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Dolby Vision image quality leaves viewers stunned

The Association
for International
Broadcasting

The Channel

THE INTERNATIONAL MEDIA MAGAZINE FOR TV, RADIO, ONLINE & MOBILE

ISSUE 2 | 2014

Myanmar emerging

Reporting conditions are changing

Camera in the sky

Using multicopters for creative and newsgathering

Digital switchover

A disruptive transition - but players are beginning to see and seize the opportunity

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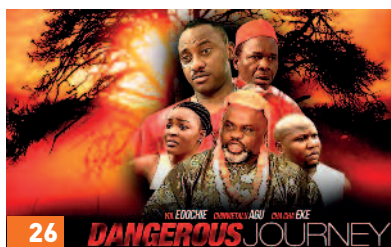
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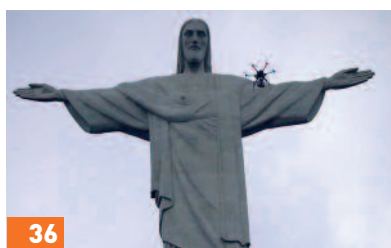
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WELCOME

Are you in the slow zone? I guess not. My friends are not shy to press the point and have just given me 'The joy of laziness – How to slow down and live longer'. But make no mistake. Slow is on the up. Travellers on British Airways have been able to sample 'Slow TV' – a seven hour train journey to Oslo in real time, no commentary, no fancy editing. The film has become a cult hit in Scandinavia, where Slow TV as a genre is already popular – featuring knitting, walking and fishing. As an antidote to modern TV, where camera angles shift every second, it's strangely calming.

But all you action producers and action fans, fear not. People like the BBC's Tom Hannen and Owain Rich, and Ruptly's Ahmet Cakan are making sure you are not bored. What they are doing with drones is truly amazing. My colleague Rita who did the interviews went from 'drone virgin' to 'drone mistress' in a very short time and loved the experience.

Our focus topic is digital switchover – we try to look at the reality of DSO from different angles. H Nwana writes that a lot of African countries and emerging markets are going through DSO as a purely technocratic exercise – that is a big mistake and completely misses the point that it is all about creating jobs, creating a new economy. Add to this Emeka Mba's observation, that "In Africa, information is not just about entertainment, it often makes the difference between access to health and education, and indeed life and death; which is why the DSO offers us the opportunity to rethink and remake broadcasting to serve our social and economic needs more efficiently in order to secure a more developed and socially cohesive country." Generally the realisation seems to be dawning that although the transition to digital is disruptive, the evolutionary benefits at the end will be more than worth it. All the new broadcasters that are popping up throughout Africa understand the digital opportunity but, as Mayo Okunola points out, one major challenge is that a great deal of content is exclusive across Africa to MultiChoice. Is the end of that monopolistic style of selling content near, where business is done in Cannes or South Africa?

Ah, yes, content. Shell are doing exciting things with 'branded content', getting close to the action of a story in a way that no ordinary broadcaster could. Euronews are venturing into Africa with a pan-African sister channel called Africanews, to produce the right sort of content for their target audiences. And in Burma (or Myanmar), international broadcasters like the BBC and Channel NewsAsia are practically frolicking at the prospect of being able to do proper journalistic work on the ground. Speaking of 'on the ground', AFP's video business is expanding, always on the search for that exclusive.

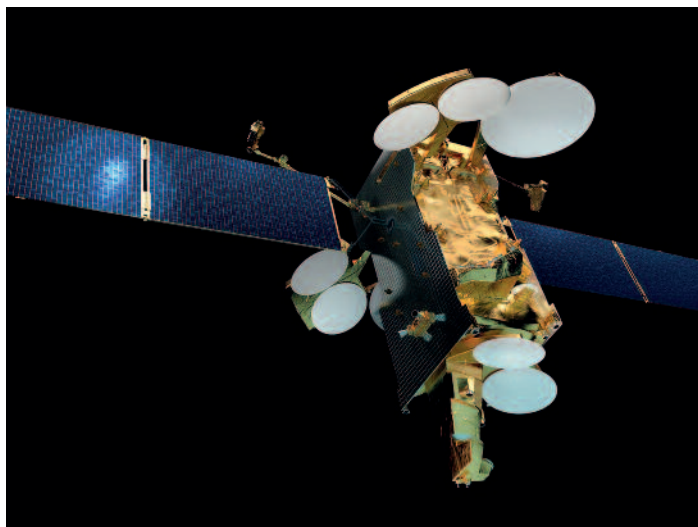
Where would content be without technology? Henrik Eklund gives us a glimpse of his vision of tagging video news; and Dolby promises a 'wide colour gamut' with its Vision technology which – after a start in the movies – will hopefully soon filter down to broadcasters. Roland Vlaicu says they have started to think about the live broadcast cases and will be showing some advances at IBC. So see you there?

GUNDA CANNON EDITOR

“From 'drone virgin' to 'drone mistress' in a very short time”



SES DTH/HTS hybrid for Asia in 2017



SES has selected Airbus Defence and Space to build a new hybrid communications satellite, SES-12, to serve the fast growing DTH, data, mobility and government markets in Asia, for launch in Q4 2017. The new satellite will expand SES's capabilities to provide direct-to-home broadcasting, VSAT, Mobility and High Throughput Satellite (HTS) data connectivity services in the Asia-Pacific

region, including rapidly growing markets such as India and Indonesia.

SES-12 will be positioned at the well-established SES orbital slot of 95 degrees East and will replace SES's existing NSS-6 satellite and be co-located with SES-8. Today, SES serves close to 20m DTH households in India and Indochina from this orbital slot.

The satellite is designed to

operate for 15 years, with a payload comprised of 68 high-power physical Ku-band transponders and 8 physical Ka-band transponders. The spacecraft will be equipped with an electric plasma propulsion system for orbit raising and on-orbit manoeuvres. The payload of the hybrid SES-12 satellite consists of two distinct but complementary missions: first, traditional wide beam coverage, and second, a high-powered Ku-band multi spot beam payload (HTS).

Starting September 2014, SES is providing a new digital TV platform for West Africa on SES's ASTRA 2F satellite at 28.2 degrees East, in cooperation with service provider Computer Warehouse Group. This independent TV platform in Nigeria will be the country's first free-to-air DTH digital TV platform, providing end-to-end contribution, ground and space services to local, regional, national and international TV broadcasters across West Africa.

Arabsat growth

ABS and Arab Satellite Communication Organization have signed a strategic commercial agreement for a multi-transponder lifetime Ku-band payload on the new ABS-3A satellite planned for launch in late 2014/early 2015. The ABS-3A satellite will be one of the world's first all-electric propulsion satellites (a Boeing 702SP platform satellite) with nearly 8 kW of EOL payload power and up to a total of 48 C and Ku-band transponders. It will be located at 3° West and will offer expanded capacity connecting the Americas, Europe, the Middle East and Africa regions. Its wide C and Ku-band coverage will serve both sides of the Atlantic for transatlantic as well as regional connectivity and services.

The company also announced that Spanish technology business group GMV will provide a complete Satellite Control Center (SCC) for Arabsat's existing and upcoming fleet of satellites.

Earlier in the year, Hellas-sat, a majority owned subsidiary of Arabsat, partnered with Inmarsat to launch a joint satellite into 39° E orbital location in 2016. One of the satellite's two missions will be to carry a 44 Ku-band transponders payload designated 'Hellas-sat 3' that will replace the existing Hellas-sat 2 and provide growth capacities to its customers with diversified footprints in EMEA.



Eutelsat UHD TV + roaming

Global satellite operator Eutelsat is launching an Ultra High Definition demonstration channel for Southeast Asia and Australia, based on Thomson Video Networks' award-winning ViBE VS7000 multi-screen video system and Sapphire MPEG stream server. Broadcast via Eutelsat's year-old EUTELSAT 70B satellite, the demo channel will leverage the advanced high-efficiency video coding capabilities of the TVN solutions to provide a rich UHD TV picture at up to 50 frames per second and in 10-bit colour. The ViBE and Sapphire systems combine to create a very simple and affordable platform for broadcasting a UHD channel —

as well as an ideal opportunity to demonstrate the full power of HEVC encoding for delivering pristine UHD picture quality with maximum bandwidth savings, said Michel Chabrol, Eutelsat's Director Marketing Innovation.

Eutelsat has also entered into a pioneering agreement with ViaSat that will enable service access and roaming on each other's high-capacity satellite networks (KA-SAT for Eutelsat and ViaSat-1 for ViaSat). Both Ka-band networks, representing well over half of all Ka-band capacity on orbit worldwide, share the same high-capacity satellite ecosystem, enabled by the ViaSat Broadband System, along with other ground

infrastructure owned and operated by Eutelsat and ViaSat. The resulting high-capacity service area will span North America, Europe and the Mediterranean Basin.

The agreement includes provisions for future satellites and follow-on technologies as they complement current Eutelsat and ViaSat High Throughput Satellites, including ViaSat-2 scheduled for launch in 2016.

Michel Azibert has succeeded Jean-François Leprince-Ringuet as Eutelsat Deputy CEO and Chief Commercial and Development Officer, taking commercial and development activities under his direct responsibility.

Intelsat deals



Intelsat S.A. has signed a 15-year agreement with Encompass Digital Media, a global leader in mission-critical media capture, management and distribution services, for capacity on Intelsat 34, one of the three satellites comprising Intelsat's premier video neighbourhoods serving Latin America. Encompass will transition from Intelsat 805 at 304.5° East to its replacement satellite, Intelsat 34, in late 2015, and lease additional C-band capacity to expand its SD and HD video distribution feeds throughout Latin America.

Also in June, Intelsat announced a 15-year service agreement with leading African pay-TV provider MultiChoice, on the new Intelsat 36 satellite expected to launch in late 2016. This satellite will be co-located with Intelsat 20 at 68.5°E, Intelsat's premier DTH neighbourhood in Africa where MultiChoice has been the anchor

customer since 1995. Intelsat's SVP of Global Sales, Kurt Riegelman (left), said that Intelsat has committed to and invested in Africa's communications and broadcast infrastructure since 1965. The Intelsat 36 design will feature Ku- and C-band services. The MultiChoice DTH services will utilize the Ku-band payload. The C-band payload will provide services to other customers using the premier Intelsat 68.5°E video neighbourhood, which also distributes content to South Asian cable communities.

In Europe, Slovak Telekom a.s. is using Intelsat to expand its DTH services in Central Eastern Europe, operating multiple transponders at the Intelsat 1° West premier video neighbourhood. In addition, Intelsat's terrestrial network, IntelsatOne, is providing an uplink from Intelsat's Fuchsstadt, Germany Teleport with fibre contribution from Bratislava and a provision for disaster recovery uplink services. With the potential to reach 17m households across 17 Northern, Central and Eastern European countries, Intelsat 1° West is a leading neighbourhood for CEE media platforms.

TVC News distribution

TVC News, the first pan African 24-hour TV news channel, has concluded deals with CONSAT (West Africa), Zuku TV (East Africa), Montage pay-tv (Nigeria) and TV Africa (Ohio, USA) to increase distribution to its growing audience. TVC News' existing agreement for carriage on StarTimes is to be extended to include a further 12 African countries. Household reach is now more than 15m, and TVC News is working to grow that number across Europe and the US.

Based in Lagos, TVC News covers the major news stories from around the continent of Africa. Some have been on its own doorstep in Nigeria – such as Boko Haram's abduction of more than 200 schoolgirls – while its correspondents have filed from Kenya, Central African Republic, South Africa or Tunisia with breaking news.

Q4 of 2014 will see the launch of three new programmes: *The Scoop* – a weekly interview with a leading African personality; *Africa Correspondent* – a monthly showcase for human interest stories/social issues; and *The World This Week* – a longer look at stories making the news.

IN BRIEF

PAY-TV RESILIENT IN US

Pay-TV subscriber numbers in the US remain relatively resilient despite rising costs to customers and the growth of alternative online video subscription services. The Informa Multiscreen Index, which tracks trends in TV services, shows that the top 10 pay-TV services reporting figures lost 165,500 digital TV customers in the seasonally weak Q2 '14. This represents just 0.2% of their combined subscriber base of more than 87m homes. The longer-term trend is that satellite and telco providers have been gaining customers, generally at the expense of cable companies.

INTERMEDIA CEO

Independent global consultancy firm InterMedia has appointed Dr Christopher Fleury as CEO. Fleury is a seasoned research executive who worked most recently with the global market and opinion research firm GfK. InterMedia specialises in strategic research and evaluation, with projects in more than 100 countries, including many of the world's most challenging places.

TELEPORT CERTIFICATION

World Teleport Association is developing a Teleport Certification Programme to create an objective, transparent, and internationally accepted method for documenting the quality of teleport operations. It also aims to provide a means for customers to select teleport vendors delivering the price-performance level that is appropriate for their applications. Certification standards for facilities, technology and operating procedures are being developed by a volunteer committee of teleport, satellite and technology executives as well as representatives of end-user customers.

#FreeAJStaff



Speaking at the US-Africa summit in Washington DC, US President Obama once again called for the release of Al Jazeera English journalists Peter Greste, Mohamed Fahmy and Baher Mohamed, jailed in Cairo on 23 June this year. MD of Al Jazeera English, Al Anstey,

welcomed the President's comments and renewed the call for the journalists' immediate release, saying that their continuing detention is a challenge to media freedom as "not a shred of evidence was presented against them in the trial". Charged with aiding the

Muslim Brotherhood and reporting false news, Greste and Fahmy were sentenced to seven years in prison, while Baher Mohamed was sentenced to a total of ten years in prison.

Following the shock verdicts and sentencing, global support for the release of the Al Jazeera journalists has grown, with politicians and governments adding their voice to that of over 150 rights groups, global petitions, protests by media outlets across the globe, and social media campaigns to #FreeAJStaff.

IN BRIEF

GUIZHOU GOES FOR VIBE

Guizhou Province TV, the primary broadcaster in China's Guizhou province, has deployed Thomson Video Networks' ViBE VS7000 encoding and transcoding platform to drive the launch of its new IPTV service. Installed in the station's operations centre in Guiyang City, the ViBE platform joins an existing footprint of TVN video compression solutions. Currently delivering 17 HD channels and 35 SD channels via IPTV, the ViBE VS7000 is providing the foundation for the network's long-term strategy to offer a range of IP video services, including multi-screen delivery.

EMMY NOMINEE

Romania's Antena 3 has been nominated for an Emmy by The International Academy of Television Arts & Sciences in the Current Affairs category for *The Long Journey Home*. It tells the story of a boy saved from the abominable orphanage in Siret and now living in the US who gathers the courage to return to Romania to meet the man who saved his life and the mother who abandoned him. The Emmy winners will be announced in New York on 30 September.

BLACK BOX RAID

The recent raids by Hong Kong Customs on suppliers of pirate TV box services should serve as a warning to all potential consumers of unauthorised TV services, said Asia's pay-TV association CASBAA: as the content is being illegally supplied the signal is subject to interruption at any time. Illegal boxes pose a growing problem, and industry players expect to work closely with enforcement agencies to combat their supply and use. Holders of authorised pay-TV licences in Hong Kong are Hong Kong Cable TV, PCCW/now TV, and TVB Network Vision.

How we follow, share and use the news

A news usage survey compiled by News Republic, the news app that aggregates global news for smartphones, tablets and wearables, sheds light on similarities and differences in how nationalities engage with the news and provides interesting insights into how gender plays a role in engagement with the news.

News Republic compiled nearly 14,000 responses across six countries – the US, France, Germany, UK, Italy and Spain. "To feel connected to the world," was the top reason for following the news given in every country.

The responses showed that national news is most important to every reader, but in every country, 60% of readers are also interested in international news, with tech news of greater interest than business news. The world is split down the middle on whether they would use a wearable to track the news.

Among a string of recent awards and nominations, News Republic has been chosen as one of Google's favourite Android apps (only 40 out of 1+ million), is a global "Editor's Choice" and received the SIGNAL award for Twitter momentum.

RRI partnerships

Radio Romania International is partnering with UBB Radio, the online student station of Babes-Bolyai University in Cluj, NW Romania. UBB Radio rebroadcasts RRI shows in Romanian, English, German, French, Spanish and Italian for UBB's foreign

students. In another initiative, RRI Spanish language content is rebroadcast at the Miguel de Cervantes high school in Bucharest. RRI is part of Radio Romania (PBS), the market leader (31.7% cumulated market share, daily reach 4.5m listeners).

Engaging Arab Youth

Arabic language network Radio Sawa, which has a weekly reach of more than 11m, has launched its new free Radio Sawa app that gives owners of iPhones, iPads and Android phones and tablets instant access to Radio Sawa's streams of breaking news, music, information programmes and hourly news updates.

Listeners can tune into one of Radio Sawa's seven country and regional streams which include Iraq, Egypt, Jordan, Morocco, Gulf, Lebanon and Sudan. User participation is through Sawa Chat, and original content can be easily shared via Facebook, Twitter and e-mail. The app features On Demand Podcasts of Radio Sawa's news and information programmes and allows audiences to tune into Radio Sawa while using other apps. The Radio Sawa app is produced in partner-ship with the Broadcasting Board of Governors Office of Digital & Design Innovation.

Teeman joins Bloomberg



Matt Teeman is joining Bloomberg Media as commercial director for its international multi-platform media organisation in EMEA. Bloomberg Media includes web, mobile, television, digital video, radio, print magazines and live events. Teeman was most recently commercial director at DMG Media and previously at Metro, Immediate Media and

BBC Worldwide.

Based in London, Teeman will oversee Bloomberg Media's advertising sales efforts, pursuing innovative revenue models and expanding into new markets as part of Bloomberg's new consumer media strategy, first outlined by Justin B. Smith, CEO of Bloomberg Media in March.

Adam Freeman who was

appointed in May as the first Managing Director of Bloomberg Media for Europe, the Middle East and Africa, said "Matt is a terrific addition to the strong commercial team within Bloomberg Media bringing more than 20 years of experience, particularly in the cross-platform area. He will build solutions to evolve our portfolio of digitally-led, multi-platform brands targeting the informed and engaged global audience who voraciously consume Bloomberg Media's brands. Our global scale presents commercial partners with opportunities no other media company in the world can offer, and Matt will further build our regional commercial offering as part of the wider global strategy."

Vizrt unveils new tools

At IBC2014, Vizrt is showcasing new studio automation, 4K, IP and cloud-based graphics, enhanced media asset management, social TV and sports production tools and solutions.

Highlighted during the show will be Viz Artist, its real-time 3D modelling and animation tool with MAXON CINEMA4D and Adobe After Effects integration, Viz One, a file-based video workflow with Viz Pilot timeline editor workflow, and the new Viz Mosart, for a complete newscast automation solution. Also on display will be the Vizrt Social TV solution with maps and interactive

touchscreen capabilities, Viz Libero, a 3D virtual sports enhancements solution with Viz Arena image-based tracking for displaying live player-attached graphics in real time, and Viz Pilot, a template-driven graphics and video management tool with multi-channel playout.

Among recent deals signed by Vizrt are a US\$323k sports analysis deal with a Western European broadcaster, a US\$1m virtual set deal with a news channel in the Middle East, and a US\$452k broadcast graphics deal with an African financial news channel.

TWC picks ClipJOCKEY

When Time Warner Cable Sports looked for professional studio production software early this summer for its new Columbus, Ohio facility it chose ClipJOCKEY, arvato Systems' stand-alone solution for efficient workflow management in control rooms and post production houses. Deciding factors were cost effectiveness and flexibility of studio production, play-to-air capacity, ease of use, strong production capabilities and integrated file sharing. The system was operational after just one week of installation, configuration and training time, says arvato Systems' Eivind Sandstrand.

