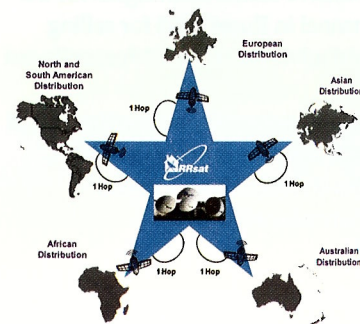
I am pleased to say that 2008 has been a great year for RRSat. We were able to announce two major acquisitions: Hawley Teleport located in Pike County Pennsylvania, USA, acquired from Loral Skynet Satellite Corporation, and the satellite business of Bezeq Sat in Israel, Emeq Ha'ela Teleport. Substantial resources have been invested in Hawley Teleport during its 33 years of operation – the facility is spread over approximately 200 acres, with a two-storey communications building, communications equipment and antennas.

With this additional facility, RRSat intends to build a strong local presence in the US and Asia as well. Emeq Ha'ela Teleport has operated as one of the premier communications facilities in Israel for more than 30 years and is currently one of the best connected fibre network hubs in the country. The facility was designed to support video, radio and data content, and will allow us to increase the capacity and redundancy of RRSat's infrastructure significantly. In addition RRSat has launched a new HD Playout Centre which is capable of providing end-to-end HD services, including high

resolution graphics and Dolby Digital 5.1 surround sound. And we are not stopping there – RRSat is continuously expanding its range of innovative, value added services and adapting service offerings to new technologies.

OPTIMISED NETWORK

RRsat's "Star System" gives our company a unique advantage. The location of RRSat's principal teleport and the star configuration of RRSat's global network offer considerable technological and financial benefits to our customers. This system allows for significant cost savings for the customer by reaching any geographic market in just one satellite hop and provides dedicated versions of TV channels to each regional market. It allows us to provide global satellite distribution services via the most advanced digital MCPC platforms to more than 425 TV and radio channels, covering more than 150 countries on a permanent 24/7 basis. ■



The RRSat "STAR" System

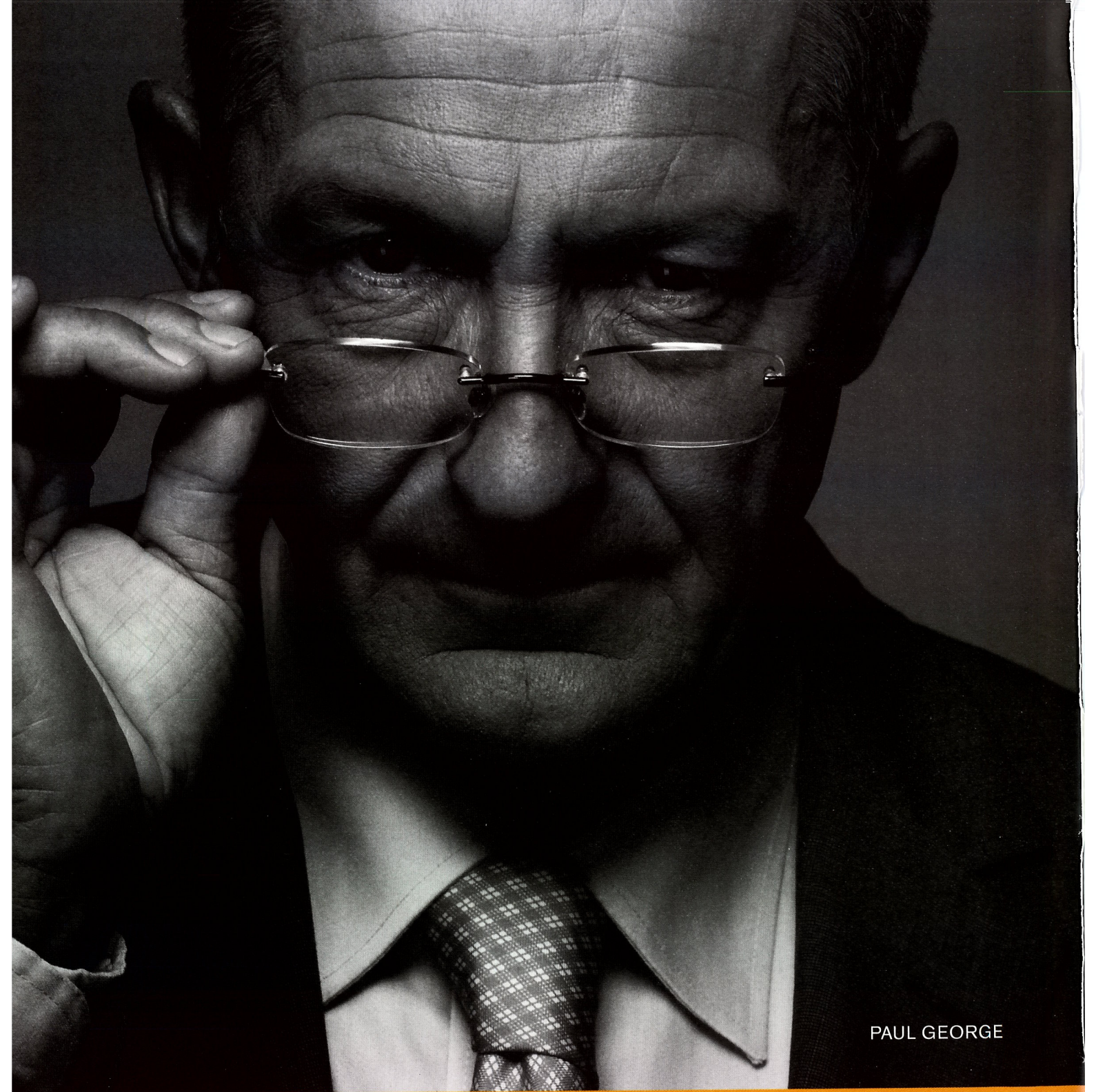
In the World Teleport Association's 2008 'Top Teleport Operators' league,

RRsat is in the 'Global Top 20' list (at 18), in the 'Independent Top 20' list (9) of companies with a proven track record and commitment to innovation and providing added-value services, and the 'Fast 20' list (12) ranking all teleport-operating companies based on year-on-year growth in their most recent fiscal years

The Association
for International
Broadcasting

Media
Excellence
Awards
2008

winners and finalists



PAUL GEORGE

MONEY & POLITICS

Where money and politics collide. World leaders and policy makers speak exclusively to Bloomberg Television.
Weekdays at 13:00 CET.

BLOOMBERG TELEVISION
A WEALTH OF INFORMATION

WELCOME


2008 was the fourth year of the AIB International Media Excellence Awards. We inaugurated these Awards to celebrate creativity and reward success. The international broadcasting community has responded to our challenge to showcase its best work across a range of programme genres.

These Awards cover all media: television, radio, online and mobile. We have seen considerable growth in the number of excellent cross-media entries, demonstrating that broadcasters are meeting the challenge of producing content that serves their audiences across different platforms.

Our judges – based in North America, Europe, Africa, the Middle East and Asia – have devoted considerable time to evaluating the extensive number of shortlisted entries. There were many difficult decisions to make in deciding the final winners. The wide geographical base of our judges helps the AIB to be fairer to entrants. We know, through our regular reporting of the media scene, that not all budgets are equal. We know our judges are able to spot emerging talent and that good ideas are not confined to the English-speaking world.

This year's entries have come from every continent and the winners, too, are spread throughout the world, confirming the truly international nature of this competition.

The AIB and its network of members thank all this year's judges, sponsors and production staff for their help in making the Awards 2008 the best yet. We also congratulate the companies and individuals who are the winners in the 2008 AIB International Media Excellence Awards.



Simon Spanswick
Chief Executive, AIB

AWARD CATEGORIES

BEST RADIO CURRENT AFFAIRS DOCUMENTARY

BEST TELEVISION CURRENT AFFAIRS DOCUMENTARY

BEST INVESTIGATIVE TV DOCUMENTARY

CLEAREST RADIO COVERAGE OF A SINGLE NEWS EVENT

CLEAREST TV COVERAGE OF A SINGLE NEWS EVENT

BEST CREATIVE TV FEATURE

BEST CREATIVE RADIO FEATURE

BEST CROSS-MEDIA PRODUCTION

MOST INNOVATIVE USE OF GRAPHICS
Powered by Vizrt

MOST CREATIVE MARKETING STRATEGY
Powered by Russia Today

MOST INNOVATIVE TECHNOLOGY
Powered by Bloomberg

MOST CREATIVE SPECIALIST GENRE

INTERNATIONAL TV PERSONALITY OF THE YEAR

INTERNATIONAL RADIO PERSONALITY OF THE YEAR

AIB INSI SPECIAL AWARD

AIB EDITORS' AWARD 2008

Navigate into the future



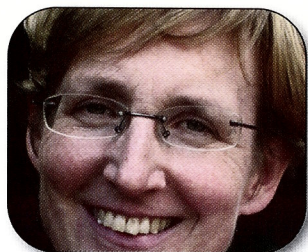
Vizrt creates leading-edge content production and media asset management tools for the digital media industry – from award-winning 3D graphics & maps to integrated video workflow solutions. Vizrt's product suite is used by the world's leading broadcasters including: CNN, CBS, Fox, BBC, Sky, ITN, ZDF, Star TV, Network 18, TV Today, CCTV and NHK.

vizrt.com



Meet the

judges



MARIA BALINSKA
BBC Radio
DIRK BEUSCH
Deutsche Welle
CATHERINE CANO
CanoVision

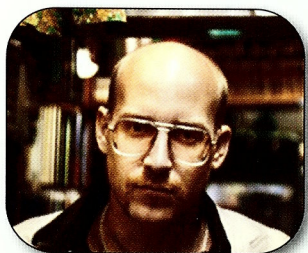
HUGH MILES
Journalist
LEIF LONSMANN
Danmarks Radio
SIMON SPANSWICK
AIB

CARLSON HUANG
Radio Taiwan International
JONATHAN MARKS
Critical Distance
BRIAN MARTINEZ
Bloomberg TV

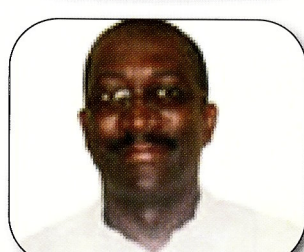
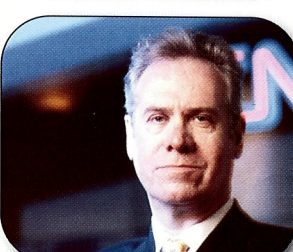
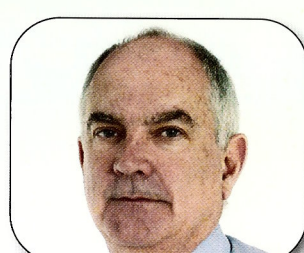


PAULA MASSELOS
SBS Australia
MARCUS METZNER
S4M
SUN WEI
Shanghai Media &
Entertainment Group

ADRIAN MONCK
Journalist
LINDSAY CORNELL
BBC
CHRIS CRAMER
Cramer Media
ANDREW FINLAYSON



Fox News
JOHN O'LOAN
iO Media
SAMUEL ATTAH-MENSAH
Citi FM Ghana



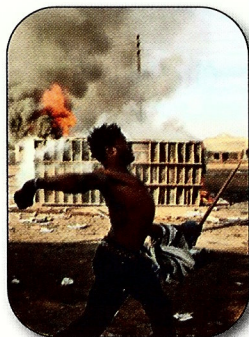
Not pictured:
Dirk Beusch

Clearest TV coverage of a single news event

We saw too many entries that were simply extracts from rolling news coverage where the aim was to be first, rather than to provide context and answers for the viewers. But there were 17 entries which demonstrated conscious attempts to provide viewers with strong analysis and clear story lines.