RTI's digital archives

In May 2013, Radio Taiwan International launched a full-scale digital archiving of its treasures from 86 years of broadcasting. The project covers print materials from 1949 to 1979 and sound files of old programmes. Included in the latter are reel tapes of broadcasts from China, which RTI monitored and

recorded during the Cold War era. The wide variety of regional accents found in main-land China made the process of transcribing broadcasts particularly challenging.

As part of the project, old publications and documents were taken out of storage for cleaning, scanning and

categorising. RTI's digital archives eventually ran to 15,000 pages of old publications and documents.

RTI also cooperated with Chengchi University on a report detailing propaganda broadcast by RTI during the Cold War. This report also sheds light on national history and the history of cross-strait dialogue.

FMM distribution deals



The first half of 2014 has seen France Medias Monde sign numerous new distribution deals.

For France 24, developments include expansion in Panama and Uruguay for the English version of the channel, a new part-time broadcast on MyChannel to some 10.5m households across Europe, inclusion in the OTT and

mobile offer of Digi TV in Romania and broadcast via the satellite offer Tring in Albania.

France 24 has also strengthened its presence in Thailand with a new distribution agreement with major cable operator Chaoren that carries France 24 English version in its basic offer, providing access to a quarter of all digital

households in the country.

For Virgin Media and ONO subscribers throughout the UK and Spain, a dedicated France 24 app compatible with TiVo digital decoders has been developed, allowing viewers to access text and photo articles as well as programmes on demand.

Radios RFI and MCD have struck new deals in the USA and Canada and subscribers to ENOVATIVETV IPTV package can now access eight 24/7 RFI and MCD streams, including the French language feeds RFI Monde and RFI Afrique, both in French, to RFI English, RFI Swahili and RFI Hausa, RFI Musique, MCD and MCD Music.

IN BRIEF

AUSTRALIA HBBTV

Australian broadcasters Seven, Nine, Ten and ABC are launching their HbbTV service on 2 September. FreeviewPlus offers a range of new features including a 7-day EPG; access to available FTA Catch Up TV in one place on the TV; recommendations of the best programmes on today, on Catch Up and in the future, the ability to browse and search programmes across the next seven days, plus a 'Favourites' function. A range of FreeviewPlus receivers will be available from major appliance and electronics retailers to coincide with the launch.

ABC HANGOUTS

The ABC has been trialling the use of video hangouts to give audiences a chance to get to know their favourite ABC personalities in a live video Q&A, with questions submitted on Facebook, Twitter and Google+. Visually a hangout is not quite as polished as broadcast TV, but the advantages are the low cost and the ability to have up to 10 cameras on 10 different locations. After the live broadcast the hangout video is posted onto YouTube and can be shared online and on social media.

SUNDANCE EXPANDS

Spanish language Sundance Channel Global, part of AMC Networks International, is expanding across Central America with launches in six new territories. Its distinctive mix of first run original drama and independent films is now also available on Cable Onda, the biggest pay-TV platform in Panama, on Tigo in El Salvador, Costa Rica, Honduras, Paraguay and Guatemala, and on Claro, the biggest pay-TV platform in Colombia and the Dominican Republic. The network is available to operators as an SD or HD linear TV channel, VOD service and via mobile and online authenticated streaming.

IN BRIEF

TELSTRA BUYS OOOYALA

Australian service provider Telstra is to acquire video streaming and analytics specialist Ooyala for US\$270m. Telstra, which already owns a 23% stake in Ooyala, has invested significantly in the company over the last two years. Ooyala will become a subsidiary of Telstra, and will operate as an independent business with its existing management team under CEO Jay Fulcher.

MICROSOFT €19 HANDSET

Microsoft's new entry-level mobile phone, the Nokia 130, is billed as the most affordable mobile phone with video and music player, with the ability to add content via the microSD expansion slot (it is dual-band GSM only, with no Wi-Fi). Citing figures from Strategy Analytics, Microsoft said that 300m devices from the "below \$35" category are sold every year. Nokia 130 will be available in select markets, including China, Egypt, India, Indonesia, Kenya, Nigeria, Pakistan, the Philippines and Vietnam.

SKY SPORTS WEEK PASS

BSkyB's OTT platform NOW TV is offering a weekly pass for sports fans keen to watch more of the best live sporting action. The £10.99 pass comprises all seven Sky Sports channels for 7 days, including Sky Sports 5, the new home of European Football, and the new-look Sky Sports News HQ, which both launched on 12 August. NOW TV is available on devices including the NOW TV Box, PC, Mac, iPad, iPhone, Android smartphones and tablets, Xbox 360, Xbox One, PS3™, PS4™, YouView, LG Smart TVs, selected LG media devices, Roku boxes and Apple TV.

Globecast launches The Indonesia Channel



In mid-June Indonesia's first 24-hour English language entertainment and lifestyle channel launched across the globe with Globecast on multiple platforms. Dalton Tanonaka (above left), CEO of the privately-funded Indonesia Channel, says the channel seeks to inform and entertain with cool and informative shows.

From its digital media facility at Mediapolis in Singapore, Globecast is providing playout and media management services, localising content for The Indonesia Channel and ensuring that proper formats are available to suit each region's needs. Globecast also provides its OTT Managed solution to adapt the content for

mobile viewing on various mobile devices. The Indonesia channel is available across Asia Pacific via the MEASAT-3 satellite, across Europe via Globecast's fibre delivery, and online via OTT in most countries with high speed broadband. Viewers on the go can access the channel from their mobile phones, tablets and notebooks.

In July, Globecast extended its reach in West Africa via a new PoP partnership with Senegalese telco Sonatel. Headquartered in Dakar, Sonatel serves additional local markets including Mali, Guinée Bissau and Guinée. The PoP – which is operating as an access (in/out) point to Globecast's international network dedicated to the backhauling of audiovisual services – is located in Dakar and connected via fibre to Globecast's Parisian hub. The partnership is ideally positioned, from both business and technology perspectives, to attract local and international broadcasters or production centres that need to backhaul signals to or from Senegal for onwards cable, MMDS, satellite or OTT distribution.

400 episodes

Every day, millions of people tune into a lifestyle show that brings everything from comedy and music to style, business and sport, to audiences across the globe. Broadcasting live every Monday to Thursday from a studio in the heart of London, *Living the Life* is Islam Channel's flagship programme.

This summer the programme celebrates two years – that's 400 episodes. The hour-long show comprises three studio interviews and five features from around the world. You may find yourself meeting renowned international performers like Zain Bhikha one minute and then following the man walking from Sheffield to South Africa to raise money for water projects, the next.

After the break expect to be entertained by a report from Pakistan's annual donkey cart race and later on, watch with amazement how residents in Gaza recycle rubber tyres to make floor tiles.

The team behind the show constantly push the boundaries of TV production to pack a great deal of entertainment value into an hour.

Growing US audience for RT



With its UK operation set for a full rollout in the near future, RT – the global, Moscow-based TV news network – has been enjoying measurable success in the United States.

A survey completed for RT by

Nielsen in seven of the largest US cities, including New York, Washington, Chicago and Los Angeles, showed that in the course of less than a year RT's weekly audience has more than doubled there. The research, concluded in March 2014, showed that almost 3m people in these cities watch RT every week.

RT's editor in chief Margarita Simonyan says that the channel's fresh editorial vision is a key factor contributing to the rapid increase in viewers: "Now more than ever it's important to listen

to an alternative point of view – and audiences around the world and especially in the US are hungry for it." She added that "the situation in Ukraine, too, has certainly put RT and its regional expertise in the spotlight. We've seen a massive uptick in numbers across all languages and platforms, online and in social media. This growth is only partially reflected in Nielsen's US results as the study was done right before the crisis escalated and became the top international news story."

2014 a great year for Eurosport

On 30 May this year, Discovery Communications, the world's number one pay-TV programmer, took controlling interest in Eurosport, expanding its portfolio to reach 2.7bn cumulative subscribers across more than 220 countries and territories.

The deal is designed to enable Eurosport's brands and business operations to expand by drawing on Discovery's operational scale, local expertise and global platforms, and create new value for advertisers, affiliates and audiences across Europe and Asia.

With the addition of Eurosport's six pay-TV brands, Eurosport, Eurosport HD, Eurosport 2, Eurosport 2 HD, Eurosport Asia-Pacific and Eurosportnews, Discovery Communications now operates more than 210

worldwide TV networks.

This year, the French Open, one of Eurosport's key properties, achieved its highest average live audience figures – making it the best ever broadcast of the tennis Grand Slam on Eurosport.

Eurosport Group CEO Jean-Thierry Augustin says these fantastic achievements are the results of the channel's strategy to identify and secure exclusivity in specific European markets on key properties – the French Open being a prime example.

Also in May Géraldine Filiol took over as new Director of Communications at Eurosport Group, to manage the international and Paris-based teams in charge of media relations, TV channel marketing and digital services promotion.

RRsat for Cisneros + IBC

RRsat Global Communications Network has signed a seven year agreement with Cisneros Media, one of the largest producers of Spanish-language content in the Americas, and pay-TV operator.

RRsat will provide Cisneros Media with full playout and global distribution services of their pay-TV channels that include Venevision Plus, VmasTV and VePlusTV. As operations expand, a new RRsat playout centre will be established at the Venevision Studios. RRsat will also have fibre connectivity to its US media centre in Hawley, PA and RRsat's global fibre network.

RRsat will be exhibiting at IBC 2014 in Amsterdam (1.B24, Hall 1). Simon Kay, MD RRsat Europe said RRsat is at a critical moment in its history, with recent

acquisitions and customer wins positioning the company in a period of planned sustained growth.

In August RRsat reported revenues of \$32.5m for Q2/2014, up 10.2% year-over-year. Kay pointed to acquisitions made over the past year which strengthened RRsat's position globally and resulted in great work – from the NFL, to the World Cup, distributing channels across the globe, and film restoration projects from Hollywood's golden age.

Kay says being present at IBC gives RRsat the opportunity to tell these stories, show what's new and innovative, and demonstrate how this could translate into success for other businesses.

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IN BRIEF

MOBILE APPS IN KSA

A new Arab Advisors Group survey of Saudi Arabia's mobile application users released in June revealed that young users dominate the ranks of mobile app users: over half of adult mobile apps users are less than 34 years old. The survey also showed that around a quarter of Saudi's mobile app users are not aware of the operating system of their smartphone. Mobile app users constitute some 55% of total cellular users in KSA.

2014 DEATH TOLL

The International News Safety Institute's biannual survey of news media casualties says Ukraine was the most dangerous country for journalists in the first six months of 2014 with seven members of the news media killed. 61 journalists have died carrying out their work worldwide – 21 more than in the same period last year. Most dangerous countries: Ukraine 7, Iraq 6, Syria 5, Pakistan 5, Afghanistan 4, Philippines 3; employer/commissioner: TV 23, radio 16, press 14, news agency 6, online 1; status in country: local 49, foreign 12.

DIGITAL SERVICES VAT

From 1 January 2015, tax on the supply of broadcasting, telecommunications and electronic services ('digital services') to private consumers will be paid in the European Union Member State where the consumer is located. Businesses will have to register for VAT in every EU member state where they supply digital services to consumers. However, businesses using the VAT Mini One Stop Shop (VAT MOSS) online service will be able to submit a quarterly return and payment to a single EU member state tax authority to cover all their EU business-to-consumer supplies.

Short news video on the rise in Poland

According to Polish video news provider x-news, the market for short news video is growing rapidly. Owned by TVN Agency, x-news is the leading service of its kind in Poland. Online media may publish the x-news content using their own players or, alternatively, the x-link player offered by TVN Agency. In May, video items published on the x-link player generated over 10m views.

X-news makes over 4,000 video items available to the media on a monthly basis – mainly on politics, sports, showbiz and the economy. This

includes items produced by the TVN Agency and other members of the TVN Group (including TVN24, Poland's leading 24-hour news channel), as well as clips supplied by international partners (including CNN Newsource, Cihan News Agency, several dozen ENEX channels across the globe, and Storyful social media agency).

As more Polish web portals publish video content produced by TVN Agency, the service is looking for suppliers of news content from all around the world – both international and local.

#BE PART of DW GMF

2,300 delegates from 120 countries attended the 2014 Deutsche Welle Global Media Forum which focused on "From Information to Participation – Challenges for the Media." DW Director General Peter Limbourg said events such as the protests in Brazil and Kiev's Maidan demonstrations illustrate how

new approaches to media are leading to "more active participation, community involvement and interest in the political decision-making processes." The 2015 Global Media Forum (June 22 – 24) will focus on the tense relationship between media and foreign policy in the digital age.

NHK WORLD TV at the UN

Japan International Broadcasting, the distribution company of NHK's international channels, has entered into a five-year partnership with the United Nations Headquarters in New York City which brings NHK WORLD TV, the stand-alone 24-hour English-language TV news and lifestyle network, to the UN's In-House Network channel. The service launched on May 1, and the official signing ceremony at the UN on June 26 was attended by Tsuruo Mochizuki, DG of NHK General Bureau for America.

NHK WORLD TV is the first outside news channel broadcasting in HD on the In-House Network. All UN staff can view the network on their desk-top computers, as

well as on TV monitors in the organisation's public spaces. NHK WORLD TV provides a 24-hour programming cycle, including the network's signature news show, *Newsline*. In addition, a variety of perspectives on world financial affairs can be found on *Asia This Week*, *Asia Biz Forecast* and *Asian Voices*. The channel also offers a range of technology, lifestyle and cultural programmes, including *great gear*, *Seasoning the Seasons*, *cool japan*, *J-FLICKS* and *Dining with the chef*, plus documentaries and specials.

Other international news channels available at the UN include BBC World, Al Jazeera, France 24, TV5 Monde, MSNBC and CNN International.

Pixel Party creative

Pixel Party, a creative services company based out of Delhi and Mumbai, is making a name for itself among leading national and regional broadcasters in India with its innovative ideas for channel packaging, show packaging and on air promotions.

For the launch of India's first Gujarati business channel on 1 July Pixel Party created the entire channel packaging, branding, design and graphics. CNBC BAJAR is part of the Network18 Group, the market leader in news and entertainment, which includes leading channels CNBC-TV18, CNBC AWAAZ, CNN-IBN, IBN7, IBN LOKMAT, the ETV Network and Viacom18 (Colors), MTV, VH1, Comedy Central, Sonic and Nickelodeon.

CNBC BAJAR is a first-of-its-kind in Indian TV and caters for the niche segment of investors, traders and affluent global citizens of enterprise and industry – the Gujarati community being India's most dynamic business community. Pixel Party co-founder and director Sumit Grover who previously was at the helm of creative direction at CNBC AWAAZ, India's top-rated business news channel, says the company has also been given a one-year mandate of packaging shows for the sports division of Star India.



Major redesign for Kazakhstan TV



Kazakhstan's National TV channel has undergone a major redesign and emerged with a new logo and a re-positioning of its flagship programmes.

The channel is part of the state-owned Kazakhstan Republican TV and Radio Corporation, that brings together the Kazakhstan National TV channel, Balapan (Kids) and KazSport TV channels, Kazakh Radio, Radio Shalkar, Radio Astana, Radio Classic, the Kazinform News Agency, as well as 14 regional TV and radio companies. Kazakh radio first went on air in 1922 and Kazakhstan's first TV channel began broadcasting in 1958. Today 98% of the population has access to the corporation's output.

The recent redesign is an initiative of CEO Nurzhan Mukhamedzhanova who, after

evaluating the experience of different international media brands such as BBC, CNN, Euronews, China's CCTV and Japan's NHK, opted for a new logo which incorporates the blue and yellow of the Kazakhstan flag.

One of the goals of the re-branding is to appeal to a wider audience. "My Kazakhstan" has been chosen as the new tagline for Kazakhstan's National TV channel, as well as its 14 regional channels, to emphasise the unique contribution of every member of Kazakhstan society, regardless of ethnic origin, and the goal to build a united multi-cultural country. The channel says it is important for the news coverage to appeal to the audience as 'their' news and tries to strike a balance between official news and news on the nation's socio-economic situation.

COLORS emotions

The Anupam Kher Show – airing every Sunday at 8pm – is one of the most popular shows on Mumbai-based pay channel COLORS. A recent episode brought together Naseeruddin Shah and Om Puri to chart their journey from simple beginnings to the superstars that they are today. Having met at the National School of drama in 1970, both are credited with taking Bollywood to international fame. COLORS is Viacom18's flagship brand in the entertainment space in India. COLORS launched in 2008 to bring an entire spectrum of emotions to its viewers – from fiction shows to format shows to reality shows to blockbuster movies. COLORS states it is dedicated to promoting 'cohesive viewing' and is available via SUN18 Media Services in India.



Crowdsourcing in Uzbekistan

For decades, Uzbekistan has been counted among the world's most restrictive societies, ranking at the bottom of surveys on fundamental freedoms and human rights. RFE/RL's Uzbek Service, known locally as Radio Ozodlik, is pioneering ways to collect and generate information for audiences eager for knowledge and news.

Radio Ozodlik recently launched the OzodWiki project, a partnership marrying the service's reporting capabilities with the resources of the Uzbek edition of Wikipedia, the online, crowd-

sourced encyclopedia.

Like virtually every other independent information initiative, Wikipedia is currently blocked inside Uzbekistan. The explanation is simple, according to Alisher Sidikov, Uzbek Service director (pictured), who says that in terms of content and concept Wikipedia's crowdsourcing model is simply at odds with the country's authoritarian order.

The OzodWiki project involves hyperlinking selected words and phrases that are used in Radio Ozodlik reports to entries in Wikipedia where they are defined

and explored. The relationship is mutually beneficial, enabling Ozodlik users to click through to expanded information resources, while popularizing Wikipedia by driving new topics and audience their way. Since the launch of the partnership in February 2014, visits to Wikipedia's Uzbek edition have risen 300%, totalling around 136,000 visits in April.



IN BRIEF

4G FOR MALAYSIA

Telekom Malaysia has launched a 4G broadband offering – 'TMgo'. The service, available initially at 17 sites in Kota Setar and Pendang, Kedah, will provide customers in underserved areas of the country with high speed broadband connectivity. Coverage will be expanded as Telekom Malaysia deploys additional base stations in other states nationwide. TMgo will initially be offered for data access via prepaid USB dongle and MiFi options and is expected to be available in most states in Malaysia by early 2015.

DISCOVERY IN NZ

Discovery Communications has acquired New Zealand's pay-TV networks The Living Channel (TLCNZ) and Food TV, expanding its presence in the market to four channels, with Discovery Channel and Animal Planet currently available on SKY TV. Mandy Pattinson, EVP and general manager for Australia, New Zealand and the Pacific Islands at Discovery Networks Asia-Pacific said Discovery is committed to keeping the channels 'local' and uniquely Kiwi to give viewers the content they love.

MBC CLOSER TO ABU

During a visit to the ABU Headquarters in Kuala Lumpur, Ms Jin-sook Lee, Executive MD of Korea's Munhwa Broadcasting Corporation (MBC) said she looked forward to enlarging the partnership between the public broadcaster and the ABU. Ms Lee met with Secretary-General Dr Javad Mottaghi and ABU directors of News, Programming and Technology to explore a range of partnerships and initiatives. ABU and MBC will continue their discussions of reciprocal partnerships when the ABU Secretary General visits Seoul in late September.

CV

NAME

H ("Hyacinth") Nwana

DATE OF BIRTH

September, 1964

CAREER

Born in Cameroon, H Nwana has lived in the UK for more than thirty years. He holds multiple degrees, including a degree in Computer Science & Electronic Engineering from the University of Birmingham, an MSc in Computer Science, a PhD in Artificial Intelligence/Computer Science from Aston University Birmingham and an MA in Computer Science Education from Queen's College, Cambridge. He also holds an MBA with distinction from the London Business School at the University of London. In 2005, after several years at Quadriga Worldwide, he became Managing Director of Arqiva. In 2009, he joined Ofcom, where he was Director of Ofcom's Spectrum Policy group, responsible for overseeing the UK's digital switchover, and presided over the auctioning of the UK's 4G spectrum. He has recently written a book, *Telecommunications, Media & Technology (TMT) for Developing Countries: How to make TMT Improve Developing Economies in Africa and Elsewhere for the 2020's*. He currently is Executive Director of the Dynamic Spectrum Alliance, which encourages regulations aimed at more effective spectrum use internationally. He is also the founder and CEO of Atlantic Telecoms and Media which seeks to aid the digitisation of the TMT sectors in developing economies.

MEDIA USE

Doesn't watch much television, but does a lot of YouTube viewing, especially during his travels around the world. Frequently listens to iPod, particularly African and classical music. Uses just about every kind of online media – including Twitter and Facebook

FAVOURITES

Running; enjoys speaking to his grown children as individuals and watching them develop: "It's one of the joys of life to be able to bring up your kids"



CONNECTING THE FOUR BILLION

In major economies, the inevitability of the digital switchover is taken for granted. But for most of the developing world DSO is interlinked with a vast array of connectivity and infrastructure challenges. We asked **H. Nwana** how he is trying to help emerging markets digitise

I decided to leave Ofcom last year after the spectrum auction in order to go try and digitise my continent of Africa and digitise emerging markets. I'm also running the Dynamic Spectrum Alliance, because I'm absolutely passionate about the fact that in order to digitise emerging markets, and emerging countries in places like Africa and Asia, we need to also start by fixing spectrum policy. We need to change the way that spectrum is typically allocated across the world by regulators on an exclusive basis. Dynamic spectrum access ultimately means spectrum is being shared, which means you have more ability to drive different players in the same market because the spectrum is shared.

I think if we don't do that, then in places like Africa and Asia, or countries like Bangladesh and Indonesia, things like 4G technology will never get to the rural areas where a significant part of the population live, and they'll never be connected – forget about

“
Many African and emerging markets are going through DSO as a purely technocratic exercise. That is a big mistake
”

digital broadcast and the digital switchover. It's a very different situation to what we had in the United Kingdom, where we were trying to clear some of the spectrums to auction them for 4G. In the United Kingdom, regulators like me actually imposed an obligation for 4G to go to 98% of the population. But I could not do a trick like that in Africa. We need a different spectrum policy across emerging markets which will allow different technologies, not only 4G, but also TV white spaces, satellite, and cheaper versions of 2G and 3G technologies.

What is your book *TMT for Developing Economies* about?

It's all about how to make TMT – telecommunications, media and technology – improve the economies for Africa and elsewhere for the 2020's. I say the 2020's deliberately, because it takes ten years to make things happen. In the United Kingdom, the digital switchover project took eight years, from inception to completion. So the idea that it's going to take two

years in Africa to make this happen doesn't make any sense.

So you spend a lot of time on the ground in Africa.

Yes, I'm giving a lot of invited lectures and speeches about the book right now. And I'm running a very big digital switchover project in an African country, where I won the contract competitively against some big companies. I'm designing the network right now and writing the invitation to tender to bring in partners to implement the real network. I'm also involved in advising in another country, which I cannot disclose, on their spectrum policy and their digital switchover strategy. So right now, I typically spend two to three weeks a month in Africa.

What do you see as the most important outcome of DSO?

We want to do the digital switchover to release the spectrum, typically through 4G auctions, like we did in the UK, and also to open some of those frequencies for High Definition TV, Standard Definition

TV and for TV white spaces. We want to release some of those valuable frequencies for mobile broadband. Why? Because most of these countries are going to be wireless, not fixed. Take my home country, Cameroon – nobody is going to be cabling to all the homes of Cameroon any time soon, I can promise you that.

4G on its own is not going to do the trick. In my country, if 4G gets to more than 30% of the population then they've done well. The economics of 4G doesn't allow you to go beyond that. Look at the economics of mobile today: it is an empirical fact that mobile operators get 50% of their revenues in 10% of their sites, which are around the cities. And the last 50% of their sites only give them 10% of their revenues. So guess what? 70% of the emerging markets tend to live in the rural areas, so that tells you that those guys are not going to be getting broadband any time soon unless you do things differently.

What does the Dynamic Spectrum Alliance do?

The Dynamic Spectrum Alliance is a group of companies from around the world who are trying to close the digital divide. There's roughly four billion people who aren't connected, in terms of broadband. And you can count most Africans in that number, a big majority of Indians, hundreds of millions of Chinese, and also count a lot of countries in Latin America in that number as well.

Those numbers are not going to be connected using fixed lines, like we do in the United Kingdom. We do not have this in most emerging market countries, including Africa, where fixed is almost nonexistent. I go around with the Dynamic Spectrum Alliance advocating across emerging markets about why they need to change their spectrum policy and why they need to think clearly and openly about what they're going to do for those 70% of people in rural areas where 4G is not going to reach. It's a very significant piece of advocacy to get

“Reach without affordability is completely futile”



those ministers and those decision makers in emerging markets to think of things differently, so they can think about different tools – the TV white spaces, satellite, the cheaper versions of 2G technologies, wifi. So I'm pushing all these technologies right now on my continent of Africa, as well as different emerging markets, because without these this digital divide has absolutely no chance of improving.

Do emerging countries need help from outside?

Yes and no. Obviously the development of the country is ultimately an issue for the country concerned. But the communications industry is an incredibly global industry which requires economies of scale in terms of devices and other things to make it work, so no country can be an island. No country can totally go it alone. And there's not only the digital switchover project happening – in emerging markets, a whole range of other projects should be considered in concert.

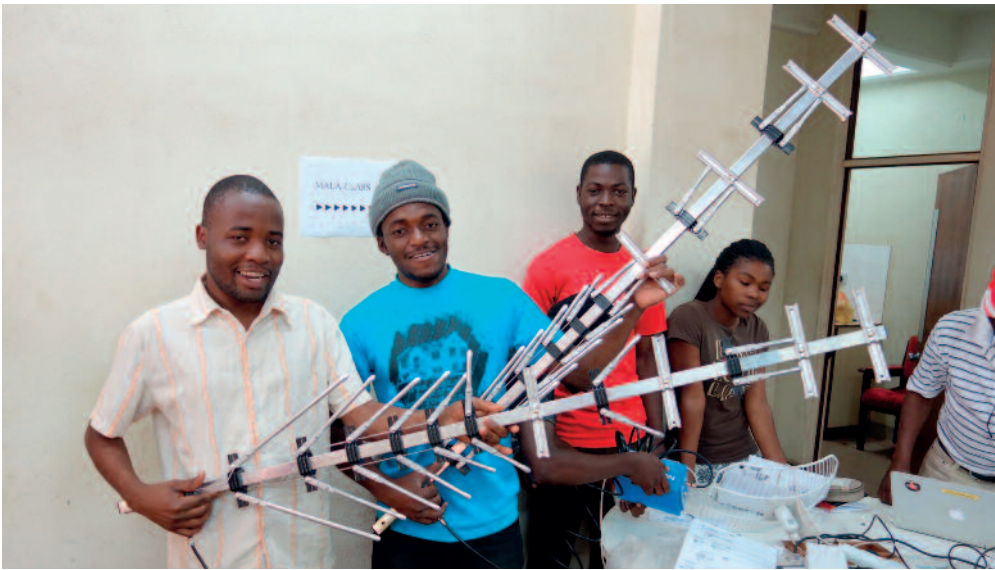
You also need to think about affordability and accessibility as you do all these projects. Reach without affordability is completely futile. Don't bother to roll out all this fantastic 4G to my grandmother in my village, when it's going to be costing her \$30 to \$50 a month. And at the same time affordability without reach is also equally useless. If it's affordable, but you've

only allowed it to go to the urban areas and not the rural areas as well, then what's the point.

For me, broadband is the absolute oxygen of the digital economy. For the continents of Africa and Asia and other developing countries, we need to get connectivity right, we need to get our spectrum policy right and we need to get our digital switchover projects right. There's a lot of things we need to get right. It's not only about digital switchover – that's only one of the projects. Asia needs to think about all of this in the round, Africa needs to think about all of this in the round, before we even have a chance connecting the next four billion people.

The UN calls digital connectivity a basic right.

I'm a big fan of the UN. The UN has talked about the Millennium Development Goals. And I wish them all the luck in the world. I think some of them will be achieved. Some of them we have no chance of achieving in some of the countries any time soon. But I think it's important we have those milestones, if nothing else, because it helps keep some of the politicians who run these countries honest. But if you look at those four main development goals, a lot of them will not be achieved any time soon on the continent of Africa. One of



the goals says that by 2015 most populations should be spending no more than 5% on broadband connectivity. I can't think of a single country in Africa that's going to achieve that goal. But I think it's an important goal to have, because it speaks to my point of without affordability, connectivity is totally futile and affordability without reach is equally useless.

Is it an advantage building digital infrastructure from scratch, rather than having to deal with legacy systems?

Absolutely. I think it's important that we skip a generation in quite a lot of stuff. If you go to countries like Rwanda, which is a textbook case, in my view, of good technology leadership by president Paul Kagame, they are definitely skipping a generation. Kagame's

goal is by the end of 2014 to have LTE connectivity for 90% of the Rwandan population. He's rolling out 3,000 kilometres of fibre optic cable, across a very small country, and he's trying to improve affordability and get the right spectrum policy. He doesn't have to worry about ADSL or cable, he can skip straight to those new technologies. And if any other countries have an opportunity to do the same, I would urge them to take it.

What's the key message for policy makers about DSO?

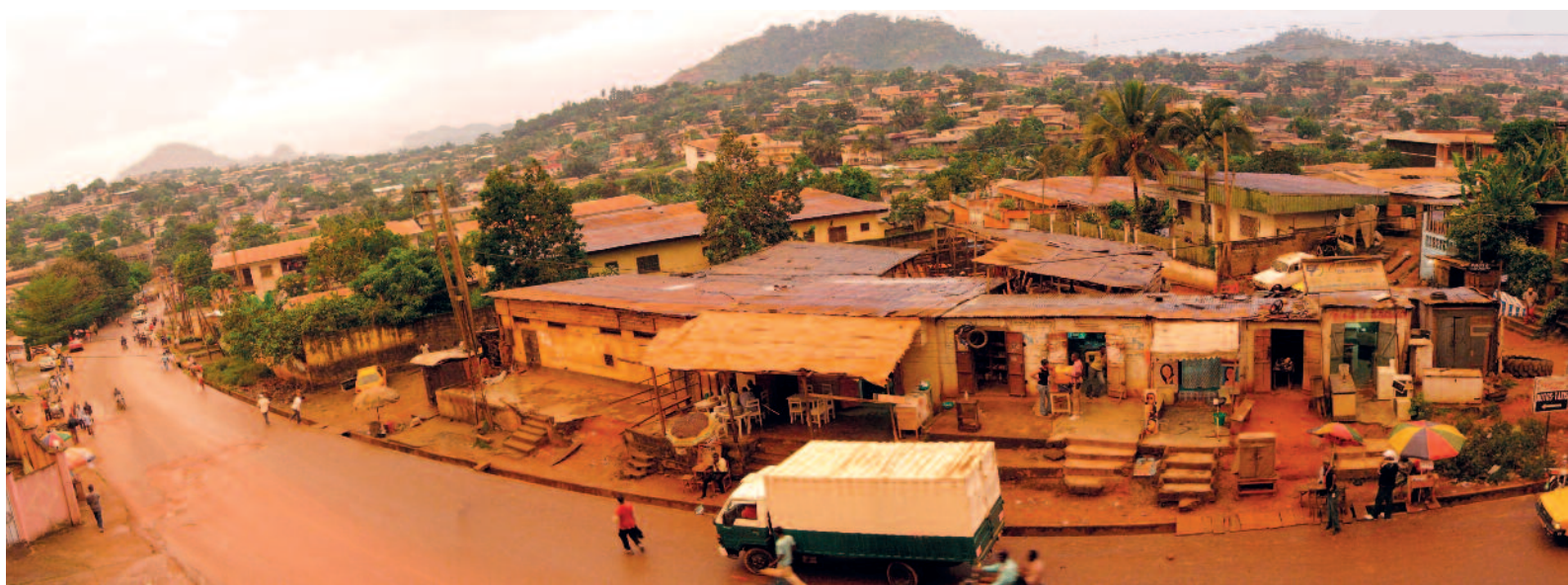
The one clear message is, as I say in my book: "The analogue to digital switchover of TV should not just be an exercise in technocracy. It should and must be exploited as an opportunity to light the burners of a new multi-channel, multi-media,

▲ Left Aerials about to be installed as part of the White Spaces project at the University of Malawi
Right Mobile banking is important in Rwanda
▲ Far left President Kagame of Rwanda

www.dynamicspectrumalliance.org

interactive and more social media sector in most of these economies." A lot of the African countries and a lot of the emerging markets are going through the digital switchover as a purely technocratic exercise. That is such a big mistake – and is missing the point. The whole point of doing this is to release those frequencies to drive a new, much more emergent telecommunications, media and technology sector. The reason to do it is to create jobs. If you have 20 channels, rather than one channel – you need 20 illustrators, you need 20 editors, you need 20 newsreaders, you need 20 websites, you need 20 MDs, the list goes on. This is what this is really all about. It is about creating the soul of the new economy.

H Nwana, thank you.





THE DSO OPPORTUNITY

In this article **Emeka Mba**, Director General of Nigeria's **National Broadcasting Commission** (NBC) outlines the steps taken so far on the road to switchover, and the objectives that guide the NBC's philosophy of what digital broadcasting means and how the country intends to take advantage of it

Digital television is not altogether a new service in Nigeria; in fact, the South African-based Multichoice DStv pay DTH platform has been in operation since early 2000 providing digital TV services across Africa and into Nigeria. However, this service is essentially limited to the rich and upper middle class homes. What digital terrestrial TV migration offers however is a major realignment of the TV industry; one which to a large extent is disruptive as it changes the already existing industry value chain, as it distinguishes between content and distribution infrastructure, and dispenses with the notion of scarcity to a large extent.

EVOLUTIONARY

A lot has been said about the

“**Nigeria has one of the most active and diverse broadcasting industries in Africa**”

transition to digital being disruptive, but not a lot of thought has been given to the fact that digital is also fundamentally evolutionary. Its impact will inevitably continue to shape developments and the growth trajectory of the broadcasting industry, worldwide. For us in Nigeria, the disruption that digital brings is complicated by the fact that Nigeria has one of the most active and diverse broadcasting industries in Africa, indeed I might hazard, even in the world.

Consider that in Nigeria, we have over 400 radio and TV stations, made up of 244 free to air (FTA) TV stations, with incredible diversity of ownership spanning Federal Government, state governments, private commercial enterprise. This obviously makes the disruption a tad complicated.

Clearly, the advent of digital means that the Nigerian TV

industry is in the midst of a dramatic transformation, and with the current interventions necessary to entrench digital, the pieces of the future are currently scattered across the diverse broadcast industry landscape, and the NBC is essentially using the toolkit of engagement and legal and regulatory frameworks to bring the pieces all together again.

Meeting the DSO deadline of June 17th, 2015, is – to use a once popular phrase in Nigeria – a task that must be done. Nigeria has no choice but to transit with the rest of the world in order to avoid remaining in digital darkness. However, there is no doubt of the enormity of the challenges ahead, and there are reasonable fears that Nigeria and a host of other African countries may not meet the ITU imposed 2015 deadline. We are focused on doing all that we can, given the resources available, to meet that goal.

The transition to Digital TV broadcasting opens up huge opportunities for a wide range of new services such as more channels, better pictures and sound, high definition, interactive services, deepening local production, plus the added use of the digital dividend spectrum for broadband service deployment across the country. The big question is: are we ready to take advantage of the opportunities that it presents?

ELEMENTS FOR SUCCESS

In my view, DSO requires four key elements for success: (1) Broad stakeholder involvement, deep collaboration between and amongst all important key players, especially of existing analogue broadcasters, government and regulators as well as advertisers, content producers, etc.; (2) Focus on the benefits of the new digital broadcasting ecosystem to each stakeholder group, and the general economy; (3) Effective leadership and change management by regulator/government; and (4) Availability of funding to drive the entire process by Government.

There still remain further strategic objectives that we as a regulator believe should underpin DSO, based on the local market environment, and the future envisaged by the Commission. These are as follows:

FTA TV and the DTTV delivery platform dominate in Nigeria – analogue FTA TV dominates the leisure and entertainment lives of most Nigerians. The NBC believes strongly that it is in the general public interest for FTA DTTV to continue to grow as a vital delivery platform as it represents the highest value proposition to viewers and therefore, the Commission would take steps to ensure that we have an increase in the number of FTA TV channels as soon as practicable to enhance the entertainment and information utility Nigerians can derive from further investment in DTTV

reception systems and equipment.

It is important that we also focus our attention on how developments in terrestrial broadcasting technology can enhance the lives of the general public and end users of the services made possible by them. This is especially paramount in a country like Nigeria, where our citizenry face peculiar challenges arising mostly out of lack of information, necessary for development and peaceful coexistence.

KEY DRIVER

The key driver for digital remains content; and we would like to transform the TV set into a “comprehensive information terminal” for the household. NBC hopes to see the establishment of more broadcasting services to fill current gaps in content and services such as: themed channels, special interest channels, educational and children’s channels, regional channels, new HD services, and interactive services such as T-Health, T-Government, T-Voting, and Banking, etc. In short, see the TV become the hub for a new digital lifestyle, the device that helps to bridge Nigeria’s stark digital divide.

Digital will usher in varying levels of convergence, which will disrupt existing business models as far as content production, distribution and monetisation is concerned. A greater need for synergy is called for between broadcasting and telecommunications operators, especially given the fact that Nigeria has two distinct regulators for both sectors.

It is also important to recognise that with the DSO, the provision and regulation of broadcasting services to meet general public expectations are inextricably intertwined with decisions made regards the new digital broadcasting licensing framework, right transmission and reception equipment technology and standards.

“Digital is disruptive, no doubt, yet evolutionary”

With regards to the new Digital licensing framework, the NBC shall focus on a number of key areas: (a) Promoting creation of more broadcasting services & competition (themed/special interest/educational/children’s/regional channels, HD); (b) Promotion of competition in relation to the provision of broadcasting services and associated facilities; (c) Interoperability of digital interactive TV services: The NBC fully supports the concept of interoperability and recognises the need for flexibility and consensus between all major players within the DTT value chain: broadcasters, multiplex operators, signal distribution companies, and other relevant market players so that effective interoperability can be achieved for the benefit of the end consumer. Therefore all multiplex licensees shall operate within a regulatory framework, which promotes and encourages interoperability through the use of open standards. (d) Licensing Electronic Programme Guide providers: The EPG becomes increasingly important as the main means by which viewers find their way through the multitude of channels and programmes. Because the EPG becomes the main means of access, it is important that it, too, is properly licensed to ensure that all TV service providers are given ►

► Dr Tom Adaba, former DG of the Nigerian Broadcasting Commission gives DSO his approval



fair, reasonable, and non-discriminatory access to the EPG. In addition, PSBs should be entitled to particular prominence on the EPG to ensure viewers can access these services easily. (e) Mobile TV (DVBH)/datacasting: The NBC recognises there is a demand for mobile TV services in Nigeria and intends to make available spectrum within the last quarter of 2014 for mobile TV services – geographically limited based on geographic interleaved spectrum availability. (f) Audience measurement & advertising: The long-term success of FTA DTTV depends largely on the robustness of the advertising market, and each service's ability to source their own advertising revenue. The NBC shall establish a Joint Industry Committee (JIC) which shall work with all relevant stakeholders to set up an Broadcast Audience Research Board, which shall provide reliable data on estimates of the number of people watching TV, including which channels and programmes are being watched, when they are watched and the type of people who are viewing at any one time.