News, especially TV news, is expensive and often throws up logistical nightmares that need to be solved. The judges looked at the short-listed entries and took into account the very different budgets available to TV broadcasters in different territories. As a result, they decided to award two top prizes.

The first goes to the **South African Broadcasting Corporation** for an edition of its Special Assignment strand called *Hambani Makwere-kwere* – foreigners go home, telling the story of the ethnic unrest in South Africa in May and June this year. The judges said that this was a very engaging production, giving the viewer a real sense of being there. They commented that it was a thorough and engaging piece of journalism that got behind the headlines. On the one hand it showed the personal tragedies of the victims of the anti-foreigner violence. But it also heard from perpetrators and pundits who gave much-needed political, social and economic context to the frustration displayed by many poor South Africans. The team took risks in going in trying to talk with people who had taken part in the mob violence. At the same time, the interviewing and sensitive, un-hurried editing was such that one got a three dimensional sense of many of the characters profiled.



Sasha Wales-Smith,
Special Assignment
Producer, collects the
Award from Mark Owen

The second prize in this category goes to **France 24** for *Crackdown in the heart of Burma*. The judges felt this was an extremely "good watch", as well as being fast-paced, emotional, sensitive and visceral in delivery. The undercover footage from the demonstrations was extraordinary and was truly an example of brave journalism. The on-the-spot reporting was immediately gripping and put the viewer at the centre of the action.



Cyril Payen, France 24



SABC
France 24

COMMENDED

Al Jazeera English *Myanmar Cyclone* Judges' comments

Comprehensive and polished coverage combined with moving on-the-ground undercover pictures and useful political context made this a highly commended entry.

COMMENDED

BBC World Service ***The Assassination of*** ***Benazir Bhutto***

Judges' comments A comprehensive and well researched series of broadcasts with excellent analysis that showcased the skill and ability of the team. The story was well paced conveying the seriousness of the situation.

BBC Russian Service – ***Presidential Elections in Russia***

Judges' comments Wide ranging interviews, a diversity of talent and tough questions going to the heart of the issues. The background research, plus the lighter elements, served to make this compelling radio. Good technical production, effects and music, added colour and texture.

Clearer radio coverage of a single news event

BBC World Service

This category attracted fewer entries than in previous years, despite the number of major, headline-grabbing news stories that occurred in the past year. Some of the entries showed that radio is trying to mimic rolling news TV networks, simply repeating facts and figures but not providing enough critical analysis. For many productions, if you didn't join the coverage early on, it was impossible to pick up the thread easily.

The judges awarded the top prize to **BBC World Service** for *The World Today: Chinese Congress Party*. The production provided, said the judges, a very absorbing insight into a subject about which little is known. This highly competent and professional production opened a door on a closed event while also becoming a broader exposition on the Communist Party, how it works and what people think. This radio broadcast was, said one judge, better than watching the event on the TV screen, making it very real and engaging.



COMMENDED

Ruth Evans Productions ***Kenya, Healing the Rift***

Judges' comments This was a gruesome eyewitness report of human violence. The programme was "scarily credible" and told a story in a graphic way that could not help but to involve listeners. The pace of the programme was just right.

Ruth Evans Productions ***Ground Zero: Rebuilding*** ***Southern Sudan***

Judges' comments A true living, personal, intimate portrait of the victims of the wars in Southern Sudan. Simple, clear storytelling, gluing the images to the listeners' mind while adding important context for people not familiar with the situation in Southern Sudan and how it differs from the situation in Darfur.

Best radio current affairs documentary

Tinderbox Production

A smaller field of entries than in previous years causes us to ask whether the radio documentary genre is on the wane. The judges found a considerable range in quality. There were some excellent productions. But they stood out from a crop of very mediocre entries which either suffered from poor technical production, poor editing or the wrong choice of music.

We noted that independent production companies often came up with the best story, best script and by far the best use of sound design. They are clearly committed to documentaries.



The judges awarded the top prize to Wales-based independent production company **Tinderbox Production** for its first-rate programme *Where Next, a Soldier's Journey*. This programme was a heartbreaking confession of a fallen fighter, a witness to a meaningless war.

Best television current affairs documentary

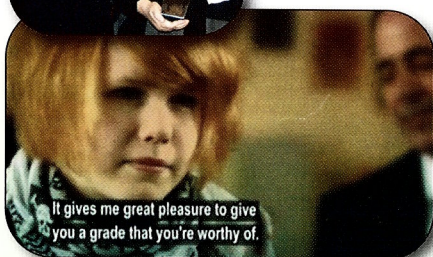
Strix TV

There were more than 70 entries for this category, which fell into distinct types: factual and investigative, so we split this category into two.



In factual documentary, the winner is Gothenburg-based production house **Strix TV** for *Class of 07* which aired on Sveriges TV. The judges said this was a strong documentary focused on a bold social experiment, with great use of close-up interviews while filming was carried out sensitively. One said

that this is one of those rare films that plays well in a foreign language and was impossible to stop watching. Another described it as completely engaging. Judges said this programme definitely needs a follow-up film in five or ten years: what happened next, both to the students and the school?



COMMENDED

TV2

The Serena Attack

Judges' comments The sacrifices of the press to bring the public the news were told in this chilling story of one night of violence. Very fast-paced, very sad, with strong delivery made this a compelling piece of television with strong narrative and good signposting.

Best investigative TV documentary

BBC Northern Ireland

Regional television is often overlooked in international competitions. Yet it can often be of world class standard. We were pleased to see that this year producers from this important broadcast sector submitted their work to the AIB Awards.



The winner of this investigative category was **BBC Northern Ireland** for *The Pitbull Sting* which investigated one of the largest dog fighting gangs in Europe, exposing the extent to which Northern Ireland has become a centre for this brutal activity. The team spent weeks following the perpetrators of this illegal "sport" across Europe, using covert filming to tell a horrific

story. The judges said this production revealed an astonishing story in a very creative way. All commented on the excellent production and careful editing of what at times was highly graphic and deeply upsetting footage. The team took a risk in spending nearly 1½ years developing the material. Their rewards were high audience figures and decisive action by the authorities after transmission.

COMMENDED

TV3

Undercover Ireland: The Drugs Trade

Judges' comments Very deep investigative report with high social value. Excellent editing with good use of undercover filming. Thoughtful, comprehensive and revealing.

VRT –

Corrupt Romania

Judges' comments Corruption is common in many countries. But this production told the problem of endemic corruption in Romania, from cradle to grave. It gave an insight into a little known historical issue, brought to life through dynamic story-telling and a wide range of contemporary interviews.

COMMENDED

Russia Today TV *Russian Glamour*

Judge's comments The judges felt that this story drew them in and benefited from excellent research into the subject. Interesting characters added to the story being told, and great editing helped too.

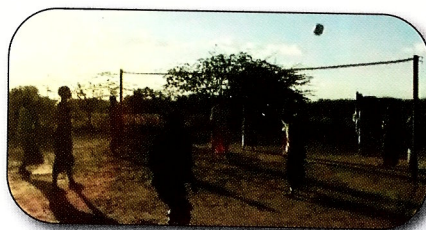
ChelloZone *Psychic Private Eyes*

Judge's comments This was an unusual approach to reality TV and follows the work of three respected UK mediums who use their unique gifts to help solve the murder of British model Sally Ann Bowman in 2005.

Best creative TV feature

Rockhopper TV

In this category, the judges were looking for a programme, or one episode from a programme series, that makes the most creative and the most exceptional use of the TV medium.



The judges were impressed by the range of entries, covering very different subjects, but were unanimous in their verdict that first prize should go to independent TV production company **Rockhopper TV** for *A Sporting Chance*.

This programme, from the series

"Survivors' Guide", looked at Somali girls in a refugee camp fighting heated resistance from the community when they tried to establish a volley ball team. Judges said that this was a very interesting social subject with balanced treatment of the different sides. It had very accurate and attentive editing and was highly relevant to international TV audiences well beyond the borders of Sudan.



Best creative radio feature

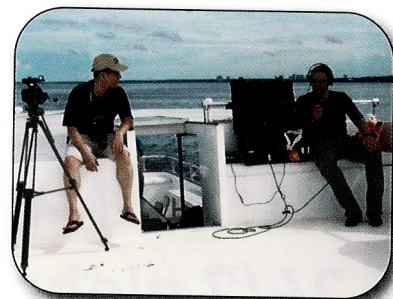
BBC Portuguese for Africa

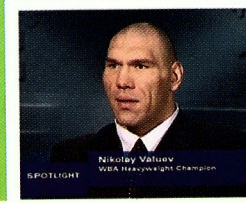
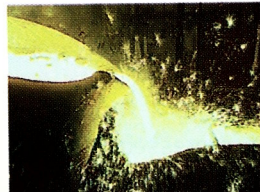
Judges were listening for exceptional and creative use of radio. They were unanimous that they found it in the **BBC World Service Portuguese for Africa** submission entitled *The Amazon Paradox*. The programmes posed the question of whether the Amazon region can be developed economically without destroying this precious part of the world's ecosystem. Overall, the project brought together 11 language services from BBC World Service, ensuring there was South-South communication as well as South-North. It was a great example of teamwork using journalists with very different cultural backgrounds tackling a single issue from several interesting directions.



The judges commented that this piece of work was an encouraging display of journalistic competence, and was a "must listen" for a wide range of people, not just other journalists. The on-line videos on the websites complemented the live radio reportages. It was interesting to see the different variations the language departments made on the same story.

The judges also appreciated that this production is still accessible on-line and suggest that this could be a basis for a much larger, on-going environmental dossier. Too many "specials" are simply gone and forgotten a few months after the event - a waste of effort and knowledge gained.





RUSSIA TODAY
24/7 global news channel

www.russiatoday.com

COMMENDED

WDR

Radio Peelings

Judges' comments An innovative production from Germany's public broadcaster about a British public broadcasting legend – John Peel. A highly creative production and the sound balance and design were a pleasure to listen to.

Bloomberg Television

Emerging Africa Week

Judges' comments

Bloomberg's Emerging Africa Week from the World Economic Forum in Cape Town involving interviews, in-depth reports and background was an excellent example of how to redress the balance of African events being so often reported in a poor light or laden with clichés.

Most creative specialist genre

Sveriges Television

This category – new for 2008 – allows us to highlight work that doesn't fit comfortably in mainstream genres. We were looking for innovative productions and creative thinking in radio, TV and cross-media.

The judges presented first prize to **Sveriges TV's** interactive drama *The Truth About Marika*. Part reality game, part mystery programme, SVT describe it as "participation drama". If you switch on, you might think that it's a true story that's being told. In fact, it's a story that has more than a ring of truth to it. Setting it apart from conventional television shows, viewers could search for clues planted in a virtual world called Entropia Universe, helping solve a mystery. Fans could also interact with avatars of the show's main characters. Many television companies are looking for ways to capture viewer loyalty before, during and after a programme. With "based on a true story" marketing, *The Truth About Marika* saw its fan community overcome a series of complex trials in order to come face-to-face with "the mind-blowing truth."