MILESTONES

The NBC in conjunction with Digiteam Nigeria, headed by Edward Amana, has recorded significant progress as regards DSO, despite the fact that the transition started rather late. Let me at this point share some of the work done so far, based on the already approved Digital TV Broadcasting Policy Decisions as contained in the Government white paper.

There will be a separation of functions in the broadcast industry.



“In Africa, information often makes the difference between life and death”

The broadcaster will be responsible for the content of the broadcast while a signal distributor or carrier will be responsible for the transmission of the signals to the viewers at home. Three signal distributors or carriers are to be licensed, one of which is to evolve from the Nigerian Television Authority – NTA. The transmission standard shall be the DVB-T2 format with MPEG-4 AVC compression format.

The NTA's pilot DTT project in the DVB-T2 format, in conjunction with StarTimes of China, has rolled out in more than 20 cities in the country. A uniform STB standard has been accepted for the whole of the ECOWAS countries. Switch-off from analogue broadcasting is envisaged to be in three phases, beginning with a pilot DSO/ASO in a selected city. On June 30, 2014, the NBC achieved a significant milestone with the official launch of the Nigeria digital switchover process, in Jos, capital of Plateau state. The Commission realised that in order to give substance to the larger DSO/ASO plans, there was an urgent need to have a pilot city which can provide a suitable testing ground. The pilot will continue as we work towards full analogue switchoff of Jos, latest by October 30th, 2014.

CHALLENGES

One of the opportunities that digital brings is the more efficient use of scarce spectrum for national broadband coverage which has the potential to grow Nigeria's GDP by over 10%. Yet given the serious economic and social issues faced by many African countries including Nigeria the major obstacle to successful DSO is funding – funding for the infrastructure rollout, STB distribution to consumers, as well as new content. The catch is that governments cannot realise the revenue from the auction until broadcasting completes the analogue switchoff. However, the NBC has taken a creative and perhaps radical course of action, which involves seeking the approval for the advance payment

of the expected revenue from the Digital Dividend auction to the telecommunications industry, based on agreed cross sectorial agreement on the estimated value of the spectrum by both the NBC and the telecommunications industry regulator Nigerian Communications Commission (NCC) and with the support of both ministers, as well as the approval of the President. Whilst this proposal is yet to be approved, we would like to note that it provides a window of opportunity to overcome the funding challenge. In the case of the Nigeria, the value of the DD spectrum is estimated to fetch close to \$2bn to Government.

FINAL THOUGHTS

We must not fall into the misleading mindset that digital is about technology. The digital mindset required must recognise that technology is not a function but a dimension, that is disruptive no doubt, yet evolutionary.

For Nigerian consumers to be able to enjoy the positive effects of digitisation, it is of crucial importance that all groups in society have access to broadcasting when the means of broadcasting signal reception changes. The analogue switchoff may result in social exclusion in so far as digital TV is unavailable to some parts of the population. Given the current income levels of most Nigerians especially those in rural areas, only a fraction of Nigerian households would be willing and able to buy a digital STB at market price. This means that millions of households in Nigeria will be left without TV, further widening the digital divide, and leaving poor communities even poorer.

In Africa, information is not just about entertainment, it's about access to health or education and often makes the difference between life and death; which is why as a regulator, the DSO offers us the opportunity to rethink, reimagine and remake broadcasting to serve our social and economic needs more efficiently in order to secure a more developed and socially cohesive country. ■

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DSO

WHERE ARE WE NOW?

As a technology, television has led a relatively calm life in its nearly 100 year history. There were few changes: notably black and white to colour in the 50's, mono to stereo sound in the 70's, and these changes have been introduced with minimum fuss to broadcasters and viewers. This time going from analogue to digital, things are different! Here **Pham Nhu Hai**, Counsellor at the **International Telecommunication Union (ITU)** paints the broad picture of the transition to DTT in different regions of the

With an estimated 5bn+ TV sets in our homes around the world, television plays an important social, economic and political role in our lives and societies. Going from analogue to digital television is not just a technological change but an economic revolution. Digitisation brings fundamental changes to the TV ecosystem through exponential increases in the capacity of broadcast platform, reduction of the costs of both production and distribution of contents and increase in the range of format from portable, mobile, 3D and Ultra High definition images.

One TV channel used to carry only one analogue TV programme; with digital technology and the latest signal compression techniques, the same channel may carry 20 or more TV programmes. The flexible digital signal is capable of accommodating additional new interactive (eVote, eHealth,

eGovernment) and accessibility (subtitling, audio commentaries or signing) services.

As a result, introduction of digital TV changes the TV ecosystem in all aspects including government regulations, content production and market structure. More importantly, the change from analogue to digital TV will make available substantial radio-frequency spectrum, widely referred to as digital dividends, which can be used by other radiocommunication services, such as mobile, wireless broadband, emergency services, etc. This brings substantial economic and social benefits, not to mention significant amount of revenues for the government coffers from auctioning off these valuable pieces of spectrum.

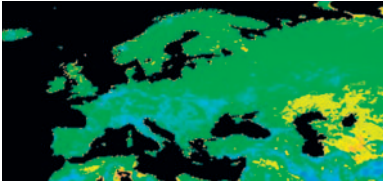
In the face of increasing demand from viewers for multimedia content of technical quality whether they are at home or on the move, and increasing demand for radio spectrum from other services – in particular mobile wireless broadband – for governments the

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There are common threads that appear in the lessons learned
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question is no longer whether to migrate to digital TV or not, the question is when & how to migrate and more importantly, how the digital dividend spectrum will be used and for what services.

TAKING STOCK

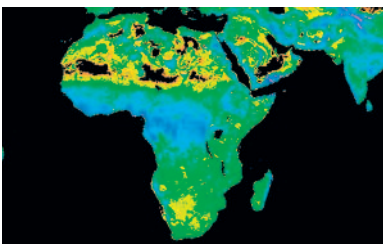
The migration from analogue to digital TV is a costly and difficult process. To ensure success, all parties that are affected by the changes must be involved and consulted. Governments need to revise existing broadcasting and radiocommunication laws and regulations. Spectrum management authorities need to assign frequency channels to new DTT stations while ensuring protection of existing and new digital services in their own and neighbours' countries from interference. Broadcasters need to upgrade transmitting facilities and the transmission network. The most important task is to keep the public informed throughout the whole process to ensure that their TV reception is not disrupted.



EUROPE

It is not surprising that European countries pioneered the migration from analogue to digital TV. DVB-T, one of the four digital TV systems was developed in Europe, and European countries are keen to set good examples. The launch of digital TV was led by the United Kingdom in 1998, followed by Sweden in 1999 and the majority of Western European countries in the first half of 2000. As of August 2014, the majority of European countries have completed the switching off of analogue TV except Bosnia and Greece, scheduled for later in 2014 and Albania, Montenegro, Serbia, Turkey, Ukraine and Russia, scheduled for middle of 2015.

Switching from analogue to digital can be fast and painless – as was the case in the Netherlands where more than 90% of the population could already receive their TV services via cable – or can be long and arduous as was the case in the UK where a network of 1154 transmitting sites needed to be converted in phases over many years at an estimated cost of £500m. Most European countries also took the opportunity to improve their TV coverage when going digital. For public service broadcasters, TV population coverages improve typically from 80-85% during analogue time to 90-99% after going digital.



AFRICA & MIDDLE EAST

Together with European countries, countries in Africa and the Middle

East including Iran agreed on 17 June 2015 as the end of the transition period from analogue to digital TV. Many countries have started test transmissions, but only a number of countries have started DTT services and only a few have completed switching off their analogue services. In 2011, the 48 sub-Saharan countries took an important and significant decision to agree on harmonised frequency bands for digital TV (below 694 MHz) and mobile wireless broadband services (above 698 MHz). Subsequently in 2013, the sub-Saharan countries with the assistance from the African Telecommunication Union and the ITU have successfully negotiated a revised frequency plan for digital TV that provides a minimum of four national coverages in all countries.

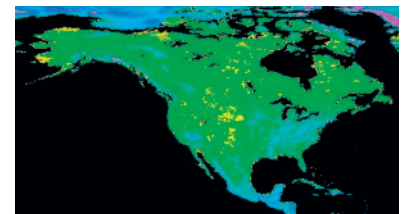
As of August 2014, the four sub-Saharan countries that have completed the analogue switch-off (ASO) are Mauritius, Tanzania, Malawi and Rwanda. Rwanda's successful migration demonstrates what can be achieved when there is strong commitment from the President and its government. In 2008 the Government decided to digitalise the whole RBA Transmission Network and between 2009 and 2011 the digital transmission network of public broadcasters (DVB-T, MPEG-2) was constructed following public tender with 95% coverage of the country. The countries that have started DTT but have not commenced ASO are Egypt, Algeria, Senegal, and Cameroon, Ethiopia, Seychelles, South Africa and Ghana have targeted to complete their ASO before the end of 2014. At the ATU 3rd Digital Migration and Policy Summit held in May 2014 in Nairobi, Kenya, participating African countries acknowledged the challenges encountered while executing the steps in the migration process, but were resolute in their commitment to meet the deadline of June 2015. Countries present generally agreed that the two main

Rwanda's successful migration shows what can be achieved with strong commitment from government



challenges were financial and technical implementation.

In Arab States countries, TV is mostly received via satellite. For example in Cairo, Egypt, a city of over 20m, it is difficult to find a single roof-top TV aerial. In June 2014 Arab States countries organised a sub-regional frequency coordination meeting with assistance of the ITU, with the objective to revise the TV frequency plan in order to facilitate introduction of DTT services as well as harmonise the frequency bands to be made available for future mobile wireless broadband services. The sub-regional group plans to complete its work by the end of 2014.

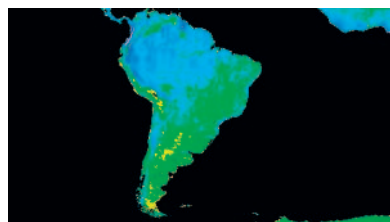


NORTH AMERICA

In North America, the United States and Canada have completed the digital switchover process while Mexico aims to complete the process in 2015. All three countries adopted the ATSC standards developed by the Advanced Television Systems Committee. The USA led the way in launching DTT services with 28 stations in the ten largest cities in November 1998. Six months later saw other stations in the 30 next largest cities following suite. All commercial broadcasters were simulcasting on digital before May 2002 and non-commercial broadcasters a year after. High power stations were required to be switched off before June 2009, stations operating TV channels between 52 and 69 before December 2011 and thousands of low power stations before September 2015.

In Canada the first commercial DTT station went on air in Toronto in early 2003. Currently, there are about two dozen DTT stations across the country broadcasting in ►

the major markets such as Toronto, Montreal, Vancouver and Ottawa. About 33% of the population can receive at least one Canadian DTT station. Analogue switch-off was completed for major markets by August 2012, however, low power stations outside the major markets were allowed to continue analogue operations.

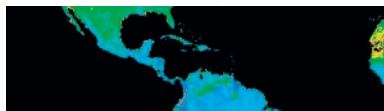


SOUTH AMERICA

Early DTT services were launched in Sao Paulo, Brazil in 2007, Buenos Aires, Argentina in 2008 and Lima, Peru in 2010. The majority of Latin American countries (Brazil, Peru, Argentina, Chile, Venezuela, Ecuador, Costa Rica, Paraguay, Bolivia, Nicaragua, Uruguay, Guatemala and Honduras) adopted ISDB-Tb standards. The ISDB-Tb (Integrated Services Digital Broadcast – Terrestrial Brazilian version) is based on the Japanese standard ISDB-T with additional features of a new interactivity TV middleware technology (Ginga).

In terms of broadcast coverage, digital TV in Brazil would be expanding rapidly. According to ANATEL (National Telecommunications Agency), Digital TV coverage reached more than 480 municipalities and 46.8% of the population (89.2m people) in 2012, with 102 stations transmitting with digital broadcast technology. Initially, there was the expectation from ANATEL that the coverage of Digital TV was equal or higher than the signal coverage of analogue TV even before 2016. According to the Ministry of Communications, studies showed the possibility of starting the analogue signal switch-off gradually. The new plan is starting the switch-off in large cities from 2015, taking as its starting point the first locations that receive the digital signal, and extending the deadline for the entire Brazilian territory to 2018.

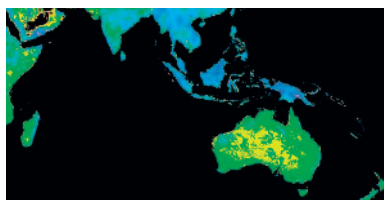
“It is vital to secure adequate funding for public communication to educate viewers”



CENTRAL AMERICA & CARIBBEAN

Many countries in Central America are conducting trial transmissions before deciding which standards to adopt so all four TV standards may feature in the region. Costa Rica and Nicaragua adopted Brazilian ISDB-Tb standards in 2010. Dominican Republic and El Salvador chose North American ATSC standards in 2009 and 2010 respectively. Panama has chosen European DVB-T standards and Cuba is carrying out test transmissions using the Chinese DTMB standards.

Five countries in the Caribbean have 50% or higher percentage of analogue terrestrial TV penetration. Three countries have adopted TV standards – one opting for DVB-T and two for ATSC. Most administrations have not yet decided or are in the testing phase. Four administrations have no plans to migrate due to high penetration of cable TV. French Caribbean Islands and French Guyana have already completed transition to digital and analogue switch-off. VHF and UHF are used by a significant number of administrations. The switchover phase will require compatibility measures for smooth transition until ASO is completed. One administration has identified a target date for ASO. There is a need to coordinate ASO dates to avoid interference constraints during interim periods. Almost all countries are considering the possibility of using the 700 MHz band (698-806 MHz) and/or 800 MHz band (790-862 MHz), pursuant to the WRC-07 and WRC-12 decisions to allocate these bands worldwide and identify them for international mobile telecommunications (IMT).



ASIA-PACIFIC

Australia was the first to launch digital TV in the region in 2001

using DVB-T standards (same as Europe, Middle East and Africa) and was quickly followed by India, Singapore, Japan using its own standards ISDB-T, South Korea, Vietnam, New Zealand and Hong Kong and China using Chinese standards DTMB. The 9th Conference of ASEAN Ministers (Indonesia, 2007) endorsed DVB-T as standards for member nations (Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam). The Philippines after much deliberation chose to adopt the Japanese standards ISDB-T. Analogue switch-off is now completed in Japan, South Korea, Hong Kong, Australia, New Zealand, Singapore, Mongolia and Taiwan. The other countries are working towards completing their analogue switch-off during 2015 and 2020.

With assistance of the ITU, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Fiji, Indonesia, Laos, Maldives, Micronesia, Myanmar, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Vietnam and Vanuatu have completed or are in the process of completing their roadmaps for transition.

DEADLINE FOR ASO

While there is no legal deadline for switching off analogue TV stations, countries in Europe, Middle East and Africa agreed as part of the Geneva 2006 Agreement that at the end of the transition period, 17 June 2015 or 17 June 2020 for analogue TV services in the VHF band (174-230 MHz) for 33 developing countries in the planning area, analogue TV frequency assignments shall no longer have their international recognition and protection status. That means they may continue to operate as long as they do not cause unacceptable interference to and do not claim protection from the new digital TV stations of their neighbours.

The end of the transition period does not necessarily signify that analogue switch-off will take place throughout a given country. It does, however, mean that analogue services will no longer be protected

or available along the borders, and hence could serve as an impetus to switching off analogue services throughout a given country.

LESSONS LEARNED

Every country has its own specific challenges and each has developed its own solutions. However, there are common threads that appear in the lessons learned from the experience of those countries that have completed and started the transition process.

■ Involve all stakeholders

The success of the transition from analogue to digital TV depends on the involvement and active participation of all players throughout the process. This enables better and direct communication between parties and encourages commitment of all parties to the process.

In many countries, a steering group is set up with members from government, regulators, broadcasters, network operators, manufacturers and civil societies. The steering group is responsible for developing a roadmap for the management of the transition process. The roadmap states clearly the objectives of the digital switchover in respect of existing analogue services, digital coverage, end of analogue transmission, financial assistance to viewers and broadcasters and use of digital dividend spectrum. The roadmap is used as a management forecasting tool and is directed to the implementation of strategy and related to project planning. A roadmap matches short-term and long-term goals and indicates the main activities and milestones needed to meet these goals.

■ Legislative framework

A clear legislative framework should include telecommunication, media and broadcast laws, policies on new communication and media services, licencing and content regulation in the new market structure. This provides the necessary legal and regulatory bases underpinning the transition process and also the certainty that encourages long-term investments and commitments from

broadcasters, network operators and any new players in the market. If the creation and mandate of the steering group is written in laws or regulations, this demonstrates commitment and support of government to the process which is critical to its success.

■ Public communication

There are certain actions that viewers may have to take and information they will need to continue receiving TV services in digital – for example buying a set-top box or new TV set, installing a new aerial, knowing the date when digital service starts and analogue service will end, and how to retune TV sets. Without an effective and well planned publicity campaign that educates viewers, viewers risk losing their TV services. This is in nobody's interest. It is therefore important to secure adequate funding for public communication – sufficient budgets should be allocated by government for these activities – and this public communication needs to be tailored with deep outreach into communities.

■ Secured funding

In many countries the establishment of an assistance scheme is vital to provide practical or financial support to low income, older or disabled people who may find making the change difficult. Many countries provide subsidies to low income families to help offset the cost of set-top-boxes. Sufficient financial resources must be made available to ensure effective running of such a programme.

▲ A remote DTT cabin being readied for operation in the UK's Lake District by Babcock International

FINAL THOUGHTS

We are actually watching more and more television, in hours and minutes of TV watched per day, 3:51 in 1988, 3:57 in 1998, a jump to 4:49 in 2008 (introduction of digital television?) and 4:63 in 2013. But we are watching differently, according to comScore's State of Digital 2012 Report, one of three minutes spent on digital media occurs through smartphone or tablet. The viewing of TV content on devices other than the TV set is expected to increase further. Future TV content will be delivered by multiple delivery means to multiple screens of different sizes. Will there be no rest for the digital broadcasters?■

The views expressed in this article are those of the author and do not necessarily represent the views of, and should not be attributed to the International Telecommunication Union (ITU).

MORE ON DSO

■ ITU (2014) Report ITU-R BT.2140-7 Transition from analogue to digital terrestrial broadcasting

www.itu.int/pub/R-REPr-BT.2140

■ ITU web page. Status of the transition to Digital Terrestrial Television Broadcasting
www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Spectrum-Broadcasting/Pages/DSO/Summary.aspx

■ DigiTAG (2008) Analogue switch-off – Learning from experience in Europe www.digitag.org

■ Digital UK (2010) Digital UK's ten transferable lessons from the UK's digital TV switchover programme www.digitaluk.co.uk



CHOICE FOR AFRICA

Nigerian pay-TV provider **Consat** is one of a new breed of broadcasters taking on the status quo of African TV. We asked CEO **Mayo Okunola** about Consat's first year and its plans for the future



The name 'Consat' is a concatenation of its parent company Continental Satellite Limited. We not only provide satellite services, we also aggregate content from free-to-views on the ground and uplink other channels from around the world to our transponders.

We launched the service in June of this year – although I call it more of an unveiling than a launch, since we had been transmitting since 2013. During that time, we hadn't been advertising. We were basically testing. I used to work with the big African broadcaster MultiChoice, and 'launch' for me usually means a lot more pomp and circumstance, so we'll be doing something later in the year that will have a lot more impact from a marketing and advertising point of view.

We expect that by December we'll be at comfortably 50,000 subscribers, because we've been working very hard to make sure we get boxes out there. We're getting the service well tested and trialled, then we'll really start pumping it up from a marketing perspective.

What triggered your move out of the testing phase?

We could have launched earlier last year but we weren't ready. One

reason for the delay was having the right people to steer the ship. I started at Consat as the CEO at the beginning of this year. They had spent some time trying to find the right people – but it's not easy finding someone with a background in launching a DTH service, a background in launching products, and who is also Nigerian.

It's a very complex business. Some people tend to think it's not and that it's very straightforward and simple, but it's one of those businesses where, if you get it wrong, it really hurts. You can really mess up, from the financial perspective.

How is Consat approaching digital migration?

Nigeria already missed the initial date last year. Whether we make the next date in 2015 is subject to the regulator and the government, but I know that they're actively working toward that. What that means of course is those who have been watching TV via antenna will be switched off, so they need to get decoders.

Currently, you have the incumbent here in Nigeria – in the form of MultiChoice – with products like DSTv and GOtv. The number of active subscribers is around three to four million. Meanwhile we have somewhere

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It is the end of that monopolistic style of doing business from content providers
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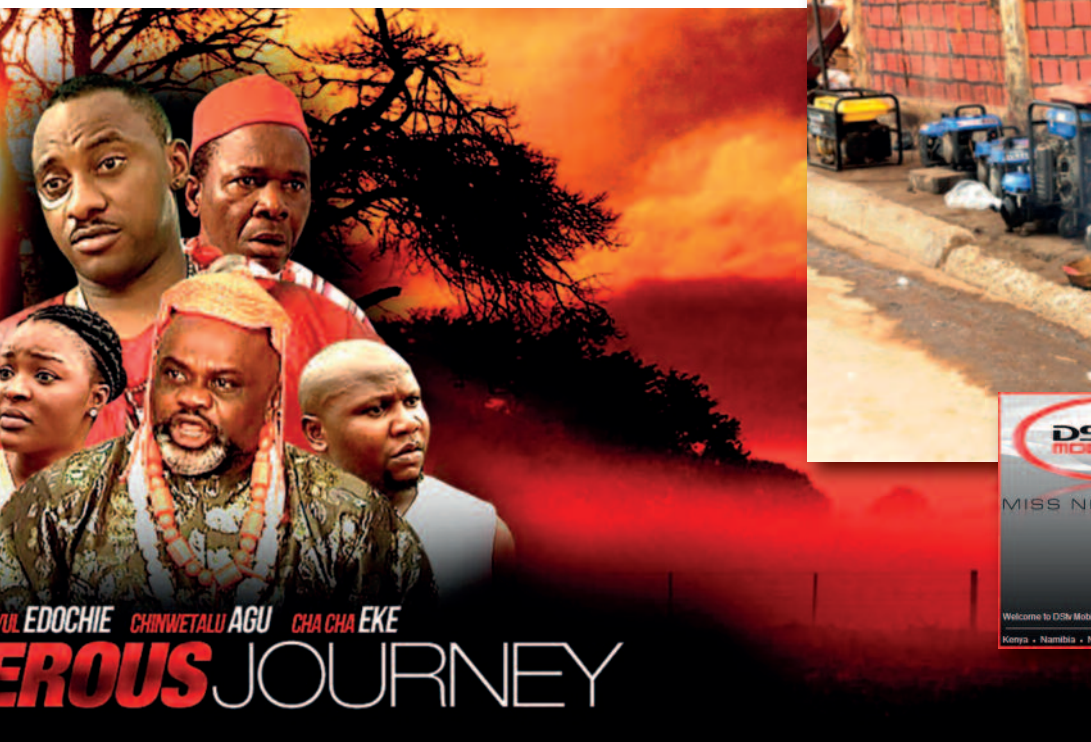
between 20-30m households in Nigeria. And you could arguably say less than 50% of those would be viable to have decoders in their homes because of poverty and insufficient power. So you're looking at a market of 10 or possibly 15m.

When you do the maths, you see very quickly that you might have about six million households left that you potentially have access to, but not all of those can afford decoders. Our product is more targeted at a semi-mass market. We know we have an opportunity there, but we also want to be a brand that is aspirational and that will be determined by the content and the services we offer. It's very hard to combat an incumbent that has been around for 20 years in the market, and so you have to do things differently.

How will you acquire content?

It's all about content. From a content perspective, the challenge we have is that a great deal of content is exclusive across Africa to MultiChoice. It's not just a Nigerian issue or a Consat issue. It's an issue for all the other broadcasters who are popping up throughout Africa, because they all understand the opportunity that digital migration offers.

It's not just sports that are exclusive – the World Cup or the



English Premier League or La Liga. It's also channels. CNN International – exclusive. Cartoon Network – exclusive. All the better-known brands that people typically watch in the UK or the US are exclusive. This means that, as a new business, you have to invest a great deal into new channels and new content and mass marketing, and your spend is going to be higher because the brands are not well known. So it takes time.

There's an issue there, and we will address that issue through regulatory and legal means. If you look at the news, you'll see that in Kenya, the regulatory elements there are beginning to make a shift and are creating a situation where there's a bit more fairness, and now MultiChoice is obliged to resell content to those who are interested.

I talked to colleagues at other African broadcasters, and I still have very strong contacts at MultiChoice. I think we all understand it is the end of that monopolistic style of doing business from content providers. They need to really wake up to that. Business has previously been done in places like Cannes or in South Africa, but they are going to have to start doing business on the ground. Africa is many countries and dealing with it as one entity is going to be a problem for these

content providers, because when the regulatory and legal wrangling starts it's going to really impact their bottom line.

Also we are part of a broader TV entity, called TV Continental, which is a news station. So we have studios, which puts us in a unique position to start putting together some interesting content and some interesting shows.

Will you move beyond linear?

I'm originally a mobile media and entertainment specialist, so I'm a big believer, and I understand the value chain and know mobile is key to this industry. One of the reasons I was hired to work at MultiChoice was to launch a product called DSTV Mobile in Nigeria and in Ghana. The system worked very well.

In Nigeria, the generation of power – and the lack of it – is an issue that affects people in their daily lives. A certain amount of power is generated via generators – that's very expensive. A great many people wake up in darkness and go to sleep in darkness. It makes sense that you can charge your mobile device and watch it and be entertained. We have to be careful we don't make any errors, but fundamentally, we must launch that service. Interactivity is key. We must be able to create something like that for this market, so we are

A major challenge is that much content is exclusive

www.consat.tv



looking at that.

So what is the biggest challenge?

Infrastructure is one. Getting content from Place A to Place B is not easy. Funding is another. And power too is another area.

In Europe, you have a very sophisticated infrastructure that allows you to pass content comfortably at reasonable cost and price from one location to another. Here in Nigeria it's difficult. Satellite is the best option. Otherwise you start investing in DTT platforms, which cost you up to \$2m a pop, and you have to power them 24/7 with a generator.

The local industry is young, and because of that, those who have good experience and expertise tend to be the ones that have been trained outside of Nigeria.

Funding is a challenge too, because here media and entertainment is not necessarily seen as an area where most people want to put their money, particularly because of the long gestation period. Typically most people want to put their money in assets they can see and touch. The industry, from music to pay-TV, is ready to take off, but you are still not seeing the institutional investment.

Thank you, Mayo Okunola.



OPENING UP THE SKY

Win Naing, Executive General Manager of Shwe Than Lwin Media in Myanmar, established DTH pay-TV platform **SkyNet** at a time when Western sanctions were still in force. Today SkyNet is Myanmar's biggest digital pay channel – what were the challenges faced in SkyNet's first years?

didn't have a media background to begin with. But my current boss and I were looking into establishing a pay-TV platform. We began the SkyNet service in 2010 and started test transmissions at the end of that year. Since then, we've expanded the service more and more. At the moment we have about 109 channels on our pay-TV platform. Our distribution is DTH via satellite. For some stations there has been the issue of the digital switchover, but we started out late enough and so SkyNet began as a digital channel and there was no need to do a switchover. We have been transmitting in MPEG-4 right from the start.

We are an entirely tapeless

operation. When we started our service at the end of 2010, we began with about 36 channels. There were 13 of our in-house channels – ten of our entertainment channels, three of our sports channels. And 23 international channels. Later on, we expanded more and more, offering more international channels, rebroadcasting the direct feed of those channels. And we also expanded our own offerings of in-house package channels. Right now, we have 26 in-house channels – two are HD, and the rest are SD. We have a total of 70+ international feeds as well.

What were the challenges of setting up SkyNet?

When we first started in 2010, it was a little difficult – our country

“In Myanmar the biggest challenge is the piracy problem”

was sanctioned by Western countries, the EU as well as America. So when we tried to acquire content from some of those Western channels, they refused to sell to us, even though we were a totally private media company. But those regulations are getting better and better these days, so we don't have that problem any more. At first, we had a lot of problems acquiring American channels. Now we have pretty much all of them. We have HBO, CNN, Cartoon Network, Bloomberg, MTV, as well as all the European channels.

Where did you source content from at first?

It was mostly local content. And we had about 13 in-house channels that consisted of some acquired

content. We had no problem acquiring content from Asian countries at the time, just problems acquiring from Western countries. Nowadays the situation is much improved.

What lessons have you learned from setting up the network?

Looking back, I would have done things the same way if I had to do them again, given the situation we had at the time. But if someone were to start a channel these days, it would be a lot easier. Somebody could be starting out with no restrictions on doing business in Myanmar.

Did you think at the time that things would improve?

We were optimistically hoping. But there was no way of knowing for sure. I would say we were very lucky that the sanctions were being lifted as our business took off.

What is the future of SkyNet?

We are expanding and are hoping that we will expand more. The biggest challenge we have is the piracy problem in Myanmar. There are a lot of pirate pay-TV dishes and set top boxes available in Myanmar. India and Thailand are the worst problem. They are selling these set top boxes very cheap and they offer a lot of international channels as well as a lot of international sports events. When there is an international sporting event on, for example, it doesn't matter if it's on an English language channel or if it's in their own language. People just turn down the audio and watch the action.

We had problems with the recent World Cup. We had exclusive rights to broadcast the World Cup, but unfortunately there was a Thai TV provider with a set top box which carried the channels free to air. So all 64 matches of the World Cup were available for free in Myanmar to anyone who made a one-time purchase of that set top box.

How can you prevent and combat

“Starting a channel would be a lot easier today”

► Top left Win Naing
Top right SkyNet at a Yangon electronics fair
Right The blue dishes of SkyNet have become increasingly popular

www.skynetdth.com



such piracy?

There are a couple of ways, but nothing has been very efficient so far. It is true that our country needs more regulations and tighter control over distributing these illegal set top boxes. At present people can buy these set top boxes quite freely and there's not much control so far. Our neighbouring countries are taking advantage of our lack of regulations.

So is it a matter of the Myanmar government tightening up the regulations?

Yes. Our country is on the way towards democracy. There are so many things the government needs to be doing now, and they are doing them as best they can. Our democracy is very young at this point. What is unfortunate is that our neighbouring countries are taking advantage of this situation. I would hope they would enforce the law on their own side. But our government has so many things they need to accomplish right now, this is not their highest priority.

What about multi-screen delivery and OTT content?

We do want OTT, but the problem is that internet speed is quite slow in Myanmar. So it's difficult for us to expand in that area. Also we could offer VOD on our own service, but the problem is that the bandwidth requirement to do so would be quite a lot. So we're not able to provide it right now.

In developing countries the switchover to digital TV is a bigger issue than merely swapping digital for analogue...

Correct. The way that we distribute is one-way communication through satellite. If we used fibre communication, two-way communication, it would require much higher bandwidth than we have right now. One area that we are looking at is fibre through FTTX distribution, which I can see being implemented in the future. But our country, remember, is quite mountainous, and the geographical shape of our country is quite elongated, so it's not that easy to lay out fibre across the whole country. It will take some time to do so.

Thank you, Win Naing.

The tenth annual festival
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radio and online productions

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“What a great night we had in London. Fantastic arrangement and fantastic people.”



▲ The host of this year's AIBs on 5 November - the BBC's Matthew Amroliwala

▲ Some of last year's winners

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This year is the 10th year for the AIBs, the international media excellence awards organised by the Association for International Broadcasting (AIB). There are 15 categories covering factual television, radio and online to showcase outstanding material from programme makers in all parts of the world. This year we have seen a tremendous rise in the number of entries submitted – we've received work from 34 countries that together represent every continent on the planet.

JUDGES

During September and October, our judges will view and listen to the material that has made it through to the short-list. This year too we are delighted to welcome a great number of senior professionals from diverse areas of the broadcasting industry to our international panel, thus ensuring that different cultures and different media markets are represented. We are immensely grateful to all our judges for giving freely of their time and expertise in evaluating the short-listed entries so that the final winner can emerge. And because many of the jurors run channels, they are often encouraged to buy the programming they see for broadcast on their networks. This is another great reason to put your work forward in the annual AIBs.

AWARDS NIGHT

The names of the winners and finalists for the AIBs in 2014 will be kept firmly under wraps until Wednesday 5 November – the day of the AIBs Awards Gala and Dinner. For what has by now become one of the highlights in the international broadcasting

calendar, guests from every continent will be joining us in the fabulous performance space of LSO St Luke's in central London. It is a magnificent venue that never ceases to impress and fascinate our guests.

Our host this year is Matthew Amroliwala, a seasoned on-air presenter at the BBC and a familiar face to audiences in the UK and around the world. In September, Matthew becomes the new presenter for the flagship *Global* programme on BBC World News.

As always, we will have a special guest "in conversation" during the evening, adding to the interest and excitement of the event. And of course we will announce all the winners of the coveted AIBs awards across all categories and present them to the deserving winners.

OUR SUPPORTERS

Running the AIBs is a considerable undertaking for us and we are delighted that this year Eutelsat have signed up as our inaugural sponsor for the 2014 festival. The entire AIB membership and the awards team extend their particular thanks to Eutelsat for contributing to the success of this international competition.

JOIN US

I would like to extend a personal invitation to you and your colleagues to join us for the AIBs awards gala dinner in London on 5 November. I know that you will find it inspirational and rewarding, with excellent networking opportunities and the chance to exchange ideas and knowledge with colleagues from all over the world. And you will also be able to meet some of the world's top programme makers – but reserve your places soon as the event is always a sell-out. It's a date not to be missed - see you in London!

JUDGES

Faisal Abbas, Editor-in-Chief English online, Al Al Arabiya MBC | **Neeraj Arora**, EVP Head of International Business, MSM Asia Limited/Sony Entertainment Network | **Tim Ayris**, Director Channel and OEM sales EMEA, thePlatform | **Amadou Ba** | **Hannelie Bekker**, Founding MD, Wananchi Programming | **Klaus Bergmann**, Director of International Relations, Deutsche Welle | **Graeme Blundell**, The Australian | **Jenny Buckland**, CEO, Australian Children's TV Foundation | **Fernando Calvino**, CEO/Owner, Señal Internacional | **Catherine Cano**, Executive Director News Programs, CBC/Radio-Canada | **Rahul Chopra**, SVP Global Head of Video, Newscorp | **Eugen Cojocariu**, Head, Radio Romania International | **James Cridland**, Radio Futurologist | **Verona Duwarkah**, Group Executive: Television, SABC | **Anastasia Ellis**, Head of Europe TV, Bloomberg | **Geraldine Filiol**, Deputy Managing Director, Eurosport | **David Finch**, VP Europe, News Republic | **Marco Frazier**, Senior Vice President Global Distribution, AMC/Sundance Channel Global | **Angela Fung**, Deputy Head of Phoenix Chinese Channel, Phoenix Satellite TV | **Mihai Gadea**, CEO, Antena 3 | **Lee Gal**, Chief producer, i24 News | **Sumit Grover**, Director, Pixel Party | **Mohamed Ali Harraath**, CEO, Islam Channel | **Sven Herold**, Global Head Creative Development, Shell | **Carlson Huang**, Vice Manager and English Program Host, RTI | **Richard Jacobs**, Business Development Director, Babcock International Group | **Emmanuel Josserand**, Marketing Director, Civolution | **Bettina Klauser**, Head of Press and PR, N-tv | **Cheryl Knapp**, Series Producer, Wild Kratts | **Nathalie Lenfant**, Communications Director, France 24 | **Marcus Metzner**, Head of Marketing Services and Communication, arvato Sysyems | **John Momoh**, CEO, Channels TV | **Alexey Nikolov**, Managing Director, RT Channel | **H Nwana**, Executive Director, Dynamic Spectrum Alliance | **Lemi Olalemi**, Deputy CEO, TVC News | **Lindsey Oliver**, International Media Consultant | **John O'Loan**, CEO, iO Media Group Europe | **Nenad Pejic**, Editor-in-Chief, RFE/RL | **Jonathan Perelman**, GM Video & VP Agency Strategy, BuzzFeed | **Helen Stehli Pfister**, Producer/Editor, SRF | **Tom Porter**, Commissioning Editor, Channel 4 | **Libby Powell**, CEO, Radar | **Paul Robinson**, CEO, Creative Media Partners | **Gillian Rose**, Managing Director, PBS Distribution | **Alla Salehian**, CEO, TIMA | **Vatche Sarkisan**, Director of Program Review, MBN (Alhurra/Radio Sawa) | **Ruth Sloss**, Director of Programming, Spafax | **Simon Spanswick**, CEO, AIB | **Lek Hwa TAN**, VP English Current Affairs, Channel NewsAsia | **Htar Swe TIN**, Editor South East Asia and Burmese Service, BBC |



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Fee: The cost of individual places at the Dinner at the *member* rate is £225 plus UK VAT @ 20% (£45.00), giving a total cost of £270.00 per place. Delegates from an AIB Member benefit from a discounted rate on all places. The cost for individual places for *non-members* is £275 plus UK VAT @ 20% (£55.00), giving a total cost of £330.00 per place. Full tables are priced at £2,000 plus UK VAT for *AIB members* (total VAT-inclusive cost £2,400.00 per table). Full tables are priced at £2,500 plus UK VAT for non-members (total VAT-inclusive cost £3,000.00).

Prices include the champagne reception, three-course meal, wines and soft drinks and the awards ceremony and documentation. Travel and accommodation are not included in any of the fees. Cancellations of reservations made before 30 September are subject to a 15% administration fee of the total booking cost. Cancellations between 1 October and 15 October will be subject to a 50% administration fee of the total booking cost. After 15 October no refunds are possible, however substitutions may be made at any time with no additional charge.

Payment must be made in full before the event. The organisers reserve the right to alter the content and timing of the event. This contract is subject to English law. VAT: The Association for International Broadcasting is registered for VAT in the UK, registration number: 795 4970 65. The Association for International Broadcasting Limited, registered in England as a Company Limited by Guarantee, number 2841983.