COMMENDED

Russia Today TV

New Year Promotion

Judges' comments Hiring Times Square in New York isn't an everyday affair - certainly not for an international TV channel. This innovative campaign offered a taste of Russian Christmas and New Year in the heart of New York and resulted in more people tuning into Russia Today TV – exactly what the channel was looking for. They certainly drew a curious crowd during the campaign.

Most creative marketing strategy

Sveriges Radio

Inspiring audiences to tune in, access programmes or to remain loyal to a media brand is a constant challenge for broadcasters in the crowded media marketplace. The AIB wants to highlight the companies that are meeting this challenge and to help spread good practice among broadcasters.



Swedish Radio's Programme Guide was aimed at getting 15-25 year-olds to discover that there's great content on SR through the use of a clever recommendation engine.

Judges praised this idea as innovative, focused and highly cost-effective. They thought the recommendation engine was a brilliant way of solving the problem that radio faces – great content hidden under a number (the frequency). Judges complimented the way the campaign worked across different media including the special interactive billboard. SR has faced a huge challenge reaching this part of the audience: the audience doesn't know it's there and finds it hard to discover great shows.



Powered by

Most innovative technology

Link Research

Powered by
Bloomberg
TELEVISION

COMMENDED

VT Communications
Global Media Network and
Media Management Centre
Judges' comments

International broadcasting is shifting towards the delivery of more and more cross-media content to partners around the world. This may be delivering to radio, TV stations, cable head-ends, newspapers, on-line services and mobile. The judges were impressed with the design and implementation of this global delivery system based on Internet Protocols. This means that the system delivers the content in a reliable way, without needing to worry if it is audio, video or text.

This year the AIB Awards judges were searching for technology that is both innovative and transferable throughout the international broadcasting industry. As broadcasting systems become more commoditised, there needs to be creative thinking to serve the needs both of broadcasters and audiences.



The judges awarded the top prize to **Link Research** for The Prague Steps Project. The challenge of getting live pictures from "inside" a cycling event, especially in this kind of terrain, was greater than most people imagine. The camera and transmitter had to be light yet robust, and the receiving antennae had to be in a complex network around the track to ensure uninterrupted coverage. The judges were impressed with the result and the way Czech TV incorporated the live footage. There are clearly other sports that would benefit from giving viewers a true picture of what it's like to participate.



COMMENDED

Al Jazeera English Iran Nuclear

Judges' comments Al Jazeera English used well-crafted visuals and maps in its news programming and judges said these really added to viewer understanding of the subject and provided additional context.

DIRECTV

NASCAR Hotpass

Judges' comments Stock car racing is a fast-paced sport and keeping track of who's where and who's winning is vital. As the cars scream around the track, keeping fans up to date with their favourite driver's performance is essential. The NASCAR Hotpass initiative, from Reality Check Studios, impressed with the way it kept viewers informed and entertained before, during and after races.

Most innovative use of graphics

Powered by 

NFL Network

In this new 2008 category judges were looking for the most creative use of dynamic graphics in television story-telling. Graphics can add to viewer understanding of complex issues or add value to sports programming. Dynamic graphs and maps, showing data in real time, have become indispensable to TV news and sports.

The judges awarded the top prize in 2008 to US **NFL Network** for its Games Graphics Package. They were particularly impressed by the creativity and energy demonstrated by the artists. The work was produced for NFL Network by Reality Check Studios in Los Angeles. The judges felt they had captured the flavour of NFL and gave something useful and extra to viewers across the USA and beyond. We suspect the artists at Reality have a real passion for sports as well as for creative design.



Andrew Heimbold of Reality Check Studios receives the Award from Mark Owen



COMMENDED

Sky1

Lost

Judges' comments US series *LOST* has inspired passionate communities around the world. Sky's new media department used this high quality content plus specially commissioned material, giving UK fans exclusive insights behind the scenes.

3FM

Serious Request 2007

Judges' comments This Dutch public radio network adopted a multi-media approach to fund raising that aimed to provide more people across Africa with clean, healthy drinking water. The judges were impressed by the use of different platforms in complementary ways to achieve a single aim – raising money and awareness for a good cause.

Best cross-media production

BBC World Service

The AIB firmly believes that cross-platform is the way broadcasting must develop if it is to remain relevant to large sections of society. It's vital the programming is produced in such a way that it fits comfortably on each device it's consumed on. We had more than 30 entries in this category, showing that many broadcasters are thinking the right way. Among them was the winner, **BBC World Service**, for the *Bangladesh Boat Project*.

The BBC set out to report from Bangladesh on board a boat about the effects of climate change in this low-lying country. A number of language services from Bush House were onboard, each feeding back reports across TV, radio, online and mobile platforms to audiences. On 15 November, Cyclone Sidr hit, turning documentary and feature production into live journalism. The journalists on the project coped well with the changing situation. The judges said that this submission was authentic "wall-to-wall multimedia production".

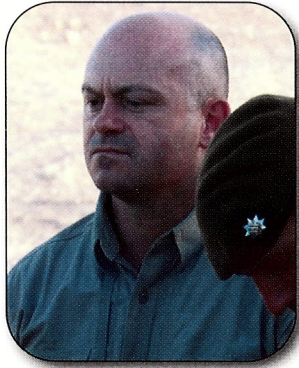


Luis Cardador Pereira, BBC Portuguese for Africa



International TV personality of the year

Ross Kemp



As more channels appear on the air, the need for engaging presenters who can relate to audiences has never been higher. Whether its news or documentaries, there's a need for someone who can explain a story in a creative and non-patronising way.

The judges decided that, from a very strong field involving TV presenters from more than a dozen countries, **Ross Kemp** should be this year's international TV personality of the year. They described him as a very impressive authentic

character – and someone who seems to revel in dealing with dangerous situations whilst at the same time explaining the context. Kemp's commitment enables audiences to experience the most extraordinary situations. His programmes are "neither the movies nor the news", said the judges, but show reality from Kemp's own perspective. He makes absorbing television from the heart. His authenticity was unquestionable.

COMMENDED

Martine Tanghe

Judges' comments A highly professional presenter and news anchor, Martine Tanghe works for public broadcaster VRT in Flanders, Belgium. She impressed the judges by the way she understands how to combine friendliness, respect, trustworthiness and a genuine interest in people. Searching for interesting stories is clearly at the heart of what she does so well. She is tough – but fair. And having compared her handling of both elections, as well as news presentation, we conclude that she's world class. Belgians already know that. Now the rest of the world needs to know, too.

International radio personality of the year

3FM Serious Request team

The AIB is passionate about broadcasting and we hope that people working in the industry share that passion – and convey it to the audience. Our search for radio personality of the year considers who's most engaging and who is most engaged.

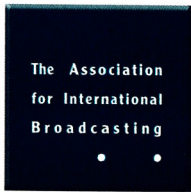
The judges considered that this year's winner should be not just one person but a team of three – **Gerard Ekdom, Rob Stenders** and **Michiel Veenstra**, the lead presenters at Dutch public radio station 3FM who organised Serious Request. Just before Christmas last year, the team locked themselves in a glass box very near the Dutch parliament in The Hague. They broadcast great non-stop radio for six days without food, raising money for a charity that works to provide clean drinking water in the Developing World. The judges noted that the team made a massive impression on the Dutch public, with people travelling long distances to see 3FM in action and have their requests played. The presenters succeeded in building a fantastic rapport with their audience, including people who might not be regular listeners to the popular music network.



COMMENDED

Owen Bennett-Jones

Judges' comments The judges singled out Owen as a particularly knowledgeable and engaging presenter. He is a world-class journalist with an in-depth knowledge of the Middle East and, especially, Pakistan. He is not afraid to tackle difficult subjects and tricky interviewees in order to bring the story of the moment to BBC World Service listeners around the globe. The judges were also impressed with his investigative reporting skills.



AIB INSI Special Award

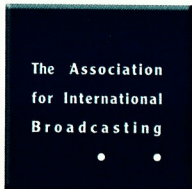
Sami Al Haj

Bringing the news from the world's trouble spots is essential for the spread of democracy and the freedom of information. Journalists, camera crews, translators – all face constant danger as they work to bring news stories to our screens and to our radio sets. So far in 2008, over 70 people working in the news industry have been killed and many more have been injured. News crews regularly come under fire. They are subject to harassment by armed militia, by armies, by rebel forces, by hooligans and by thugs. News crews are often seen as legitimate targets.



Two years ago, the AIB Media Excellence Awards recognised the documentary *Prisoner 345* which reported on the plight of Al Jazeera cameraman **Sami Al Haj**. Arrested by US Forces in the Pakistan border region he was accused of being a terrorist. Sami was sent to Guantanamo Bay where he was kept, without trial, for more than seven years. The world's media campaigned and lobbied for his release – but it wasn't until May 2008 that Sami was allowed to leave. He returned to his home country, Sudan, where he was reunited with his family. Sami has now been appointed head of Al Jazeera Network's Public Liberties and Human Rights Desk whose primary focus is to promote respect for human rights and public liberties by monitoring, documenting, broadcasting and raising awareness of these key issues worldwide and in the Arab region in particular.

The **Association for International Broadcasting** and **INSI**, the International News Safety Institute, have come together to recognise the work of Sami Al Haj who endured immense personal hardship, all in the name of bringing the news to the world.



AIB Editors' Award France 24

The AIB has been monitoring the work of broadcasters throughout the world to see who is thinking creatively about the convergence that's taking place in the media. However, thinking about this is not enough – what the AIB wants to see is a whole-hearted and thoroughly engaged approach to ensuring that broadcasters are true cross-media production houses. Today, broadcasters have to engage with audiences on multiple platforms – the audience has immense choice and if you're not on the platform that they want to use, you'll lose them.



France 24 launched in December 2006 and from the start had a true multimedia approach to international broadcasting. It has developed applications in partnership with other organisations – both commercial and public – to get its content onto mobile handsets, on to the web and delivered via e-mail. At the same time, France 24 has not lost sight of the traditional TV audience, with excellent presentation across all three of its language services – Arabic, English and French.



With a young, enthusiastic team at its headquarters in Paris, France 24 has pushed boundaries, both in style and coverage of different themes. The AIB believes France 24 has now matured into a strong, reliable and inventive international news channel for the 21st century. They have been open to sharing their ideas and technologies with other broadcasters, believing the world needs a multitude of voices to be better informed. This is why France 24 is recipient of this year's AIB Editors' Award.