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You can also reserve places and tables online at www.aib.org.uk/store



MEDIA-LOGUE

For as long as he can remember **Simon Spanswick** wanted to be involved in media. As an eight year old he had ambitions to be the voice behind the clock on TV (a continuity announcer, as he later discovered the job was called) – so no surprise that in later life he is living and breathing media wherever his job as CEO of the **Association for International Broadcasting** takes him. Here he shares some impressions from recent trips

Standing at the top of the Norman Foster-designed pyramid in the Kazakhstan capital in June, it struck me – not for the first time – that running the AIB is a real privilege, in more ways than one. Visiting a wide variety of places in the world, meeting so many interesting people, discovering how media operates in different markets – all this adds up to making my job varied, stimulating, and worthwhile. Yes, I can operate sitting at my desk a lot of the time – with BBC studio clocks and other treasures acquired in auctions benignly looking on – but I do get to travel to places that aren't on the usual tourist route, which can be a challenge and a unique opportunity to broaden one's horizons at the same time.

ASTANA

I've been lucky enough to spend time in Astana twice this year and on each visit I'm reminded just how remarkable a place the city is. It's one of the world's youngest capital cities in one of the world's youngest countries that's also the world's ninth largest, although the population numbers only around 19m. It also has the most extraordinary weather – winter

“The digital “now” is clearly in evidence in Kazakh cities



temperatures dip to minus 40c while in the (rather short) summer, they hit highs of plus 40c. Whatever time of year you might visit, Astana's architecture astonishes. It mixes myriad styles and colours and shapes. The city's centre has been designed as a grand project, with principal buildings running along an east-west axis from the remarkable pyramid – formally known as the Palace of Peace and Reconciliation – past the Presidential Palace, onto the astonishing Baiterek Tower and on towards the world's largest tent, the Khan Shatyr entertainment centre. To the north is the new Astana Opera – an immense performing arts centre that blends La Scala with the Bolshoi. The city centre also boasts a significant number of tall tower blocks, many clad in shimmering green, blue or gold glass. Among these is the new Kazakh Media Centre, a 22-floor high building that houses the two state-owned broadcasters, Khabar Agency and Kazakhshtan Republican TV and Radio Corporation. The Media Centre incorporates no fewer than 7,000sq/m of studio space – TV and radio – and a 1000sq/m concert hall, with edit suites, MCRs and offices. Outside, giant displays show a selection of

output to passing drivers and pedestrians, day and night.

The views from the top of the tower are spectacular, looking across Astana and on to the Steppe that surrounds the city.

The Media Centre also houses the press centre of the Kazakh government and it was in this area that I spoke about the rebranding of Kazakhstan TV during my last visit. I was honoured earlier this year to be asked to join an international experts' group that was being formed by Kazakhstan TV and Radio Corporation to help it devise its future strategy and to ensure that it meets the needs of its audience in the age of digital media consumption. Others on the group come from the AIBD, BBC and Rossiya Radio. The digital future – or perhaps the digital “now” – is clearly in evidence in the Kazakh cities I have visited. In Astana, there's wi-fi just about everywhere you go, from shopping malls to the pyramid and, just like everywhere else in the world, people are constantly looking at their mobile screens.

ARUSHA

This year AIB has been doing a wide range of work in Africa. Early in the year, I travelled to Arusha for the Commonwealth Telecommunications

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Organisation's Digital Switchover conference. I flew to Nairobi where roadside billboards urged people to join the digital revolution and buy a StarTimes digital TV subscription. China-owned StarTimes has been granted government contracts in multiple markets in Africa to create digital TV services. Driving down the (Chinese-built) road from Nairobi to Arusha and running the gauntlet of traffic police in Tanzania, the competing Zuku brand is much in evidence. This Nairobi-based company is pushing its pay-TV service across East Africa. It's a forward-thinking company that also provides broadband services. In parts of Nairobi, it is delivering fibre optic broadband, piggy-backing its fibre cables on the power line poles in the city. Zuku commissions its own content from lifestyle to sport and has sold some of its original programming to international players like Fox.

Zuku does not have it all its own way as there's a new kid on the block – Tanzania-based Azam TV that also has its own content and has invested in three Germany-built HD OB trucks to provide extensive live sports coverage. Azam and Zuku are both giving the incumbent DSTV from South Africa a run for its money, charging lower monthly subscription rates. Both companies, however, complain that DSTV's SuperSport channels have the entire continent sewn-up when it comes to international sport. The popular European football leagues are available only on SuperSport who acquire the rights for all of sub-Saharan Africa. The regional platforms complain that they can't bid against DSTV despite potentially offering larger audiences in countries outside South Africa. Nor will DSTV, they say, allow them to buy SuperSport channels on a wholesale basis for carriage on their platforms.

Perhaps African governments should step in to create the more level playing field for TV platforms that Europe enjoys, where large operators such as Sky, for example, have to provide their sports

channels to rival platform operators. Such a move would help fledgling local businesses develop faster and give more back to local economies.

In Tanzania, I spent some time channel-hopping on the TV in my hotel that appeared to be powered by a StarTimes box. I was surprised to see that the ad breaks on one of the South African English-language general entertainment channels were populated almost entirely with commercials promoting Chinese-made motorbikes and air conditioning alongside trails for Chinese-language programmes on CCTV-4 – in Mandarin. I couldn't work out who was getting the advertising revenue, nor could I figure out why programme promotions for a different channel were being run – particularly when the channel is aimed at a specific (presumably small) language group. It will remain a mystery for the time being.

In the last quarter century of travelling to Africa I've seen major changes. In the early 1990s, city centres across Africa were full of shops selling short wave radios, with HP (a form of loan) available on more expensive models. Short wave was indispensable as a means of keeping in touch with news from home, let alone abroad. And if you were in Africa and happened to let slip that you worked for BBC World Service, you were mobbed by a crowd eager to ask many, many questions about the BBC and life in the UK.

Today, those radio shops have gone, replaced by an even greater number selling mobile phones. Whole industry sectors have been created around the mobile, from top-up card vendors to mobile charging points where there's no mains grid. People are in touch via mobile, accessing information, getting ideas for starting businesses. The revolution is not over yet.

CANNES

Back in Europe, the northern hemisphere autumn (fall to some of you) brings with it a resurgence in the conference circuit. IBC in

“
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urge
people to
join the
digital
revolution**
”



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Amsterdam is in September where many AIB members will be searching out the latest technology for content production and delivery. Then in October, it's down to the south of France for a stroll among the beautiful people on La Croisette in Cannes during MIPCOM. The annual content market brings together thousands of programme makers and broadcasters from all over the world. I asked Laurine Garaude, TV Director at MIPCOM organiser Reed Midem, what makes the event special: "The two major international B2B tradeshows devoted to the global TV business, MIPTV in April and MIPCOM in October, are both organised by Reed Midem. Every genre imaginable, from documentaries to drama, to animation and game-shows, is represented. As the entertainment industry has become globally linked and more complex, the two events have developed world class conference, awards and networking programmes. Even in this digital age of instantaneous communication, the opportunity to meet international colleagues or industry counterparts face-to-face, remains as important as ever and a key element of MIPTV and MIPCOM's attractiveness."

AIB is working closely with Reed Midem to deliver a "channel distribution day" on Monday 13 October which we hope will provide insight into what platforms are looking for in 2015 and beyond and help to match-make between channels and platforms. I'll be chairing part of the day and am looking forward to useful, interesting discussions – against the backdrop of the Mediterranean and the old town of Cannes.

Astana, Arusha, Cannes – media is everywhere. It's a constantly evolving landscape, populated by interesting players and individuals, surprising you often with unexpected turns and delighting you with game-changing leaps forward. On the whole, I'd say I made the right choice not to become the voice behind the clock. ■

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Turan Ali, the new director of Radio Netherlands Training Centre RNTC, is a seasoned media all-rounder, with over 20 years experience of producing radio and TV programmes while at the same time gaining an international reputation as an innovative media trainer. In 2015 RNTC will become part of Radio Netherlands Worldwide and Turan Ali has ambitious plans to expand the range of RNTC's courses beyond the 70 countries they currently serve. He explains what is central to his approach

I have worked with media professionals from many developed and developing countries, and the training they receive is so often the same, worldwide. Journalists and factual programme-makers are trained in 'Who, What, Where, Why, When and How'. But there is rarely any sophisticated theory: no story theory, nothing about formats or combining them to tell stories, no learning and persuasion theory. It is this combination of story, format, learning and persuasion theory that is unique to my and RNTC's approach. Programme-makers need a rigorous but usable theoretical basis, which they should explore by analysing examples, followed by producing programmes based on this approach.

What is wrong with the five "Ws"?

That doesn't build a story. In my experience, Western journalists are very resistant to Story Theory – unlike their colleagues in developing countries. Story, they think, means fiction, which, of course, it doesn't. Of course information in every factual programme has to be accurate and thoroughly researched. But if you don't deliver this information in a story, people can't remember it. "Story" is not a dirty word, it is the main vehicle for human communication and we do not train enough of our media professionals in how to tell great stories in any format.

How do you persuade audiences?

Good programmes and stories persuade audiences, but programme-makers often persuade by chance, not design. Any

programme that has an impact on an audience persuades them about something new. If there's nothing new in your programme, there'll be no impact. The key to persuasion is being aware of the emotional journey your audience goes through. Giving new information changes people's understanding, and there's an emotional dimension to it. A truly powerful programme operates on an intellectual and emotional level. If you want to have an impact every time, you need to use a persuasion theory, in harmony with story and format, otherwise your successes are not repeatable because you won't really understand why it had an impact.

Are your ideas relevant everywhere?

Yes. Just because you cross a geographical border doesn't change the way your brain works; it doesn't change the fact that you communicate through stories. If you tell someone a great story, they will remember it. They can share it. If you throw bare data at them, after 20 seconds they can't remember a word. The feedback to my training approach is equally high in developed and developing countries.

You use the term "audience mapping" – what does that mean?

Broadcasters often use too broad a definition of "audience" – such as "We're aiming at 18 – 24 year olds" or "People in the North of England". These are definitions inherited from advertisers. But they're meaningless; these audiences don't exist as a cohesive audience because of the diversity and complexity within each group. You really have to decide which micro audiences within the macro audience you want to reach, and then craft your story accordingly. Audience Mapping is the technique for identifying and then selecting the range of micro audiences your programme or series is designed to have an impact on. This level of awareness is present in some areas of advertising and behaviour change campaigning – but not in

PERSUADING BY DESIGN

A truly powerful programme operates on intellectual and emotional levels

standard programme-making.

You offer training in drama and soap opera production – and now also game shows and comedy?

The majority of media training tends to be journalism training, which we run also; but why not share our expertise for other important formats and genres? All broadcasters need their high rating programmes, and there are very few international training courses for game shows and other types of programmes. Some soap opera producers that have been on our courses now produce their countries' most viewed programmes.

And your plans for the future?

Breaking as many fixed patterns of training as possible! It's all about breaking new ground and taking the old ways of doing things and keeping the good and taking it into a new form in the future. We are going to launch an Online Academy of Excellence where journalists and programme-makers of many genres can learn about story, format, learning, persuasion, creativity and the mapping of audiences. Training will be through play and social media, one-on-one coaching and interactive seminars introducing high level theory. Participants are expected to practise what they've learnt: produce programmes, upload them and get feedback. The online platform should keep costs down and enable us to reach a wider audience. There'll be journalism and factual productions, drama, comedy, game shows and broadcast management. We're aiming to train the media stars of tomorrow.

Thank you, Turan Ali.

www.rntc.nl





CAMERA IN THE SKY

In recent years, the use of unmanned aircraft systems for creative aerial photography and videography has increased exponentially. A great alternative to helicopters, at a fraction of the cost, these camera drones or multicopters provide the stunning aerial shots that the audience has come to love and expect. We spoke to **Tom Hannen** and **Owain Rich**, Innovations Producers of the **Global Video Unit, BBC World Service Languages**, and **Ahmet Cakan**, Senior Broadcasting Technology Officer at international video news agency **RUPTLY**, to find out about the uses of these flying cameras and whether they have developed into a fully-fledged newsgathering tool

The BBC was among the first news organisations in the UK to use flying cameras and the first to train in-house licensed hexacopter pilots. Innovations Producers of the Global Video Unit in BBC World Service Languages, Tom Hannen and Owain Rich, built their own hexacopter – why, when there are many different models on the market?

[OR] Quite early on we realised that when we're out in the field, we always have to maintain the copters. If something starts malfunctioning abroad, it's always good to understand the technology and the machine from a basic level. We wanted to be able to fix problems when they arose. When you buy the copters off-the-shelf and something breaks, it can take quite a long time to get it repaired.

Does camera drone technology have anything in common with military drones?

[OR] It would be a misconception

to say that the technology is a result of military development. The technology leaps that made the camera drones possible owe more to mobile phone technology and the availability of cheap accelerometers and gyroscope chips. These are the same things you have inside an iPhone. The copter technology has more in common with the remote-control toy helicopter scene than with the military scene.

[TH] The word "drone" implies autonomous flight, and we are always in control of ours the whole time they are up in the air.

What happens if operator and copter lose radio contact?

[OR] When the craft loses contact with the ground, it waits for a few seconds and then follows its own automated routine. It will hover, wait for another 10 seconds and will then go up to a "safe height" above any objects. We pre-programmed this height at 20 metres. And then it will come back "home" with the help of a GPS based system and land itself. It's great because it will always come

back to where it started off.

Do you need a permit to fly?

[TH] The UK Civil Aviation Authority [CAA] has given us permission to fly, and according to their rules we can only fly in "line of sight". That means we have to be able to see the craft at all times.

[OR] We have a EuroUSC qualification. EuroUSC is an independent company employed by the CAA, which offers a pilot's qualification. The CAA rules say that you can't fly within 50 metres of a person who is not under your direct control. That means the person has to know you are there. The other rule says you have to be 150 metres away from any large group of people. So we could only film, let's say a football match, once the area were secured, if there were no crowds and if all persons present knew you are there. If a hexacopter got out of control, it could be very dangerous.

What does that mean for newsgathering?

[OR] To us, the copter is only a newsgathering tool in very specific ►

◀ Getting unique shots of the Christ the Redeemer statue in Rio de Janeiro

circumstances; say you cover an environmental story or something of that nature where you can control the environment. Or it's in the middle of nowhere and not in a built-up area. For us, the copter is more like an extension of something like a jib or a steady-cam. It's a piece of filming equipment that allows you to get some amazing cinematic shots which are planned rather than respond to quick unfolding events.

I think the technology needs to come on a long way, and legislation needs to develop with those changes in technology for it to truly become a quick-response newsgathering tool.

Do the regulations change from country to country?

[TH] The rules do vary from country to country, but we follow the UK rules when we're flying abroad.

How difficult is the handling?

[TH] It's quite difficult to learn and takes a lot of practice: the pilot is

“The copter is only a newsgathering tool in very specific circumstances”

▼ The BBC team filming near Brasilia

using two joy sticks simultaneously with both thumbs at the same time. Your left thumb controls the throttle and the sort of rotation of the craft in one axis, and your right thumb controls the rotation into other axes.

And then we have a second person who controls the angle of the camera. So one person is moving the copter through the space and the second person is controlling where the camera is looking. And it's through the combination of both of them you get these really lovely aerial shots.

What are the advantages of the copter?

[TH] The great thing is that you can position this camera anywhere in the sky. For example, we were able to get shots of the Christ the Redeemer statue in Brazil which we wouldn't have been able to get in any other way. We could pan around the statue which has no real vantage point. A real copter would have got a very different shot because it can't get close to the

statue. They need to zoom in on a big lens, which gives you a very different feeling and an impressive shot. But the shots we were able to get were quite unique.

As film makers we are very excited by these new types of shots. And the copters extend our ability to offer the audience a perspective they haven't seen before. That drives us as camera people. With this equipment, we're always thinking of new ways of being creative.

Thank you, Tom Hannen and Owain Rich.

International Video News Agency RUPTLY provides visual news content to all media. Cameraman, Senior Technology Officer and staff trainer Ahmet Cakan has been using multicopters in the field - how have these devices been changing the way he works?

To get some practice myself, I went to Ukraine and Turkey to try our copter out. It's so much easier to gather footage. You don't have to run to get a good spot from where to take pictures, like a balcony on a house near the event. It is usually a lot of work to find a suitable room, get access to it, and perhaps later find yet another place which offers a different angle of the events.

The video quality of our quadcopters is not the best but it's good enough for newsgathering. You just check if the weather is ok, if all the conditions are right, and then you take off. And if you know what to shoot, you have the material in the bag within five to ten minutes.

Another advantage that comes with the use of copters is the comparative security it gives you in places where violent protests are going on. It is much easier for a journalist to stand behind a barricade about 200 metres away from the event and fly this thing 30 or 40 metres above the ground.





In these tense situations, are demonstrators not suspicious of your drone?

It actually happened a couple of times that demonstrators thought the police were spying on them and taking pictures. But we showed them our press cards and explained that we were journalists. I think at the moment this doesn't pose a problem because up to now the technology is not widely used by security forces or police. But I think this will be a problem in the future. Maybe we will have to put big stickers on the copters to let people know we're not from the police.

Why do you use quadcopters?

There are different kinds of copters: hexacopters, octocopters, just depending on the number of propellers. We are using quadcopters, which are the smallest copters available. They can't carry much weight – only up to 300g – and they can't stay in the air for long. The battery power lasts for 15 to 20 minutes depending on the wind.

We chose quadcopters because they are easier to transport and they can be operated by a single person. Hexacopters, which are used for movies or documentaries, have better cameras, but it can take two to three people to operate them. The bigger the device, the more weight it can carry – which means it can carry better cameras. On the other hand, you have more difficulties in transporting it, you need more people operating it, and everything takes more time. So we decided to stay on the smaller side: we are not shooting world class movies or high grade documentaries, but we do shoot in HD with Sony or GoPro action cams on our drones.

How does the weather affect the drones?

Our copters can operate in rain, snow and strong winds, but generally we don't use them in these conditions. Having said that, we have used them in winter in Ukraine and it was very windy there. Our copters have very good

▲RUPTLY's Ahmet Cakan [left] tracks the flying of a quadcopter

“Copters give you comparative security where violent protests are going on”

assistance functions. They are very stable in the air: even if you let go of the controls, the device just stays where it is, it doesn't drift away. We tried it in 40km/h wind speeds and it was very stable. It is really easy to control; it almost flies itself.

Can you fly these copters anywhere?

We naturally investigated where we are allowed to fly. In Western European countries and the US they have started to set up regulations for the commercial use of copters, and it is quite difficult to get permission to fly in these countries.

The process takes too long: news is not news any more, if you get the permission one week after the event. In the rest of the world, governments haven't started working on regulations yet.

What's your view on selling copters to private people?

The demand for copters is rising. On the internet you can buy a basic model from \$200; a top model which can carry a professional camera may cost thousands of dollars. The one thing I am rather concerned with is safety. There is the question of people spying on each other, but first of all I am concerned about physical safety.

These devices are well assisted but they can give you a false sense of security. And when something goes wrong electronically, like the automatic GPS system, you may not be able to keep the copter under control. You have to be able to fly them manually too.

Our journalists have to practise in all kinds of different environments; they have to perform certain flights and pass tests. Only then are they allowed to use the copter in the field in a live situation. So I could foresee a situation where governments are going to require mandatory training for the operation of copters and even the licensing of the devices themselves.

Thank you, Ahmet Cakan.



OUT OF THE CORPORATE SHELL

With so many new avenues of distribution opening up, corporations are realising that their messaging can reach a global audience more directly than ever before. We talked to **Shell's** Global Head of Creative Development, **Sven Herold** about the oil giant's expansion into branded content, and asked him 'What exactly is branded content?'

It is a term very much used in the industry right now. For me, when I hear that word, it sounds very much like a marketing thing. And I think that is what it was in the past, product placement or a way to get into an editorial space with a brand message. In most companies, it's usually been generated by the marketing department, and that's where it had been sitting at Shell when we did documentaries for Discovery Channel and other big networks.