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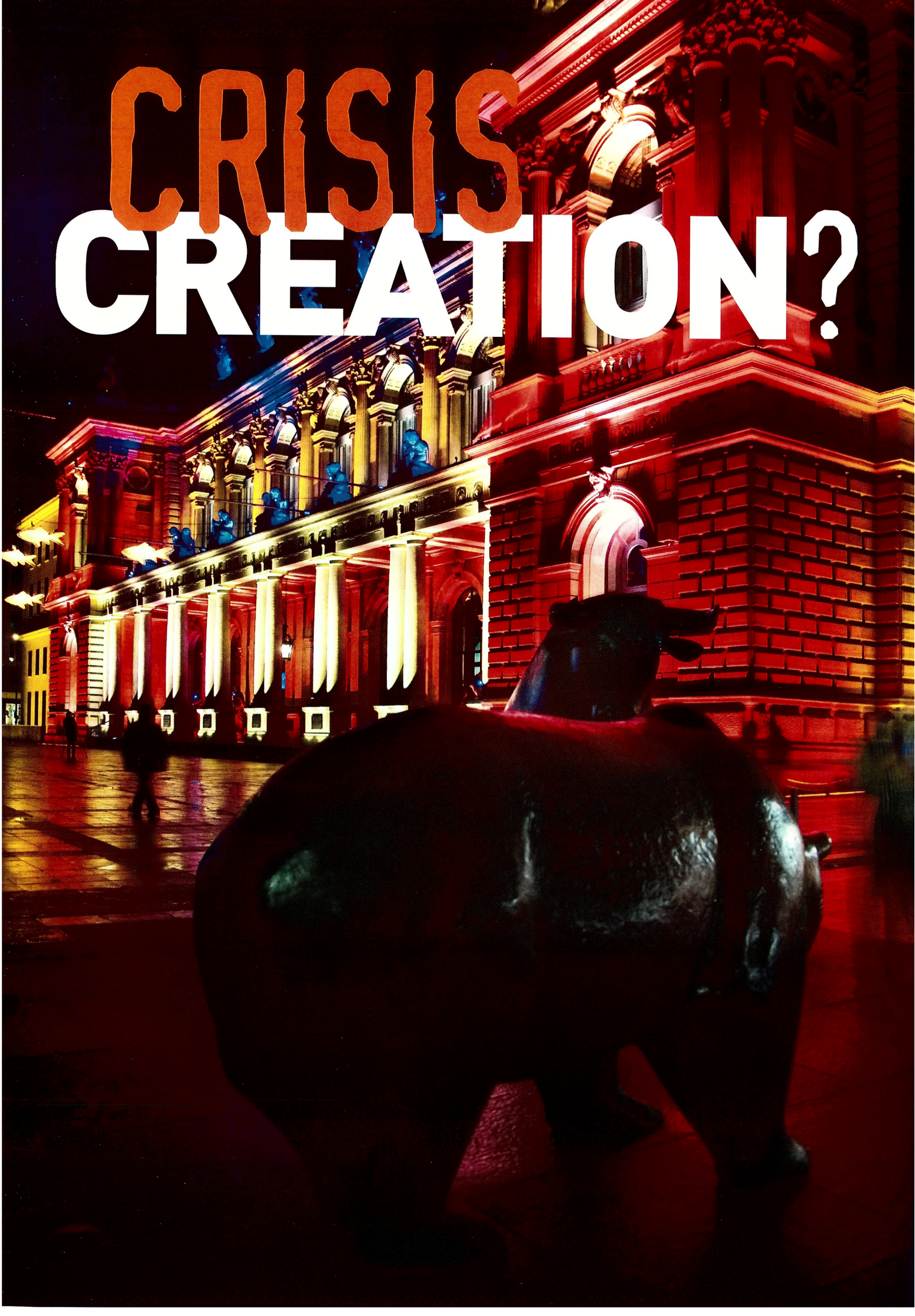
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Creativity + Technology = Vision



CRISIS CREATION?



CRISIS CREATION?

We all know the media are selective: they interpret, trigger emotions and even "create" facts. When in September of this year the global financial crisis punctured the sweet dream of easy capitalism, it was a meaty feast for journalists everywhere. There were gloating horror tales, there was explanation, there was reassurance. In the UK, a reader's letter published in the Daily Telegraph suggested: "If the BBC sent the doom-laden John Humphrys and the panic-inducing Robert Peston on holiday for a month, the world financial crisis would end tomorrow." So are the media partly to blame for the financial crisis we are in? Among the programme makers whom we asked there was a marked reluctance to answer that question – many declined to comment. Here is a selection of views from people in and out of the media industry

BBC

EXCERPT FROM "ARIEL", THE BBC STAFF NEWSPAPER, 14 OCTOBER

"Menace and scaremonger or brilliant journalist doing his job? ... The BBC's business editor [Robert Peston] has certainly generated huge media coverage – not all favourable. Where is he getting his information, ask the critics, and, dramatically: 'Should one man have the power to bring down a bank?' He hasn't quite done that but his blog breaking the news of a £50bn bank rescue package was followed by a big fall in share prices, prompting accusations of irresponsible reporting and 'spooking the market'. [...] Even some of Peston's admirers are urging caution and questioning whether his prolific blogging is appropriate for a BBC newsmen. [...] Jeremy Hillman, editor of the business and economics unit, says that if the BBC gets a good story the presumption is to publish, unless there's 'a huge over-riding reason' not to do so. 'We have one responsibility and that's to give facts to the audience that are relevant. **We don't do our journalism in a vacuum** and there's always potential for a market reaction but we don't tailor our reporting in terms of what impact it will have on this or that share price.' "



MAN IN THE STREET

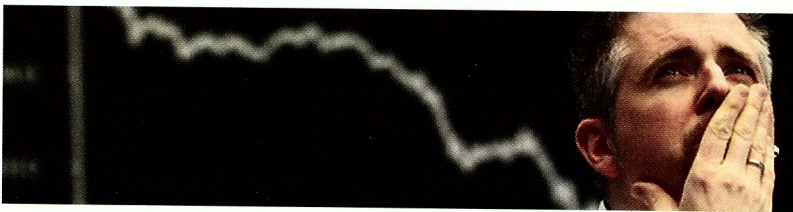
UK

The media are to blame, without a shadow of a doubt. I would say that ¾ of the doom is media-driven. I normally get up, switch on BBC news to see what's happening, and it's just dominated by the financial markets. I watch the BBC and ITN news on the internet, I think they should just cover the financial markets in their designated finance slot. If the media want to improve their image **they should stop this speculative peddling of doom and gloom stories** and engage in some hard investigative journalism by asking the bosses of these big finance houses exactly what has gone wrong and where and why, and to push for the culprits being made accountable.

DOUGLAS NAISMITH

MANAGING DIRECTOR, INTERNATIONAL FINANCIAL SERVICES COMPANY

I don't think we should blame the programmers or the TV channels for having a lot of programmes that relate to financial matters. A lot of people work in the financial industry, a lot of people use their products nowadays, and there is interest. Personally, I think there is probably too much financial news on TV but it is entirely response to market demand for that information. That's the first thing. I don't blame the financial news for the way the markets have reacted. The transmission of information across the world these days is so fast that markets are reacting very quickly. Now more information is available to trade on immediately and that has a consequent impact – sometimes a knee-jerk reaction from people because information hits their desk and they are forced to respond. The time for analysis is much shorter today. That was going to happen inevitably just with the growth of technology and nothing to do with the media. I do think though the media must bear some responsibility in a couple of different areas. One, the tone and the language were very sensationalist - "and there's blood on the streets in the markets today" and "Wall Street down, market haemorrhaging, where will it all end - financial apocalypse". It does make more people think their assets are at risk. The other area is the growth of TV programmes in this belief that asset inflation, in particular property inflation, was here to stay. Buy-to-let, properties going up, easy money, don't miss out – I don't know how many TV programmes had that theme. In a situation where you are able to borrow 130% of the value of the property, the whole fiscal prudence went away and I think that was exacerbated by **the media encouraging people to get on board this magical ride that was never going to stop**. I go online first thing in the morning because it's pre-newspapers, I find that quite useful, whether it's the BBC or the CNN site, then newspapers for a more balanced, composed editorial.



MICHAEL PETERS

MANAGING DIRECTOR, EURONEWS

It's always a question of the mirror. At the end of the day: **who is looking at who in the mirror - who is reflecting what?** Which is the markets, which is the media? Everybody is reacting because of the other. I think that is inevitable because the media are so strong today. You know that, as the competition is so hard in news media, in order to survive you need to be the first today, the one that breaks the story. It's not so simple as to say 'media have done that'. If you look at how the media are working, they have a lot of people who are speaking today, and of course when you speak then the risk is that you can accelerate things with what you are saying. The format of the treatment of the news is very important at a time like this. If you have a format where you need to speak, to discuss, to find a story, to explain a story, these formats will force you to find something else. On Euronews we just give you the news and we are not commenting it, and that's it.

GOPALAN KRISHNAN

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR & CEO, TV TODAY NETWORK, NEW DELHI

Here in India, only those platforms that report on the worldwide financial crisis in a responsible manner would build credibility in the viewers' mind. A few platforms might adopt a sensational approach for short term viewership benefits but this is not a sustainable approach. I feel every news product must place the consumer at the core - in these trying times everyone is keen to know how it affects them today and the impact tomorrow. In my mind this is a global issue and there is a certain amount of belt tightening across all sectors and all regions. Thus the interest level is more macro in nature and the consumer is keen to track what is happening on a global level. Thus even the reporting has a global element and no news product is covering it as local silos. The role of any media product is to spread awareness. I think the media have done a good job in showing the extent of the crisis. Currently there is a certain sense of fear in the consumer's mind and only awareness will help tackle this fear. **Complete transparency is the only solution to any crisis.** Consumers today get news from multiple platforms. I feel when it becomes a global issue, television becomes the primary source for most people.



CRISIS CREATION?

ALLEN COOPER

CONSULTANT, INTERMEDIA UK

It really is a huge story and we do have to report it in a way that stresses how important it is. A lot of the reporting, and I think this is bad, was based on assumptions about what might happen – “as many as X million people could be affected by this”. I wasn’t always sure that there was a sufficient distinction between hard facts as we know them and something having the effect of being presented as fact. If you take someone like Robert Peston on the BBC – remarkably well informed, excellent journalism – it did seem to me at times that when he was coming in with his scoops – he’s just discovered from so-and-so that this will be happening in the next two days – that reporting it in this way was contributing to it actually coming about. **Somehow the journalism was leaving the present and going too far into the future.** Certainly some media were going to great lengths to explain what was happening, for example I normally read the Guardian newspaper on a weekday, and I thought the BBC website was good, with a glossary of terms being used. I was in the US in the relatively early days of the crisis, in Washington mainly looking at the Washington Post and at CNN. A lot of the discussion there was looking at things that are of less importance in Europe – the whole question of is it right for the government to bail out the banks, lots of discussions about “this is socialism, this is not what Americans do”. It seemed to me that the reporting was more measured, more aimed at trying to promote an understanding. Certainly in Washington I did not detect the sort of hysteria and intensity in the way the issues were being dealt with that I sensed in the UK. I suppose you can argue it may have something to do with 24 hour rolling news that there is this monster which needs new information all the time, and what you have with this great financial tumult is that it’s not a simple development from A to B. Things change for all kinds of reasons, and trying to keep up with it on a rolling basis was quite difficult and it came over as rather confused at times.



LAEED ZAGHLAMI

JOURNALIST/ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR, ALGIERS

Algeria has the highest rate of TV satellite penetration in the world. In Arabic Al Jazeera, Al Arabiya, Al Ikhbariya, Hiwar TV, Nile TV News and Russia Today are main news sources, and TF1, France2, BFM TV, Euronews, ARTE in French. Access to the internet is not restricted, so ordinary people have many choices. The local private press appears to be the most reliable source of news as it is independent from state control and enjoys margins of real freedom, fairness and objectivity. The worldwide financial crisis was not covered in depth by the Algerian public broadcasters – with authorities arguing that Algeria is not and will not be affected by the present crisis. The local private press, however, has extensively covered and reported on the issue by bringing opposite views, and debates were organized in newsrooms enabling ordinary people to get a clearer picture of events. People feel that what is happening is the outcome of disastrous and outrageous capitalist policies. Capitalism has failed because it does not answer all questions, notably the social and human dimension. I think the media play a positive role in alerting people about foreseeable crises. I don’t think the media are to blame as it is their job to report on traders, wrongdoings, on corruption, mismanagement etc. **Now, as we live with the crisis, the media are badly needed in their watchdog role** to avoid further catastrophes, notably for the poorer countries.