I think what is changing now in the market, and what we're also trying to do at Shell, is to take a more journalistic, communications approach. For me it is not "branded content" anymore. I would rather

just call it "content" – it's just created by a company.

There was a show running on the BBC called *Supermarket Secrets*. It was a show about Waitrose, Tesco and all the big supermarket brands in England. Would you call that branded content? Or is that just a good story? So I think where we're moving toward is to open that space a little bit.

How do you select and develop content?

What we're trying to do is bring great stories, from Shell, which haven't yet been told, where we don't look at the brand first, where instead we look at people, at exciting things happening.

We have built a department in

“We are a journalistic team embedded in the company”

Shell with experts from the industry, which includes former television journalists, like myself. We work with agencies too, but I think it is extremely important that you have a creative content team in-house that has their own knowledge of the market. It's not a corporate storytelling team. It's more of a journalistic team which is embedded in the company.

When it comes to story research and identification of good characters and looking for the ingredients of the story, we use the same approach as any large TV network. It's also important for me to have people from different regions, who have worked in those regions. We have to tell a story in China very differently from how

we would tell it in America or in Europe. So it's important for us not just to have specialists but specialists who know their markets and know their audience. The approach is just the same as if we were a broadcaster, we just don't have our own terrestrial or satellite channel.

Right now we are doing a piece about the construction of the largest offshore floating liquefied gas facility in the world. The 'Prelude FLNG' is the largest floating thing ever built, bigger than any cruise ship. We built it in locations around the world, and the facility will end up off the coast of Australia. The idea was, instead of having a refinery onshore, that it be done on sea, bringing the refinery right to the exploration place.

When we floated the hull of the facility last December, we sent out a one-minute time-lapse clip of the launch on our own channels – YouTube, Facebook, Twitter. The clip already has 700,000 views on YouTube. It was shown by BBC.com and all the broadcasters around Australia and just about everywhere in the world. Even the UK's *Guardian* newspaper showed it on their technology page. Newspapers are very keen to have digital content for their audience, as long as that is something that is not dictated by the company.

Describe Shell's production process

If we take the 'Prelude' story as an example, in planning, we discuss what the milestones should be over the next four years and we decide that the outcome we want at the end is a one or two episode TV documentary about building the largest offshore liquefied gas facility in the world and we want to distribute that with a large network. We can also offer content to a variety of outlets, including our own visual channels all throughout the process.

It took us time to convince the engineers about the project and to let them know that we weren't doing it in a corporate way – that it will be a proper piece of journalism. My executive producers have filmed it all in the same way a broadcaster

would. We identify characters, we identify the right story.

You can imagine that it's not easy to get a broadcaster in to cover it. We don't own the shipyards, so we have to work with partners. And there can be thousands of people in such shipyards, and there are restrictions. We can't have a broadcast team there every day. We would have NHK one day from Japan, then ABC from America the next day. We can be there for the long term. And it's important that they trust us, so that we properly show what's happening.

The engineers are on a timeline, they have to deliver the project. And there's safety and health, which is very important for oil companies. So that's another good reason to have a corporate filming the project because a normal broadcaster doesn't have the certification. A BBC crew wouldn't even be able to board the helicopter without special papers.

Another example of our content that has been very successful is our Shell Eco-Marathon. In this event students are given a task to create a car that goes the furthest with the least amount of energy. For us, that's a great story: why not follow these teams for the five or six weeks they are designing and building them? We followed three of the teams for five weeks – in the US, in Canada, in Brazil.

That length of commitment is something a network might find hard to do, but we can do that. We ended up with a TV documentary that was shown by Fox in Houston and MBC TV in South Korea. This year we did something similar with Eurosport. So the company is getting closer to operating like a media house.

How do you counter the expectation that you're just trying to deliver a corporate message?

We want to produce things that excite mass audiences. That cannot be content that the company wants to see, it has to be the content that the audience wants to see. So there's a shift in emphasis. No one



▲ From top
Hazards abound
filming in Iraq;
Participants line
up in Shell's Eco
Marathon
Above Sven
Herold

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wants to see white-washed company messages.

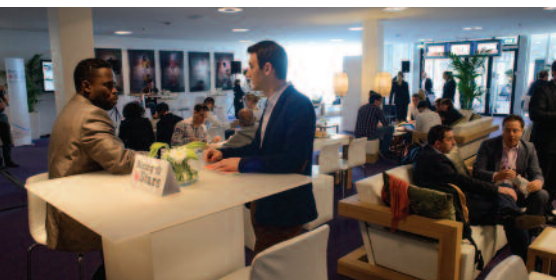
I think there needs to be a shift in understanding from the journalists' side too: they should know that companies don't always want to keep editorial control. There has to be bigger trust in working with companies and some acknowledgment that we are trying to meet broadcaster standards.

We have to come up with stories which are different from what you have seen in the past. So you will see drama, you will see challenge, you will see openness, you will see honesty. It's not easy. There is a way to go with companies, and not only in Shell, because no one is used to that. It's a very new approach.

Sven Herold, thank you.

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VIDEO SCALING UP

Other international news agencies have been providing video for a lot longer than AFP, so as a worldwide provider of breaking news, AFPTV is a relative newcomer. It wasn't until 2010 that we were fully deployed, and our expansion really took off about two years ago. Today both our production and our television client base are global, and the number of stations that use our videos continues to grow more quickly than our output.

As for our signature identity, AFP is the only alternative with a truly global footprint to the Anglophone agencies we compete with. This is important for a lot of media around the world who value a plurality of sources and perspectives, especially in the context of an increasingly globalised media landscape. AFPTV brings this difference, combined with a guarantee of complete global coverage in real-time.

What is the relationship between AFPTV and the rest of AFP's news production?

From the very start, AFPTV grew in synergy with our bureaux around the world, which today number 200. Our television production is also part of our multimedia strategy, which means that the news editors at AFP headquarters, or the heads of news output in Bangkok, Rio, Dakar or Kiev are thinking video from the moment they start organising news coverage. When it is especially relevant to the story, we'll put video at the centre of that coverage. In that sense, AFPTV makes the most of the agency's global footprint.

It is precisely because our teams on the ground are thoroughly integrated across video, text and photo that we can be efficient and fast, as was the case for the exclusive images we distributed recently of the helicopter shot down in separatist Eastern Ukraine. If we were first on the ground after Typhoon Haiyan hit the Philippines, it's also because AFP has a deep historical presence there, and a lot of logistical contacts in Manila. Likewise, we are able to have staff VJs [video journalists] operating in Damascus and in Teheran because we've had bureaux in these countries for decades.

By the same token, because of our ►

AFP is the oldest news agency in the world, founded in Paris in 1835 as Agence Havas and reborn 1944 as Agence France-Presse during the liberation of Paris. Today, global news agency AFP is delivering photo, text, multimedia, graphics and video. We asked **Marie-Noëlle Vallès**, Head of AFPTV, how quickly the agency is scaling up on the video front

long history there, Africa is also a fantastic success story for AFP video.

Isn't it sometimes a drawback to work as part of a multimedia team when video has its own rhythm?

It can be difficult to manage at times – but it can cut both ways.

Sometimes, to be sure, we need to move more quickly than we might on the text side. But sometimes – especially with features – working in video can be a lot slower. At first, features comprised the entirety of our production, and then we moved to raw video. But features are still a priority for TV clients, and maybe even more so for digital media. So, yes, it is a challenge to maintain that output of well-crafted packages while at the same time working under the constant pressure of the need for raw, hard news video.

At the other end of the spectrum is live video, which we started doing in 2012 after a full year of internal testing. It won't be fully integrated into our international catalogue until 2015. In the meantime, we are developing our editorial and technical expertise by covering the widest possible variety of events live, whether with third-party feed pickups or in-house production, single or multi-feeds, light SIM-card-based or heavy SNG equipment. And those events – of which there are dozens – are spread across the globe: Africa, Ukraine, Jerusalem, Rio, Berlin, as well as here in France, such as the Cannes Film Festival.

Moving quickly means that there's a steep learning curve as we adapt and experiment to stay in

phase with the needs of our TV and digital subscribers.

How do you respond to growing demand for video content on digital platforms?

To put it simply, we were born digital. So from the beginning, we were geared towards broadcasters and online media alike, delivering specific editorial and technical formats, tailored to very different needs in six languages.

One thing that has changed with the growing consumption of news video on mobile phones and tablets – laptops are increasingly being bypassed – is that the raw video that was once-upon-a-time only used by broadcasters is now being used by digital media, even where there is no in-house editorial operation. We're talking mainly about short and sharp news webclips, with no extra production whatsoever. Working within images that "speak for themselves" also makes it possible to deliver quickly, which is, after all, at the core of the news agency DNA.

So is accuracy, which takes more time. Is there a contradiction here?

Let's call it a challenge. As much as we need to be fast, we will always rather be "late & right" than "first & wrong". There's one area in which this is especially pertinent: so-called User Generated Content. At AFP, we have a very specific process of technical and editorial certification for UGC video. Sometimes it takes time before we are able to deliver that kind of video with confidence, and sometimes we simply do not

“
Live video
will be part
of our
inter-
national
catalogue
by 2015
”

www.afptv.com



reach a sufficient level of editorial security to deliver. Either way, we believe that this is time well spent – for the sake of our credibility and the credibility of the hundreds of media that put their trust in us.

But a successful digital strategy has to be more than that. You need a mix of "quick and raw", on the one hand, and long, carefully produced formats, on the other. Engaging, evergreen 'long-tail' videos can be anything from an extended news package to interactive explainers based on a video or a video-graphic. These are key elements that video brings to digital storytelling. A narration today works with a palette of text, photo, video and graphics. And sometimes, when the story calls for it, we should take an "upside-down multimedia approach" that is video-centric, not text-centric.

Innovations in the pipeline?

One of the areas that we are currently exploring is 4K video. Just as AFP was the first global agency to go full HD back in September 2010, it makes sense for us to keep exploring new formats. We have been experimenting with ultra-high definition in collaboration with our Japanese partners within the NexTV Forum, a collaborative group of manufacturers and broadcasters that includes NHK, Panasonic, Sony, Sharp, Toshiba and NTV.

At the same time, on our traditional global newsgathering patch, we are faced with new challenges. Among those is maintaining fair access for global TV agencies to news areas affected by an ever growing trend towards privatisation and monetisation. But that's a completely different story.

Thank you, Marie-Noëlle Vallès.





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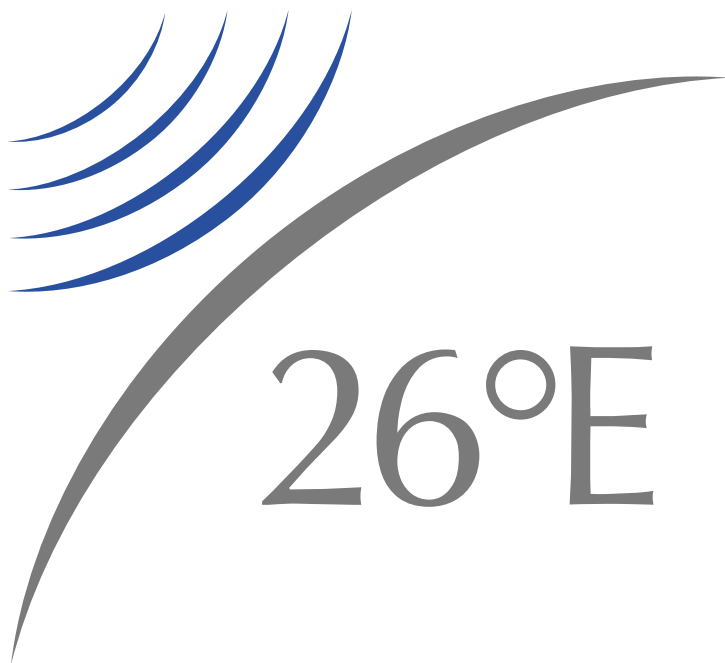
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B A D R

A R A B S A T



EURONEWS' AFRICAN SISTER

Euronews made a big splash in January this year when they announced plans for a new pan-African sister channel called Africanews, in partnership with TeleCongo in Brazzaville. We asked CEO **Michael Peters** how this step fits in with the company's global strategy

The difference between today and 20 years ago when Euronews was first born is that content is no longer king of everything. In

today's hypercompetitive market you need to explain to the consumer why they should consume your brand. They must trust you. The time when CNN had the best ever slogan, which was "Be the first to know", is over. No one can be the first to know except people who have a mobile phone and a push app. As we are all evolving in a pan-European advertising market, which is extremely small and very saturated, the only way to grow and to deploy a strategy is to diversify your activities. If you look at the rate of change in Africa, together with the arrival of the high bandwidth network, all the indications are that over the next 10 years Africa will be the continent with the highest growth.

“My goal is: How can I better meet the user experience?”

How can you break into this market?

We had two choices. The first was to launch Euronews Africa and say "Look guys, we are a big European player and we bring you our European perspective to enrich your knowledge about news of the world."

The second option was to reject precisely this approach, which to me is an extremely condescending one. So instead we were saying "How about a joint venture where we associate our expertise in international news, editorial independence, multilingualism, short format news with your own knowledge about the continent and its culture etc."

This is why we chose the name Africanews which is totally different from Euronews Africa. Africanews is clearly a sister channel of Euronews and not a daughter. Africanews will be made by Africans for Africans. Africanews will produce its own content as well as using content

▲ The new Euronews studio complex in Lyon

produced by Euronews, and Euronews will do the same.

Why did you choose Brazzaville as base?

Our project had very precise specifications. We needed a country to host the project where freedom of expression will be protected, where the independence of our work will be, let's say, agreed, with sufficient technical infrastructure like fibre and which is centrally located. I was very fortunate to meet Stephen Smith, a well-known journalist and Africa expert, and I gave him the job to go to Africa with our project. He went to see dozens of countries. Congo was the only country that respected all the strict conditions that were in the specifications. I also feel there is a parallel between Brazzaville and Lyon. Why run such a big news operation from Lyon? It works because being such a human sized town has a lot of advantages for us. I think it's the same for Brazzaville.

What differentiates Africanews from other news channels launching in Africa?

Our news is developed in a multi-lingual and multicultural way by a newsroom which offers a plurality of perspectives. These are core values of Euronews and Africanews. Our approach is quite different to that of other channels which are coming to give their own perspective on Africa. If you consume the Euronews brand every month – like 90 million people do – then that's because you think that Euronews is very different from the other channels, with a very different format. I think it will be the same for Africanews.

What media formats will you offer?

All of them. TV is pre-history now. For the past year and a half we haven't used the word channel or TV in Euronews anymore. We only speak about three things: content, products and brands. If you look at Euronews on the linear offer today

you'll see that it's like a succession of different VODs [videos on demand]. Africanews will work in the same way. Journalists will produce content, then this content will be adapted to proposed products. The linear offer is one product and it will be accessible via a big screen in your living room. But it will equally be available on a small window on your computer and with the same content we will also be able to produce other products like a website, a YouTube channel, a mobile app etc.

What is the business model?

We already have a dedicated advertising window for Africa with Euronews. I think it has increased by 450% in the first half of this year, compared to the first half of 2013. There are a great number of brands who want to communicate through a multi-territory approach in Africa today. This is why we believe in the Africanews project so strongly.

Which languages will you broadcast in?

We'll start with English and French. We'd also like to be able to launch Portuguese. Then the idea is to apply the model that we have used at Euronews, which means to enrich the brand with lots of news languages like Swahili, Hausa, Spanish and Arabic.

Your wish list for the next two years?

I try to wake up in the morning with only one thing on my mind, which is: How can I better meet the user experience? That's probably my only goal.

What is that user experience?

The user experience of today is that people consume news in a totally different way, depending on the time of day and their physical location. Once you have understood that, you just have to try and meet their expectations. For example, when they are on a bus in the morning they want very short formats; later in the day when they

“We have a dedicated advertising window for Africa”

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are sitting in a chair with a larger screen they want to be much more interactive, perhaps do some research and explore topics.

And in the evening, relaxing on a sofa in front of an even bigger screen, they want to consume a much longer format in a very passive way, while often at the same time interacting on a smaller screen device with what they see on the big screen.

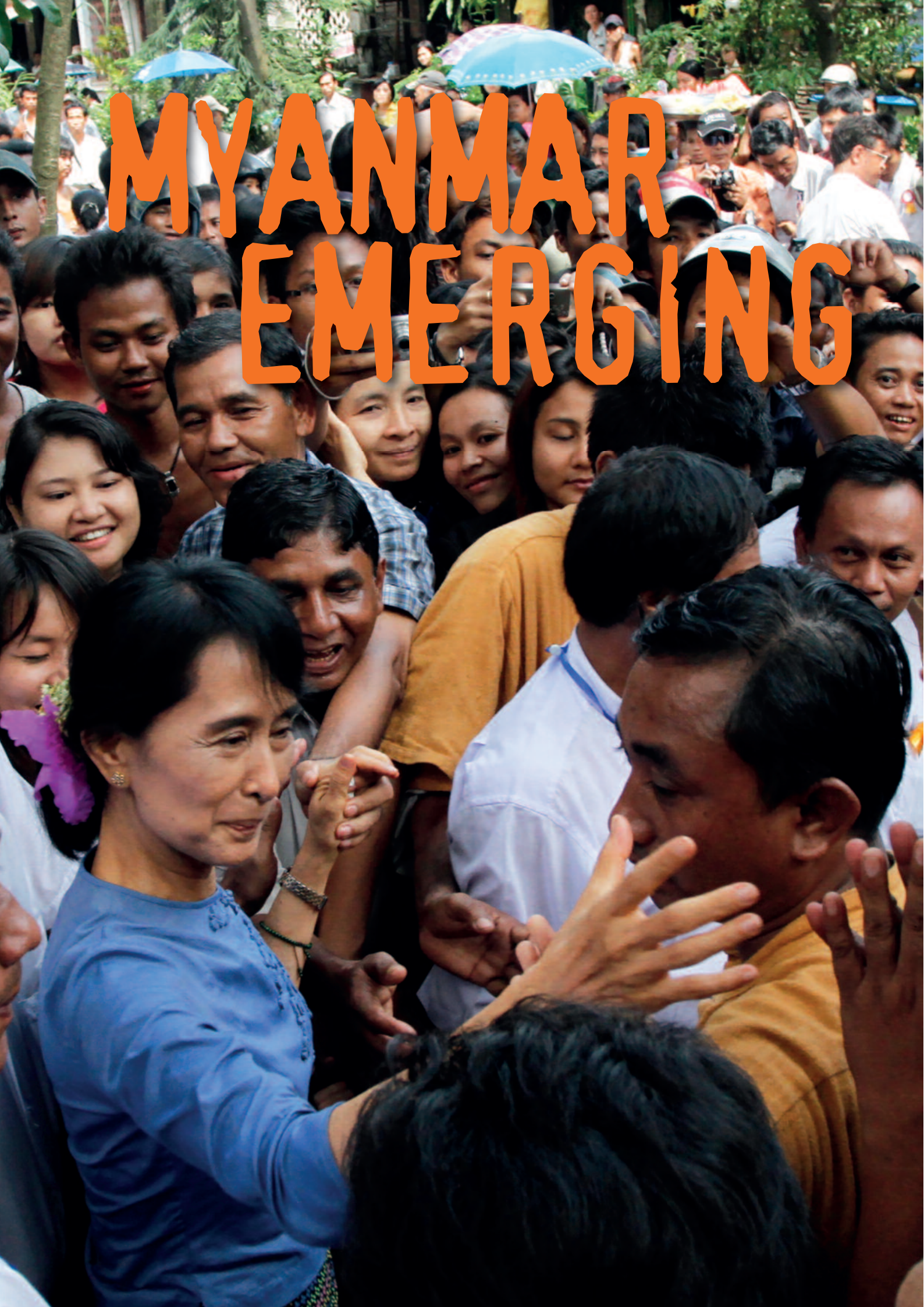
That's what I call the user experience – and what links this experience is the brand. The brand is the result of a mixture between content and product. People consume news and media while they are moving around.