ANNE SONNENBERG**COMPUTER SCIENTIST, GERMANY**

I don't think the media are to blame. You and me - we rely on the media to provide information, whether that's TV or the newspapers or the radio. This crisis we are in started far away in the US and I thought that there would be no tangible results for me, it would not touch me and my money, and then it was like a snowball effect. I personally feel that the media tried to get a grip on what was really going on and tried to get that information out to the people in a sensible way. Yes, there were headlines but then that was the news. I think that you always have to take what you hear or read with a pinch of salt because it's the reporter's point of view, or it tries to present things as facts but **you know that in most cases this cannot be the whole picture**, it's usually only part of the picture. I have a daily newspaper, a local one, then the weekly Die Zeit which I trust rather because the articles can be more reflective and considered. And I watch TV, mainly the news on the public channels of ARD and ZDF.

WILLIAM BIRD**DIRECTOR, MEDIA MONITORING PROJECT, JOHANNESBURG**

In South Africa, we have a very low level of fundamental education around basic things, and economic literacy is one of those. So when you start talking about a global financial crisis, people just get a sense of "well, this is too complicated" or of "okay, things are going to start going downhill" but the reasons for this are rarely explained, certainly in our media. Fundamentally where the media are to blame is in explaining and unpacking where this financial crisis started, who's to blame, why it is happening, what impact it is going to have on ordinary people in their daily lives. **We need a lot more basics of economics to be explained to people** so in future we need a lot more emphasis on not just adopting the jargon and technology of those in power but actually bringing that down to an ordinary person's level of understanding. In any crisis, the media have to be careful not to generate panic. On some level this is what some media have done in this financial crisis story - instead of putting things in perspective, they have said: Look, there is this thing, nobody knows where it is going, it is terrible, it is a disaster. Going forward, you'd hope that they would say, given the potential impact on this, especially on poorer societies, we have a moral responsibility to make sure that we report this in a way that is as ethical and responsible as possible.

**ECKHARD BERKENBUSCH****RESEARCHER, LEGAL DEPARTMENT OF POTSDAM UNIVERSITY**

I was just leaving Germany for China when the financial crisis gathered momentum. Overall, here in Germany I would say the respectable public service media are not to blame, they have not fuelled the crisis and created panic. They reported events in a responsible, matter-of-fact way as they are bound to. **You have to differentiate though between serious and less serious media**. For example, we have in Germany investment shows on private TV that try to persuade normal people, old age pensioners to move their money from savings accounts into very risky investments. This is very dubious, very irresponsible. I was in China at the height of the crisis. I would say the Chinese media are very reticent, they report what other international newspapers write, they quote from the New York Times or from the UK Guardian, they don't express their own opinions, they are just a mirror of what is happening in the media around the world. When I talked to people in some of the ministries in China, they were very worried because the crisis is also affecting China seriously. In Guangdong province in Southern China there are many toy factories - thousands of workers have been laid off because orders are not coming in from Europe and the US. The Chinese media are pretty open about the whole thing, they do report what is happening, also about this. ■



John Mangelaars joined Microsoft 20 years ago because he loves what technology can do for people's lives. Today as VP, Consumer & Online EMEA he helps shape the future for the browser generation and beyond, trying things to see what works and not afraid to fail. Here he talks about the opportunities of teaming up with broadcasters

THERE'LL BE ANOTHER WORD NEXT YEAR

Microsoft is much further advanced than people think in terms of this shift to – let's call it internet services – there will be another word next year. The key thing is that in the next five to 20 years, the consumer will be in control. He will say "Hey, I want to have my experience anywhere, anytime on any device, but it's my experience. So when I take my PC I want to see my wallpaper, my friends, etc, and when I go to my phone I want to do that, when I go to my TV I want to do that". Microsoft will build the technologies to enable that but we will also provide services that create those experiences for computers. So for example when you look at things like communication, like Messenger, we will go very far to provide the services ourselves. When you look at video, we will do very little, we will do a lot of technology and our partners will do all the services. We believe that all the content will be available everywhere in different shapes or forms, and it will be directly addressable in an internet way.

“The message to broadcasters is that this is not a threat but an opportunity”

Could you give us an example?

You want to see a TV show in the long format with your family on a large screen. Perhaps one of the family members has missed it so they look at it on their phone at night, and somebody else might say "I really liked this TV show, so I am going to take it to Messenger TV, and have a chat in Messenger with my friends about this TV show". If you are watching a documentary about Africa, at the same time you can look up pictures about Africa, or travel blogs, then research bookings for trips to Africa.

This needs a PC or a computing device underneath the TV set in the home.

I believe that we need to decouple the experience from the device you are using. There are many technologies which make this combination of media and communication possible, it's not bound by this one vertical technology. I think there is a notion of watching and communicating, there is another notion of watching TV. You are watching something and it will be brought to you over internet type protocol, and it can be on any

device. You are watching something or you are communicating with something, or sending an email, or you are looking at a picture, but the notion that this is bound by the device you are using will be gone. We believe it's going to be completely horizontal.

What about the timescale – there are issues with IP delivery.

Always in the short term we overestimate what we can do and in the long term we underestimate. When you see the success of things like Hulu and the number of people looking at videos on the internet – in the UK 80% of people watch at least one video a day on the internet – give it another two years and there will be a lot of people watching VOD on the PC. All the operators are now combining netbooks in their offering, it will be full-blown laptops next and everybody will have a video device on their telephone line.

What is the message for broadcasters?

If you are a broadcaster, you want to look at how you move from being a broadcaster to being an engagement company – what are

the services you are going to build to engage people around your programmes. And that's where we can team up as Microsoft and broadcaster. We can provide those communication services and the broadcasters provide content. It's a huge opportunity to do two things. One is to deeper engage with the viewers. Through our portals we bring in video, we engage with our (instant) Messenger audience. We can take it through the mobile phone together, but also on the traditional large screen environment we can provide communication services - for example on Xbox today we have Messenger. So people who are gaming on Xbox can also chat on Messenger. The other thing is that as these audiences become then what I would call 'direct addressable' you also create more directly informed advertising relationships - because we know what the viewers are doing, we can directly address them. I think those are the big opportunities: really think about what your distribution channels are, how do you create interaction with your viewers, and how do you optimise your economical model by becoming much more valuable for advertisers and at the same time for the viewers the advertising is much more relevant.

So who is going to talk to the broadcasters and make them do all this?

We play a role here to have these conversations. You can say: "I am a broadcaster, I use Microsoft technology to build my experience". You can also say: "I use Microsoft to broadcast my content" and then we broadcast the content and we share the revenue. It's the same on the advertising side. Broadcasters can use their own advertising sales force or let Microsoft sell the advertising for them. We are building up a portfolio - advertising on other PCs, on the mobile phone, and we are also extending this into the TV space. This is interesting - as an advertiser you can go to Microsoft and say you want to

reach a certain audience, say an audience that is interested in Formula 1 racing. We can advertise in a Grand Prix, or you can advertise in a Formula 1 game on Xbox, we can then create an audience across all these environments for the advertiser. The other way round, a broadcaster can say to his advertisers: "I am working with Microsoft so I have this huge reach of audience, and if someone is not watching my programme I can still find this person somewhere else on the network to get your message across". It is important to realise that this is a world where consumers are in control, and we don't have all the answers. We all have to learn and the only way to learn is to try. Perhaps as a broadcaster there are things you want to keep yours, but also figure out which things you want to share. There is this mix.

The progress of Microsoft's media centre into the home hasn't been a success - how can that be changed to enable this future?

There are a couple of things. One is the functionality will be built into the system - for example the phone has the video in there. The technology is maturing, it's going to be pervasive, bandwidth is going to be there, now it's a matter of bringing all the bits and pieces together without disrupting the past. We still use the zapper and we can also have the videos or the programmes you want to watch on our media centre PC. We can watch them when we want to watch them. So we still have the programme at 8 o'clock at night but we have it in our media centre - all of a sudden we are going to realise that people are watching more on the PC and the media centre than they watch at 8 o'clock because they do actually want to have time for dinner. Our generation can do 1.7 things at the same time and we've been trained now, we can do 1.8. There's a browser generation growing up who just assumes that things are



▲ John Mangelaars

“ This new generation can do 5.4 things at the same time instead of just 1 or 2 ”

there; this new generation can do 5.4 at the same time: they have two or three messenger stations open, they are listening to music, and when you walk into their room and say "hey, you are not doing your homework" they respond "yes, I am" and they still have capacity left. These kids are used to doing 3 or 4 things at the same time, if they are just watching a TV programme they are going to be bored because it only uses up a fraction of their capacity. If broadcasters want to catch their point out of the 5.4 they have got to do something interesting with the communities or the space, and that's what Microsoft can do because we provide enabling technology. That audience, that's our world.

Who are the competitors for Microsoft in this?

I don't think there's a single competitor who can do it all, so we are uniquely positioned on this platform of the enabling technology. We need to deliver technology, we need to build partnerships, and the broadcasters need to get comfortable with the idea that you can't all do it on your own. That's the biggest competitor, the fear on both sides of giving up control.

Is there a role for smaller players to interface with Microsoft?

We work together where it makes sense, we compete in other places. There is this discussion about the big companies hindering innovation from small companies. What people should realise is that doing something like the BBC Media Player in the UK means taking risks, it's not an innovation a small company can do. We have to give credit to the big companies for making big investments to make real progress. There are big companies who take big risks and make a lot of progress, and there are small companies who have a lot of ideas and some of them become big. You need both in this industry.

John Mangelaars, thank you. ■

BACKING THE RIGHT HORSE

The world of broadcast is moving so quickly that no one can claim to know what international broadcasting will look like in ten or twenty years, let alone predict what the big story might be next year. Faced with this uncertainty, trialling options is crucial for broadcasters, says **Bryan Coombes**, Director of Broadcast at **VT Communications**



The growth of digital media has presented a huge range of technologies that increase the opportunity for broadcasters to change the way they interact with their audiences. Traditional short wave can now be supported by any number of additional media channels. All have potential but not all will be part of the future broadcast landscape. The problem is that no one is really sure which ones they will be. It gets even more complicated as audience behaviour changes by geography and over time so it's a constantly moving target. The truth is that we simply don't know what will be the next Betamax and what will be the next VHS of the broadcast world. At the moment, the biggest question for broadcasters is simply 'which horse should we back'? If resource was unlimited the answer would be simple – 'all of them'.

This is part of a much wider issue for broadcasters around the world. Whilst some of the larger broadcasters can look at all the

options around them, trial various combinations and decide upon their future technology strategy from an informed position, the same option is not always available to small to medium-sized organisations. Yes, the growing market for digital media technologies does offer huge opportunities for the broadcast community but there is a real danger it may pass some broadcasters by because it is more difficult for them to make long term financial commitments to technologies they have not had the chance to trial. Risk is not a game that small broadcasters can afford to play.

REDUCE THE RISK

There is undoubtedly a need for broadcasters to trial new technologies before they commit to the required long-term investments in hardware, software and people with the relevant skills. They need the opportunity to reduce their risk. They need the chance to take an informed position on the new opportunities offered by digital. Ultimately, they need a level playing field.

“ Risk is not a game that small broadcasters can afford to play ”

This is why VT Communications launched its 'Taste of Digital' service at IBC this year. We take a long term partnership approach to working with broadcasters and they rely on us to guide them through the challenges of a rapidly changing broadcast market, solving problems as we go. Taste of Digital has been specifically tailored to help small to medium-sized broadcasters assess how their programming works on a digital platform, without having to invest in expensive new infrastructure or rely on a range of different suppliers. Broadcasters only need to select a programme (up to an hour a day) and they can then trial a huge range of digital media services. This can include scheduled 'live' streaming direct to a link placed on the broadcaster's website to audiences around the world, downloads from the broadcaster's website for up to three months, and subscription podcasts so that audiences can regularly receive its content with ease. The service also offers access to real user data including audience usage patterns of the digital content

to measure success and demonstrate the effectiveness of each service.

ANALOGUE HAS LIFE LEFT

While this may seem like just another short term fix, it is actually part of a broader strategy to address a wider issue – the perception that the use of short wave radio is rapidly declining. Short wave remains a cost effective method for reaching distant audiences, yet there is a perception that international broadcasting on short wave is at risk from innovative new digital opportunities. It is certainly true that in Western Europe and North America analogue short wave has declined, but once we broaden our mind to the size and complexity of the world, the reality is that reports of the death of analogue short wave are very premature. It is not a case of 'either/or'. In truth, its benefits remain as unique as they always have been. It's just been busy

finding its place amongst all the new platforms. And it's really not embarrassed to sit alongside its younger relatives of podcasts, web-streaming or TV. Of the BBC World Service figures for a weekly audience of 180+m people, over 100m are still on analogue short wave.

However, while VT Communications continue to champion the future of short wave, we also recognise that the future will include some level of digital experience. That is simply the way the market is moving. VT Communications is offering a guiding light to broadcasters to navigate to the most appropriate path and get the 'best of the new' whilst hanging onto the 'best of the old' methods of reaching their audience. Moving from traditional radio into the digital age can be a challenging prospect to some broadcasters. How can they embrace the new world of podcasts, audio-on-demand and mobile phone technology in a way

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that appeals to a new audience?

The answer is that they can't unless they can be sure of the results. This is why being able to trial ideas, technologies and new approaches make a real difference. The fear is that without help, smaller broadcasters wanting to take advantage of the market opportunities, may find themselves spending all their time identifying ways to evaluate the options and using up resources that could be channelled into doing what they do best – making compelling content for their audiences. ■

Bryan Coombes ▶



think outside the box

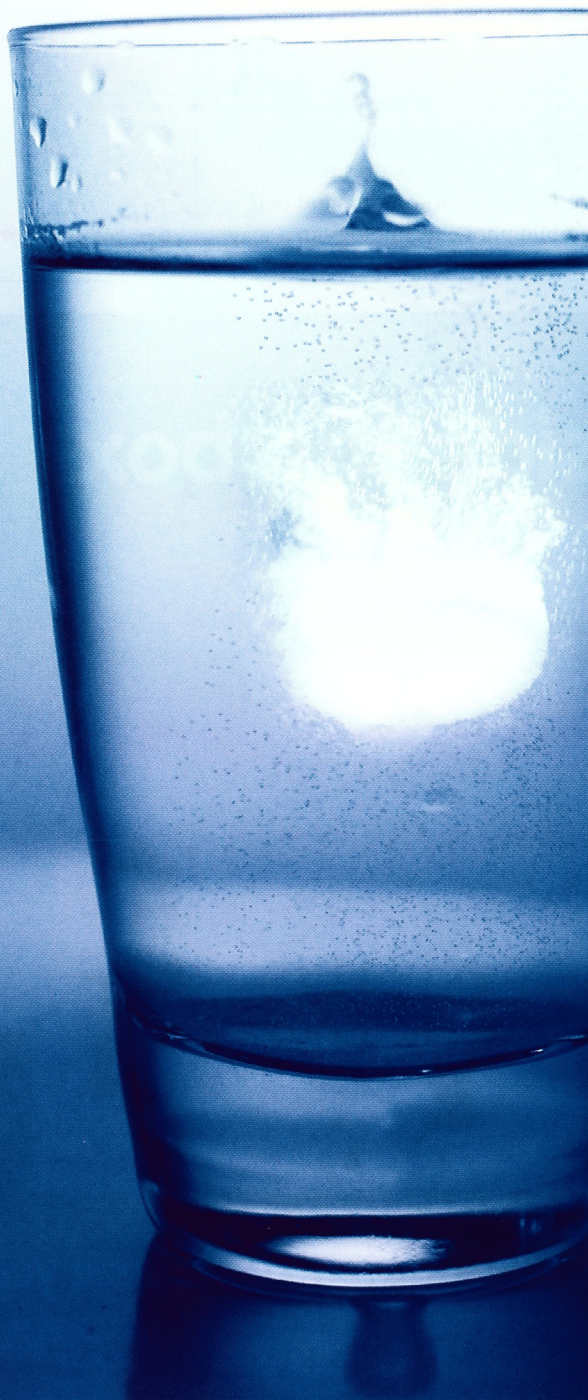


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TAKING AWAY THE HEADACHE



Wohler Technologies, best known for audio and video monitoring, recently acquired Europa Australia, the technology provider for Wohler's HDDC-200A caption encoder bridge. A brilliant piece of engineering and a passionate team has catapulted the company from audio and video monitoring into moving data, as Wohler's President and CEO **Carl Dempsey** explains

I think our objective – and this is something we are passionate about – is really to become an extension of our customers' engineering group. All the broadcast environments worldwide have had drastic reductions in engineering resources but they still need to get more done. And what we do within our own niche market area which primarily up until a few months ago was only audio and video monitoring is look at what they are trying to do and help them out either with existing products, or if they need customised products and specialised software we'll do that as well. So essentially we become a part of that broadcasters' team, we get as close to them as we possibly can to take away some of their headaches.

Would the company have continued successfully if it had restricted itself to what it started off doing?

The beautiful thing about monitoring is that the protocols change. We started out 21 years ago and most of our business was analogue and two channel. Then digital came into play, initially digital audio and then digital video SDI. We were one of the first American companies to have SDI, we have a list of 'firsts' as long as your

arm - and that has made the company successful. I'd like to say that all those years ago when there were only 12 of us - now we are up to about 96 - we saw the future and we were there to meet it, but that wouldn't be true. What happened was that these different technologies, these different protocols, were taking off in different parts of the world.

In America, they were actually behind on this, primarily because their infrastructure was already built and yet a lot of European and Asian stuff had not been built, so they went with the latest. So our customer base came to us primarily from abroad - a good 45% of our business is international - and they said "Look Carl, we love your boxes, we want to continue using them but we can only do so if you offer A, B, C" which were these new protocols. Frankly, if we wanted to keep our customer base we had to deliver. When you are smaller, you can maintain a nimbleness if you have that gorilla kind of attitude. It is more difficult to maintain that attitude as the company grows, but it's very important. And that's why I take time to travel and see customers as much as I can. If I lost the connection with the real application world then I would not be much use.

Wohler is a minnow compared to companies like Thomson and Harris. Is that good or bad?

I'm actually doing work for the companies you have just mentioned, they have got an awful lot of work on their plate, and they can't get through everything. I see them as customers, even though they are potentially competitors. A great example of that is the closed-captioning where we are helping out those companies because they weren't ready for certain protocols, and the company that we have just acquired, Europa Australia, had the solution because they had been working on it for two years.

Why did you get into the closed-captioning business?

I have known Elio Deluca, who used to own Europa Australia, for 12 years and he is still with the company. Closed-captioning is a really complex issue, you have got all these different

closed-caption standards worldwide. It is a real headache for if you have just built a plant and you can't pass those captions through because of a new protocol then you have got a problem, especially if closed-captioning of that standard is mandated, and this was the case in Australia. Elio Deluca came up with a great solution which means you don't have to change what you have got going on in your plant. We have just got this little card solution that will bridge around your piece of equipment.

The same card can also be converted to a transcode so it's pretty clever. One card uses one FPGA, a really powerful FPGA, and it squirts in whatever software is needed. The first work that we did outside Australia was in France, with Canal+. They had looked at all the big boys first and could not get exactly what they wanted. So they gave us a shot at this massive job, closed-captioning for about 23 different channels, and we were able to write new codes for their specific requirements. We did it from scratch, a brand-new protocol in what was a very short space of time. What Elio is doing really is moving data around, essentially insertion of data and extraction of data. And I believe, and this is the main reason why I purchased the company, with all this new data around broadcasting in the space they call EDS [Extended Data Systems], you are going to need a way of putting it in, extracting it, and also monitoring it - which is our core business. In the future, and the future is now, really, we are going to be monitoring all kinds of things and not only audio and video but data that is included within that audio and video. The new products will be really user-intuitive, many of them touch-screen, and you can get to anything you want. I am a great believer in "Start small but think big". The technology of the future is already here.

You say 45% of the business is outside the US, do you see that increasing?

In the States we are very well known, and we are also known in Australia. We have actually just started a company called Wohler Australia. You

“The technology of the future is already here”

really have to understand the local market and as an American company, I can't do that from California. I certainly don't go in there with an American approach.

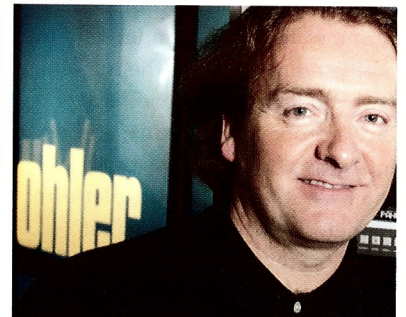
What impact of the current economic malaise are you seeing on the broadcasting industry?

Initially it was tightening up and now the budgets are shrinking. Advertising revenue is dropping, big projects are being held in abeyance. These are tough times, no question about it. But this company has been through it before. I am going to be budget careful but I am not going to batten down the hatches. This is the time when the end users need our help more than ever. It is going to last three, four or even five years.

Where do you think Wohler will be in five years' time?

We will continue to put out some very useful products, a lot more on the data side. Five years' from now, the protocols are going to change all over again. We don't want to become a massive company, I don't want to go above 150. We'll continue to invest in the engineering resource, that's the crucial thing. If we maintain our core values and that real vision where we just want to make life easier for the customer, we'll be okay. We have got great people now on our team - I love working with people who have got that kind of passion.

Carl Dempsey, thank you. ■



www.wohler.com

ENTER HERE...

South African **Pierre van der Hoven** has been labelled a "serial entrepreneur" in the media industry – he himself says he keeps kicking himself as it is hard work. His latest project **Southern Africa Direct** acquires and commissions TV programming to provide a full picture of all that the region has to offer in terms of travel, tourism, lifestyle, culture and commerce. His strategy is professionally generated content on the web and global expansion is on his agenda



It's a first - the first destination marketing company TV channel in the world. We are a private company funded by individuals, our chairman is Nelson Mandela's daughter. All the content deals with Southern Africa, we cover 25 countries. Our vision is to position ourselves as a kind of portal for Southern Africa – if you want to know anything about Southern Africa, come to us – and that could be via the internet or via a TV channel. We say to people: "Sit in the comfort of your living room, watch a TV channel, find out a little bit more about the region, and you'll be able to book travel, buy a property, buy wine, and do all kinds of transactions on the internet." Ours is a multi-platform model – the UK skies are first points of distribution but we are looking at multiple points, and that includes multiple TV channels, conventional TV channels around the world, and then IPTV and web TV and any form of distribution. We want to get our message out as wide as possible.

What has been most challenging?
To get on air and get enough content

together. We are in the normal start-up stage of the first year of a TV channel but content is an ongoing challenge. In Africa the resources are limited so the stories are rare, and the stories about Africa are normally made by foreign crews. There has been huge growth in Africa in terms of TV channels, Pay-TV, and the next phase is to boost the production sector so that we can get quality content coming out of Africa. At SA Direct we are now going through a phase where we are producing a huge amount of content in-house. It is going to put our cost base up but it will create an asset which is needed. We are working with a number of African broadcasters. We also need to originate content on HD, so we are re-versioning a lot of content that has been used before.

The UK is one market – which areas are you hoping to expand to?

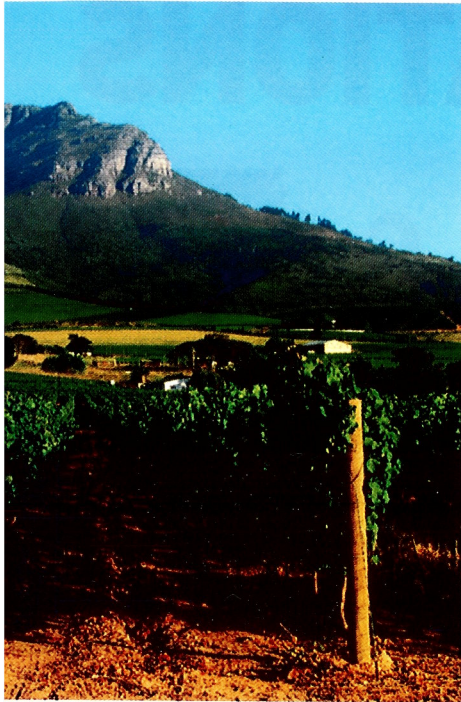
In the UK, we are on the Sky Platform, in the Lifestyle & Culture genre. We are building our online business to go into North America, we are looking at the Middle East, and India and China, and also Africa. Distribution into Africa is not a core objective but if product

“The Southern African market loves the internet and video space idea because for the first time they can get cost-effective advertising internationally”

owners can't see the channel it makes the sales process a lot more difficult, and we also see there is a serious need for Africans to find out about other Africans, because there has been xenophobia and conflict, and I think there is a real role to tell the African story to other Africans.

How are you going to tap into Africa's significant disposable income?

Our business model is to generate a strong online business and then earn non-traditional revenues on the back of the TV channel but essentially on the internet. What is happening on the internet is phenomenal. We are going the community route, launching blogs and forums. We are talking to big companies like Expedia, WAYN the travel community, we are doing a lot of work in the online space to engage with the audience. The Southern African market loves the internet and video space idea because for the first time they can get cost-effective advertising internationally. We set up our video on demand facility in London because if you set it up in Africa you get serious bandwidth issues. It is becoming a fascinating



business model in that there are lots of avenues to make money out of it but we have to generate audiences and traffic, we are in that phase of the business now.

In terms of the business plan, where do revenue streams come from?

To raise money for this kind of project, you need to sell something people understand, so the conventional TV advertising model is how we have positioned our business in the initial period – we've got Unilever and Procter & Gamble and all the big names. In the long-term strategy we go to the product owners and say: "Tell your story on the TV channel, buy a call to action ad which is spot advertising, take your video clip, put it on our web site, we'll host it, and then further down that line when people click through and they start making bookings we'll take a commission out of it." So in five years' time – conceptually - we could be the TV channels' marketing budget and we make money online.

How technologically challenging is it to set up a channel like this?

It's actually quite easy in that there

are specialist companies in the UK that are doing this for lots of channels. The challenging bit is to make decisions on existing technology when you know next year they are going to be out of date.

Will payout remain in the UK as you expand globally?

That's an interesting question, we are grappling with that right now. At the moment payout is handled in the UK by Arqiva and Canis Media. For conventional Rolls-Royce broadcast, Arqiva are the best partner but in terms of taking a feed and scheduling it and sending it straight to the States and it ending up on 20 cable channels, we probably won't use them, because it all becomes digital. We need to have the integrity of the programming based in Africa otherwise it's going to become a foreign voice telling the African story and we really don't want to do that. Also, most of our clients, the product owners, tour operators, lodges, tourism authorities, etc are based in Africa. We want to build a strong relationship with the product suppliers saying: "Don't worry about international distribution, we will solve that. Give us your content." That's the other interesting thing about our business model: getting content at very low cost. A huge amount of content already exists, produced in the travel and tourism industry but never ends up on the broadcast platform. That's why the response from the market to what we are doing has been great: they love the fact that we are delivering existing content to a much wider audience.

How quickly do you expect to move into the black?

We have got the 2010 World Cup coming, that's going to put South Africa on the map. And in this climate of negative perceptions we are going to become a very powerful tool. We are already global because we are streaming on the internet but that does not mean we have got a global audience yet. We'll probably be in 10 countries

“One interesting thing about our business model: getting content at very low cost”

www.sedirect.tv



within 12 months at least. We launched our phase 3 web site in October – with the stream, the schedule, the beginnings of video on demand, and the beginning of the transaction side of things. The next phase is a full content management system, forums, blogs, the community section linking to other communities.

How big is the SA Direct team?

It's a split team – we have got about six staff in London, 25 here and we outsource a lot. We could have 20 of our clients in production right now, making the content, where we ourselves are not directly involved.

Looking at the media in South Africa as a whole, where is it likely to go?

The first thing about the South African market is it is highly regulated. There is only one FTA private channel, there is only one dominant force in terms of Pay-TV which is MultiChoice. Three other operators were licensed but people pulled out, because to go up against M-Net or MultiChoice in their home market is a huge challenge. Telkom Media is coming and another company called On Digital Media is coming in on the Pay side. We don't have one national radio station that's private because the government won't license it. I started a radio station called YFM, we became the biggest regional station within two weeks, and the private stations have been quite successful but there are just so few of them. The SABC is a political mess but the irony is it still takes probably 70% of ad revenue, all the licence fees, so it is still a major operator and not making space for the private sector because the government is protecting it by regulation and not issuing licences. So overall, it's a vibrant market but it is fairly static as it is totally dominated by these big players. It is a very difficult market to crack.

Pierre van der Hoven, thank you very much. ■

LEGAL RAMIFICATIONS

The **Erich Pommer Institut** is engaged in research in the field of media law and media economics and passes on knowledge and skills by teaching university students and offering professional training for people who work in the media. We met EPI director **Prof. Dr. Oliver Castendyk**, formerly counsel of ProSiebenSat.1



Several media issues are currently being debated in Germany. One is the reform of the film subsidy law, the whole system was amended and revised two years ago. It is based in part on the new British model which offers incentives to film and produce and post-produce in the country. Secondly, there is the reform of the broadcasting law – Rundfunkstaatsvertrag – which is almost done - it is going to the European Commission for a final revision.

Is there anything in there that's controversial?

Oh yes. Basically it is amending the current broadcasting treaty in two respects: the mandate for public broadcasting in the digital realm and on the internet. Interestingly, it is not only the private broadcasters who are unhappy with the pubcasters' expansion into the internet. Even more dissatisfied are the direct competitors on the internet, like Spiegel online [English language international edition of the German news source] or the newspapers FAZ.de or

Welt.de. Even the German film producers are not happy: they had hoped a new market for their products would open up, and now it seems that the pubcasters have won this lobby battle and will go extensively into the online space. There are very few restrictions, the only one is the so-called 'Three-Step Test' which is modelled on the BBC - we will have to see whether this is a real barrier or not.

You are based near Berlin but your activities go much beyond Germany. What are the important issues in media law worldwide?

In private media law, which is basically copyright law, there is still the issue of piracy, internet piracy and piracy in general, and the role of copyright in the 21st century as a worldwide problem, how to balance the rights of the author and the media industry with the interests of the consumer and the people who want to inform themselves. In public media law, there are lots of problems. For example, in Saudi Arabia you are not allowed to advertise alcohol, so what about someone who has an internet site, a beer brewer for

▲ The EPI team with Oliver Castendyk back right

example, which is also available in Saudi Arabia. The internet has brought a lot of new problems in terms of regulation of media content, and you have to strike a balance between the interests of a certain nation state and the world community which is interested in the free flow of information. There is also a problem of capacity, e.g. capacity in cable networks, how to allocate certain frequencies worldwide for different usages – broadcasting, internet, mobile phone etc.

Media law is often an afterthought, when something has already gone wrong. Can the EPI help fix a problem, or do you provide guidelines to prevent mistakes?

Definitely the latter. We cannot be mediators or trouble-shooters because that's more the role of a lawyer. But the Institute can offer a neutral platform for debate, either in public at a conference, or in a more private environment for a debate off the record with people from the industry.

In today's world everything changes very fast. Technological

“ Now it seems the pubcasters have won this battle and will go extensively into the online space ”

changes in media production and distribution generate new legal questions and problems. On a practical level, how can the EPI help?

We help people by offering courses on the technical development, economic exploitation, and the legal ramifications. For example, on what's happening in the area of digital post-production, on mobile usage of films, on new technical models for bringing films to the consumer via the internet, on new economic models how to make money from that, and which legal problems arise with these new forms of usage.

What do your workshops on "Essential Legal Framework" cover?

The course on European co-production is always hugely popular, it goes into the complexities and intricacies of

“We can offer a neutral platform for debate, either in public or in private off the record”

European co-production. Then there is one on digital developments, one on mediation and negotiation in the film business, and one on rights clearance which is a very complex issue especially for a film company. These courses are organised by our Institute and a local host, and also funded by the Media Programme of the EU.

Who comes to these workshops?

Basically younger film producers, but also older ones who want to know the latest. People from film subsidy institutions, lawyers. Participants come from all over Europe including East Europe, lots from Scandinavia and Ireland.

What's in your database called "Legal Basics"?

It contains legal texts which are relevant for media companies, such as copyright law, broadcasting law,

media advertising law, etc in all the European jurisdictions. We try to find English translations if they are available. It's a free offer on our web site.

Lastly, you mention consultation on your web site – what does that entail?

It means consultation on general matters. For example, one big film studio got a certain subsidy for building a studio complex and they wondered whether this is compatible with European subsidy law. We provided them with a legal opinion and advised them on how to design their application for local subsidies in such a way that it is compatible with European subsidy structure. We charge for this kind of service but less than a law firm probably.

Oliver Castendyk, thank you. ■

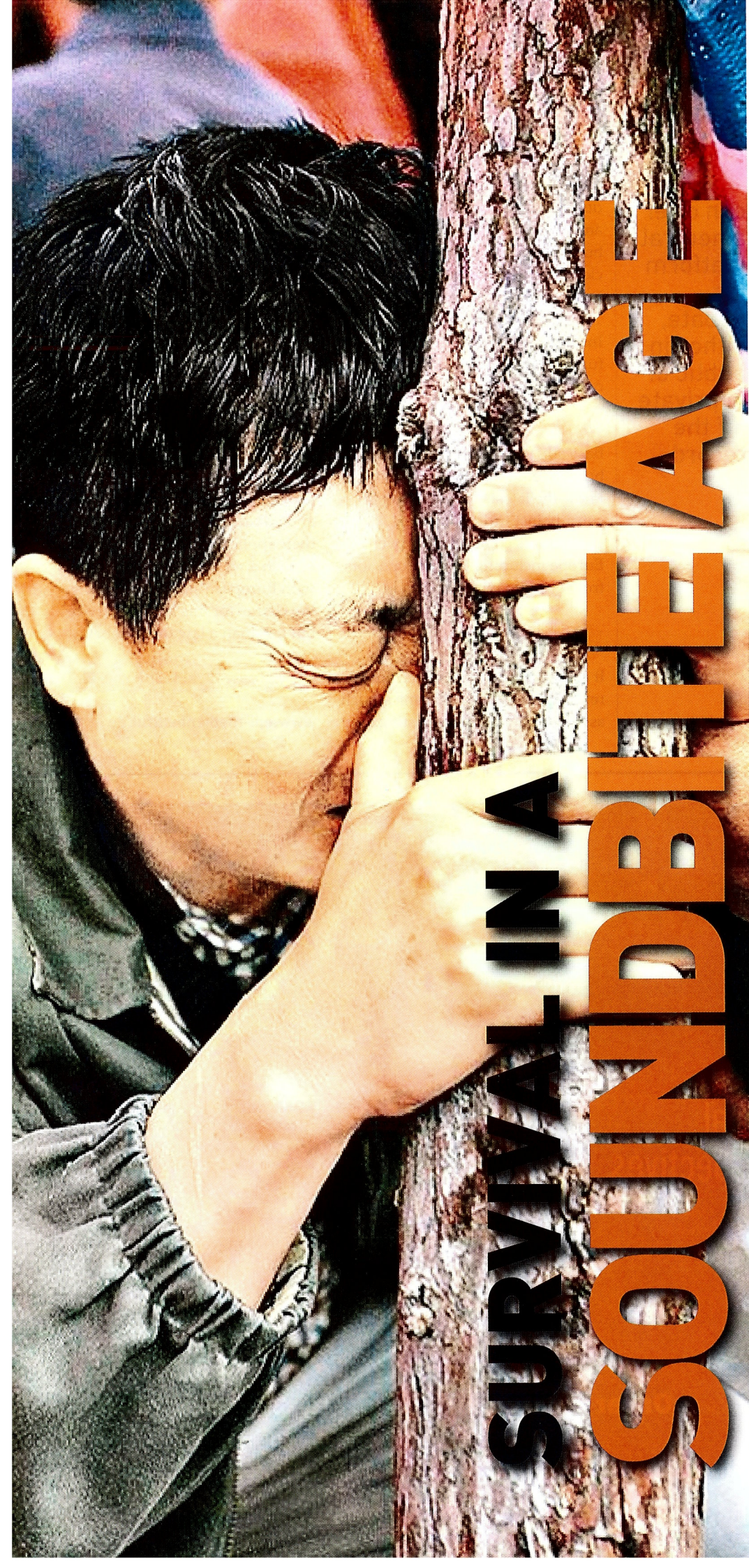
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SURVIVAL IN A BITTE AGE

SOUND BITE

The term “broadcasting” is said to be near the end of its shelf life. The future of media will be about millions producing their own content, sharing content interactively on line, anytime, in an “always on-line network...” For many though, radio and TV are still the media of choice, and at times the only media available, reports **Alan Heil**

The dilemma facing many government-funded international broadcasters today is that they have to make rational decisions about investing in an expanding array of new delivery platforms. Yet established media (radio and TV) still have proven effectiveness. They feel compelled to balance their governments’ geopolitical priorities, and anticipate new priorities, against their greatest goal: the need to serve consumers of both old and new media with an accurate, objective, and credible picture of today’s world.

Last May, two natural disasters in Asia tested the public broadcasting skills of government-funded networks in dramatic new ways. These were cyclone Nargis in Myanmar (Burma) on May 3 and nine days later, the devastating earthquake in China’s Sichuan province.

BURMA'S CYCLONE BLACKOUT
At 9:30 a.m. Washington time on May 2, the broadcast staff received an email in Burmese from a

resident of Rangoon asking for more information about the cyclone, still some distance away. He was hearing two entirely different accounts of the storm, one from the Burmese Meteorological Department saying the storm's winds would not exceed 50 mph and the other from VOA's Burmese Service warning of a possible impending disaster. Twelve hours later, Cyclone Nargis struck southern Burma, killing 130,000 Burmese.

The Washington-based Radio Free Asia the same day had interviewed a Rangoon sociologist and journalist who expressed concern that the Burmese government and state-run media weren't properly warning and preparing its citizens for the devastating storms ahead.

The two US stations followed up with reports on disaster relief efforts, health, water sanitation and safety issues, and Burma's efforts to prevent international help from arriving from abroad. In the worst affected areas, information about what was really happening was scarce. RFA's and VOA's Burmese Service webpages received four to five times the normal number of visits from survivors and relatives.

"Shortwave radio is probably the only way by which we can all be sure of being able to access information at any time and in any place without worrying about permission, or connectivity, or bandwidth, or having the right antenna or several other complex technological concerns. No other delivery mechanism is capable of sending material over huge distances without interference and at virtually no cost to the listener."

Graham Mytton, former head of audience research, BBC World Service

On June 13, a Los Angeles Times journalist whose name was withheld to protect his identity reported that people in levelled

villages were eager to tune in to BBC, VOA and RFA but had no radios to do so. The reporter left his personal shortwave receiver behind in Kon Tan Paak, Myanmar.

VOA immediately followed up by purchasing and shipping more than 800 windup radio receivers for distribution by aid workers to needy towns and villages. Eventually, listeners in these devastated cities and hamlets could learn about the massive efforts of organisations such as Medecins sans Frontieres, distributing food and plastic sheeting for makeshift tents. VOA's Burmese Service broadcast an analysis of specialists from World Vision on hygienic and reconstruction needs of isolated victims in the disaster area.

THE SICHUAN EARTHQUAKE

In China, the massive quake struck on May 12, a week and a half after Nargis. VOA China Branch correspondent Ming Zhang was on the first non-military plane allowed to fly from Beijing to the vast area of destruction in Sichuan province. His graphic reports throughout the next week focused on rescue efforts, the aftershocks, and the poignant reaction of victims at the scene. Ming took photos of those affected and their devastated homes and schools, instantly relayed via the VOA Mandarin Chinese website and on the service's interactive television call-in programmes. In one particularly dramatic report, Ming broadcast an account of the panic tens of thousands residents and he felt when the Peoples Liberation Army announced that a nearby dam was about to give way.

Unlike Burma, the PRC initially allowed access to relief workers and journalists to most of the disaster-ravaged region, and cooperated fully with foreigners willing to help. But as local protests by grieving parents and teachers against shoddy school construction spread, the authorities clamped down on Chinese and foreign media as they had during the uprising in Tibet several months

“People in levelled villages were eager to tune in to BBC, VOA and RFA but had no radios to do so”

earlier. On June 6, RFA reported that police had cordoned off the site of Juyuan Middle School in Sichuan province and escorted two foreign journalists away from the scene. On June 28, RFA's Mandarin and Cantonese services aired news about the detention of a middle school teacher named Liu Shaokun who had been doing relief work but openly criticized school construction.

"International radio is the oxygen of civil society."

Kevin Klose, President, National Public Radio

PARADOX OF PLENTY

The BBC broadcast eyewitness accounts from Rangoon, from the suburb of Tunte, and from a man who experienced the cyclone's destructive might on a road between the towns of Nay Pyi Tau and Htuankkyant north of the capital. These accounts leapt onto websites, e-mails, podcasts, mobile phones, and were summarized in short message services --- including descriptions of relief needs and appeals for help from World Vision, CARE, Merlin, MSF, the World Food Program and the International Committee of the Red Cross.

Traffic went the other way, too. Mobile phone pictures taken by reporters and some by survivors were harvested by newspapers and news agencies. Their impact was amplified a million times over when they were described on radio or relayed by international TV networks or their video streams. That was especially important in countries like Burma where new media are scarce and radio offers a nearly exclusive window on the world.

In our century, we enjoy an information "paradox of plenty" where in the rapid move to digital dialogues and fast-paced websites traditional longer form international radio and TV programming face formidable challenges. Yet take any single medium away, and risk moving backwards, rather than ahead. ■

COMPLAINTS AND COMPLIANCE

Until 1994 the majority in South Africa was a minority within their own country. Minorities extend not just to ethnic origin, but also to groupings in terms of language, religion, culture, gender, disability, and even children.

Today South Africa's national public broadcaster SABC operates 19 radio stations, including a 24-hour service in each of the country's eleven official languages, and on three national TV stations, thus trying to fulfil its mandate of promoting a national identity and catering to the diverse needs of the citizens of South Africa. At a recent symposium in Bonn, Germany, of NGOs active in developing countries, Jonathan Marks spoke to **Fakir Hassen**, Head of Broadcast Compliance at the SABC.

These days videos are simply uploaded to YouTube and other new platforms, so what role is there for a broadcasting complaints commission in the future?

Well, you know there is a song that the Commission in South Africa had banned recently for broadcast. Sales have obviously rocketed. As a public broadcaster one can't be showing something that openly advocates violence but people go out and buy the DVD. Our Broadcasting Complaints Commission was set up as a self-regulatory body by the broadcast industry, and it has been rather successful for more than a decade now. There is a great level of consultation, it's not hounding the broadcasters but trying to be conciliatory from the side of both the audience and the broadcaster.

What role has the media played in the recent xenophobic incidents in South Africa?

It's a very significant role. As the public broadcaster, SABC decided

“We'd like to believe our messages had an impact as violence subsided quickly”

that we would not wait for NGOs and others to provide content and ask us to broadcast this but be active ourselves. On both TV and our various radio services in all the languages we sent out messages about brotherhood, and how other African countries helped us in the past when our leaders were refugees in those countries, and here we were turning on the people who had assisted us in gaining our freedom. So we sent out a diverse range of messages and we'd like to believe it had an impact because you saw the levels of violence subsiding fairly quickly.

You have 11 official languages - what role does the media play to bridge communities or is there a danger that each service is preaching to its own group?

When broadcasting began being transformed in South Africa there was a question whether there was still room for what had effectively been created as a divisive type of environment, where there was a 24 hour radio service in each of those languages. And perhaps somewhat ironically it's the audiences that demanded that we retain that.

What we did do was change the names - so for example Radio Zulu became Ukhozi FM. One might argue that it is just a name change but it helped change the culture as

well. What we do believe in very strongly is promoting cross-cultural and cross-linguistic appreciation. On television for example we have soapies which use multiple languages and sub-titling. We try to do it in a natural way - if some Zulu actors are part of the cast they might use Zulu dialogue, and through the subtitling everyone will understand it.

How important is internet in South Africa?

One of the issues in South Africa is that broadband is still relatively expensive so access obviously becomes an issue as well. It's a fast developing area, and the SABC is also now putting content on the internet. It's an international phenomenon and one has to stay with the trend. And the print media are quite strong on the internet in South Africa.

What is the future for SABC?

I think there is a great future. We are about to embark on DTT in South Africa which opens up a whole range of new opportunities. We have the challenges of language and mandated quota issues and so on, and we are still very much developing in those areas just over a decade after democracy. But I think a wonderful opportunity exists there. ■

▼ Anti-xenophobia demonstrations by Wits University staff and students, May 2008



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