Mobile is first now. For instance Nokia is about to launch a new smartphone, the NokiaX, which will be sold for around \$100. It will be delivered with the Euronews Express app available from launch and free of charge. It's a 100% news application without video so doesn't use much bandwidth, with text only. I think that with these kind of initiatives growth in Africa will be much more rapid than we think.

Michael Peters, thank you.



MYANMAR EMERGING



Burma – officially the Republic of the Union of Myanmar – is the second largest country in Southeast Asia. It became an independent democratic nation in 1948, and then, following a coup in 1962, a military dictatorship which formally ended in 2011. In a country ravaged by years of ethnic strife and civil war, the release of Burma's most prominent human rights activist, Aung San Suu Kyi, in November 2010, signalled a series of political and economic reforms leading to a substantial opening of the long-isolated country. These include laws that provide better protection for basic human rights, and gradually reducing restrictions on freedom of the press, association, and civil society. We take a closer look at how reporting on and from Myanmar is changing for international broadcasters such as the **BBC** and **Channel NewsAsia**

Since the new military-backed government took office in 2011, democratic changes have paved the way for massive foreign investments and the media enjoy the most freedom for five decades. Since 1940 the BBC Burmese service has provided a vital link to keep the country in touch with the wider world, and has remained one of the key sources of information for Burmese-speaking audiences, both inside and outside the country. When it was announced in December 2013 that the BBC had been given official permission to open a news bureau in Myanmar, Deputy Minister of Information U Ye Htut acknowledged the BBC as a "model" for its standard of journalism. We talked to BBC Burmese editor Tin Htar Swe – who was awarded an OBE this year for her services to broadcasting to Burma – and asked her how reporting conditions have changed

Before the opening of the country we had no journalists there. They had to report from outside Burmese borders. We did have a network of stringers in neighbouring countries and a complex system of getting information out. But it was not safe to report from inside the country. Since then things have improved a lot. Our correspondents have an office in Yangon and can go almost anywhere to report about events.

What restrictions are still in place?

Well, the government would only allow us to go to certain refugee camps where you get the feeling that the refugees, members of the ethnic minorities, are being

intimidated into holding back the whole truth of their existence. We would like to go to the real camps, but even journalists who are allowed access can only go to certain areas. And that is so frustrating. When we ask the government for permission, they never say "no", they say: "It's not the right time." So there are still difficulties although things are improving.

What do you know about your audience?

Our audience is growing and growing. In areas where the internet is available, many people have smartphones, tablets and so on. So now we're offering our content on these mobile devices. We were the first to launch one-minute audio news on mobile devices.

The government allows a certain size of bandwidth to the mobile aggregator, which allows for only a certain number of subscribers. We reached the maximum number of subscribers. It's not a massive number, but Burma is still in its infancy when it comes to mobile technology. 18 months ago, a SIM card cost \$250; this price is expected to come down to \$1 or \$2 this year.

Is your content still available on shortwave?

Our traditional audience lives in the countryside. A lot of them are the elderly who stay at home and who are still passionate about tuning into radio. So we still have a weekly audience of 8.5m listeners, still very strong.

Another thing is social media: our audience on Facebook is growing – 1.3m to date. We got over 800 000

“**Only the wealthy can afford TV at the moment**”

“likes” so far. And when we started BBC international TV news bulletins in Burmese, the audience peaked at 4m in the days after the launch. It's so popular; we're planning to expand it. At the moment, our TV content is only available on pay-TV, but it will soon change to free to air. Not many people in Myanmar can afford TV at the moment, only the wealthy people.

So we reach our audience via shortwave radio and re-broadcasting deals on FM as well as online and through social media. And soon there will be audio bulletins on demand available on mobile phones.

How is Burma's technical infrastructure developing?

Two telecommunications companies, Telenor from Norway and the Qatari Ooredoo, have been awarded licences to operate in Burma. They have already invested several hundred million dollars on building a network of mobile masts all over the country. By spring 2015, 90% of the country should have 3G coverage, and Ooredoo plans to have 4G coverage by early 2016 at the latest. That is going to change the country completely.

How much access do you have to members of the government?

The cabinet have been told to speak to the media, and we have access to almost every government office. But it depends on how brave the ministers are and how liberal.

Not every minister will speak to us. But the recently appointed minister of Rakhine state, a military man, is very media friendly, and when we call him he will normally

give us an interview.

Can you trust the information ministers give you?

We will allow them to say what they want, but we challenge them. And they don't like that. But if they don't want to speak to us, all they have to do is switch their phones off!

You are now training local journalists?

Yes, the BBC has been asked by the government to train Burmese journalists. The BBC has agreed on condition that our editorial values must be taught too: freedom of speech, telling the truth, objective reporting. The government agreed to that. BBC Media Action have already trained over 100 journalists in the state media, and the training programme has been extended.

Did the government let a genie out of the bottle when Burma opened up?

The Minister of Information admitted that there are elements within the cabinet that are resisting the idea of public service media in a Western sense. So his major challenge is to change the mind of these senior people.

And the Burmese president said: "We want the BBC and public service media." But he added: "Look at Egypt! We have to take measured steps because some people are not yet prepared for certain changes." But they can't go back!

Thank you, Tin Htar Swe.

“By early 2015, 90% of the country should have 3G coverage”



Singapore based Channel NewsAsia carried Myanmar's President Thein Sein's first international TV interview in July 2012, and a month later partnered with pay-TV operator SkyNet for extended distribution in Myanmar. The regional broadcaster was also among the first foreign news organisations to be granted a licence to open a news bureau in Myanmar (October 2013). The channel's correspondent, May Wong, is based in Yangon (Rangoon) and has been filing stories from Myanmar since early 2013. Her reports give insight into the country's transformation by interviewing those who experienced it first hand – from business leaders to the ordinary man in the street. We asked her what working conditions are like at present

There are still lots of technical problems. The internet connection is poor, so sending pictures and sound back to base in Singapore is not as fast as we would like. The internet is such a challenge because the infrastructure is still incapable of handling high traffic. As a result, accessing data on mobile phones is a tremendous challenge. Often, I am not able to do so. And even when there is a connection, it will take minutes for a page to load. Therefore, sending a tweet or an email on the run is not always possible.

The connectivity issue makes it difficult to break news, even if you have the information first-hand. As

we are a television network, I need to send moving pictures, which is a Herculean task given the nascent infrastructure. Most times, when I am out newsgathering, I rely on the internet connections in big hotels, if there happens to be one. At other times, I use livewire or BGAN to transmit my videos. And even then, it is not always possible to send the videos through. To illustrate the point, on a recent assignment in Mandalay, my BGAN was really slow; sending a 25-second file took over 10 minutes. And internet at the hotel was almost non-existent. So operating outside Yangon is always challenging.

To compound these issues, there are also frequent power cuts in the summer. While some offices have back-up generators, including the building in which our bureau is located, the power cuts still interrupt transmissions and live reporting. And this can happen about three to five times or even more in a single day.

Are there restrictions on content?

There are no restrictions on content. For example I can cover stories about the Rohingyas, an ethnic group who are called Bengalis by the Myanmar government.

Having said that, visits to certain places are restricted. Local and foreign media both require permission from the authorities to visit these locations, including some refugee camps. Certain areas are restricted for the media due to their inaccessibility, especially to foreign journalists. To get to some refugee camps, you have to travel in small boats, which is quite precarious. Also, some refugee camps are situated in territories where there are armed ethnic groups, and these camps are not managed by the government. So there are safety issues whilst travelling.

I have been able to speak with villagers, Rohingya and government officials without restrictions. In fact, sometimes, the villagers or village heads are the ones who are wary or who decline to be interviewed. I did interviews

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▼ Tin Htar Swe
with Aung San
Suu Kyi



in a Rohingya refugee camp recently. A visiting minister from the capital was also there, and willing to be interviewed as well. He was even open to discussing the negativity surrounding the treatment of the Rohingya. I was able to interview the regional government on the matter as well.

I have not had any issues with the stories I want to pursue. As with all stories, in Myanmar or elsewhere, we strive to be balanced in our treatment, and that means giving a voice to all parties involved, including the relevant government officials.

What do you know about your audience?

We do not have any tracking numbers for Myanmar as yet. However, we do have anecdotal accounts. Viewers have written in with feedback on the news coverage. For example, viewers praised our coverage during the landmark by-elections in April 2012. We had seven news teams on the ground. The interview with President Thein Sein in July 2012 also won praise. A viewer wrote: "The questions were measured and issues-oriented." Some viewers even try to tip us off on news breaks, like "the government sent security forces to Maungdaw, Arakan, because of the current instability".

But we also get some flak: viewers complained about the font being too small on our news scroller bar when we refreshed the on-air look in June of this year.

On which platforms are you available in Myanmar?

Channel NewsAsia is beamed regionally on AsiaSat 7, with its footprint extending from the Middle East through South Asia, Southeast Asia, and North Asia to Australasia. The channel is not encrypted at the moment, so it is freely available to anyone with a dish big enough to receive the satellite signals. Online, the channel is streamed at channelnewsasia.com. The website provides news, videos and also hosts microsites for its



long form programmes. People in Myanmar can reach us via Channel NewsAsia's Facebook, YouTube and Twitter.

Tell us about your Business Insights seminar in Myanmar

In the past few years, we have increased not only our news coverage but also our documentaries and programmes on Myanmar. Earlier this year, Channel NewsAsia stepped up its engagement with Myanmar by bringing the series of *Business Insights* seminars to Yangon. These seminars engage think tanks, government and business leaders who bring the latest and very dynamic conversations to the table. It's a formula we are replicating across Asia – in cities such as Jakarta, Bangkok, Kuala Lumpur and Ho Chi Minh.

The event in Yangon took place in January and was attended by the Presidential Spokesperson and Deputy Information Minister Ye Htut and close to 200 invited guests: local and foreign businessmen, journalists, diplomats such as the US and Singapore ambassadors and entrepreneurs. Representatives from sectors such as business, law and academia discussed business opportunities in Myanmar and the challenges of operating in the country. It was an opportunity for political and business leaders to understand more about the changing face of Myanmar.

May Wong, thank you.

▲ Left May Wong interviewed by Burmese media at Channel NewsAsia's bureau opening Right CNA's *Business Insights* in Myanmar

www.channelnewsasia.com

According to research by Ovum, Myanmar's under-developed telecoms market is set to become the world's fastest-growing as the country launches its first privately-owned mobile network. The entry of private player Ooredoo will see a rapid growth in mobile subscriptions and revenue in the country. Ovum forecasts that Myanmar's mobile subscriptions will grow at 29.3% CAGR to 32.3m at end-2019. Mobile revenue will grow at a similarly rapid rate as a result of the new competition – reaching \$1.2bn in 2019, up from \$691m in 2013. Ooredoo mobile SIM cards were soft-launched at retail shops in August. Ooredoo Myanmar will be offering 3G+ services, which include both voice and mobile broadband, in urban areas around Mandalay, the capital Nay Pyi Taw, and Yangon. Ovum expects that Ooredoo will be offering 3G (HSPA+) SIMs at a competitive price of MMK1500 (\$1.50), which is same as committed to by the other licensee Telenor. Decades of military dictatorship crippled Myanmar's telecoms sector and mobile access was restricted to a handful of elite groups in power. The state-owned operator, MPT, monopolised the sector and the junta imposed extremely stringent controls on SIM cards, pushing prices as high as \$4,500 in 2011. Since April 2013, the quasi-civilian government via MPT has stopped selling SIMs in the open market and instead offers 350,000 SIMs per month across the country through a lottery system – priced at ~\$1.50. However, many of these SIM cards end up in the black market and cost anywhere between \$80 and \$130. As a result, Myanmar's mobile penetration grew to just 12.3% at end-2013, which is still considerably low – given a 60m strong population.

“Poor connectivity makes it difficult to break news”



MSM Asia is one of the world's premier pay-TV networks for Hindi-language content. **Neeraj Arora**, the company's EVP, Head of International Business, was involved in Indian pay-TV at the inception stage and early years and then in international markets for the last 15 years. We asked him about his journey and how he is positioning MSM to face the challenges of a changed distribution dynamic and business models in the digital world

MULTI SCREEN INDIA

I started in the consumer goods industry in India first before I accidentally landed in the TV and media industry – simply through a call from an ex-colleague. This was in the very first years of the Indian TV industry opening up and private broadcasters being allowed in. India's first private broadcaster was Zee Network, which I joined way back in 1996. I helped them with the distribution in India's first pay-TV channels – which in those days was a novel concept for Indian cable operators and the distribution system in general.

I came to MSM in 2004, when Sony asked me to help them establish and build distribution of their Hindi channels. I've been very fortunate. Ever since I've come into the TV industry, I haven't had to write a CV.

What is MSM Asia's relationship to Sony?

MSM Asia Limited is part of Sony's entertainment business. It's now a 100% Sony-owned company

responsible for their Hindi channel entertainment business. We've got six channels in total. We distribute four of them outside India. Those are Sony Entertainment Television (SET), which is the flagship channel of the network, a 24/7 Bollywood movie channel called Max, Sab TV which is a Hindi comedy channel, and a music channel called Mix. The two channels we don't distribute internationally are the sports channel and the English movie channel, because we don't have international rights for those channels.

How do you see MSM Asia developing?

We've been in business for nearly two decades. Historically our strength has been our distribution across all major platforms pretty much all around the world. Today our reach is well over 100 countries. But in the last few years, digital technology has been changing the canvas completely and has opened up new avenues and challenges with it. Right now our key focus is how to transition so we maintain our traditional strength but also

maximise everything that the new media and digital distribution have to offer.

Have new platforms like VoD and multiscreen become a bigger part of what you do?

The name itself, MSM, stands for “Multi Screen Media”. I think that tells you what we are all about. Our aim is to be available on every screen that offers content for entertainment, starting from the big screen on the wall, all the way to tablets and multimedia devices available to the younger and newer audience. The idea is to move on from the traditional linear channel distribution to be available on every possible screen, big or small.

We have various initiatives in terms of some OTT products we have developed. Plus we’ve learned that some of the long form content is better served if you make it into a short form for the smaller devices. So we have plans for a high level of customisation to make sure we have something to offer for every possible medium.

Recognising this is a huge opportunity, we have developed our own OTT product as well as tying up with distribution platforms around the world to be part of their OTT offerings.

What are the main challenges?

Some of the challenges we are facing are the changes in the distribution dynamic and the business models in the digital world.

Going forward, linear channel distribution is not something that suits the habits of the younger or the newer generation. They prefer to consume their entertainment very differently. The challenge is how we maximise on that. It’s the same content, but now you’re offering it in a different environment across different models. The problem is how to retain the market share you have on the linear channels, then still optimise on the newer opportunities offered by the digital distribution systems.

Do Indian or Indian diaspora audiences consume content differently?

It varies across different generations. As far as the older generations are concerned, the amount of time they spend watching TV is a lot more than their counterparts in the non-Indian audience. But the younger and the newer generation are pretty much the same, because they’ve grown up in this environment.

Their parents, or the previous generations, are different in their need to stay connected to their roots and with what’s happening back home. Their affinity for that content is much greater and hence they spend more time consuming that content.

Research has suggested that the older generation who subscribe to these premium channels for a premium price spend the majority of their time on their own channels from the South Asian market, as compared to the mainstream channels. That is distinctly different from the younger audience who are selecting equally from South Asian and mainstream content. The newer generation are closer to how the overall mainstream audience behaves in terms of consumption of content.

Are you having to work harder to keep that younger audience?

I think it’s just like any other thing in life where the younger generations are a lot more aware and a lot more demanding and a lot more intelligent. The same applies to our business as well. Younger audiences are more aware of what is available to them, and they are a lot more savvy about how to get the best of what is on offer.

So you have to be more savvy in delivering content.

Absolutely. And the way we’re trying to bridge that is to try and understand their consumption behaviour better. We maintain our core which is being an entertainment channel. But it’s important to try to understand how the consumption behaviour is changing – by doing more research,

“The overall canvas is changing on multiple fronts”

by developing feedback mechanisms, by staying in touch with our audience, by doing a lot of ground activity. This is where social media comes in very handy.

Whereas in the past you went with a belief and understanding as broadcasters or content providers that you knew what your audiences wanted, we take a slightly different approach to say: “Ok, fine. We think we know. We are doing our best”. But at the same time stay in touch with them and work closely with them to see if the content resonates or if it needs changing and then adapt accordingly.

What are the biggest changes underway for global broadcasters?

The overall canvas is changing. I see it offering bigger and better opportunities for us. But we have to be very savvy and clever as to how we seize these opportunities, and it’s not going to be easy. The canvas is changing on multiple fronts. In terms of technology and distribution things are very different from when we started 20 years ago. It’s completely changed.

In terms of entertainment and consumption habits, the younger audience consumes content very differently from the previous generations. And in terms of competition it has become easier for the newer players to catch up quickly with the older, established players, which brings in another layer of challenge. So I think staying close to your audience and understanding what they want and how they want to consume is going to play a bigger role in making sure we retain and grow our market share.

We at MSM are geared up to deal with the challenges and to optimise on the opportunity. OTT initiatives, strategic alignment with distribution platforms, continuous effort on innovative programming and launching new channels will ensure future success and help us maintain our healthy market share and viewership.

Neeraj Arora, thank you.

www.setindia.com





NEWS WITH BENEFITS

Stockholm-based **Newstag** has just secured \$1.3m of seed funding. It's an important step towards the company's vision to create change by tagging relevant content from all over the world. We asked CEO **Henrik Eklund** how Newstag combines new user behaviours and demands with modern technology and quality news sources

Newstag is set to become the world's largest video network for professionally-produced news content. The platform will bring together video news stories from content producers around the world, including AP and Reuters, as well as brands and NGOs. The 'mobile-first' service will enable users to create personalised video newscasts on their smartphones, tagging news, brands and NGOs to create relevant and customised feeds to consume and share with their peers through social networks.

Value will be created through advertising and revenues will be redistributed within the system. Once they've reached a certain level, users can spend their income or choose to make a difference by allocating money to causes and research projects they find relevant.

What's your vision?

We are trying to take the global future seriously. Our vision is to create a sustainable and relevant news source in a way that has far-reaching benefits.

Our platform not only encourages people to engage in the global news flow, but proposes a radical solution to some of the world's media challenges by using the power of the crowd. By balancing the interests of all stakeholders – users, content owners, brands and NGOs – we hope to transform the traditional media business model. We want to make a difference while also inspiring and empowering others to do good too. Newstag isn't a not-for-profit organisation, but it's a new business model with a focus on social innovation.

How will Newstag benefit the users?

On our platform users will be able to find and tag video news stories that they can trust. Newstag will provide a single destination for professionally-produced video news content from a wide range of

sources – global, regional and local. These stories will be available 24/7 from multiple perspectives and in many languages.

Users can tag brands they appreciate – not only making their experience more relevant, but also benefiting the brand as they're able to communicate directly with their consumer's brains and hearts, not just their eyeballs.

The same applies to charities and causes as users will be able to redistribute the value they create on projects that are relevant to them. This allows the NGOs to create awareness more efficiently.

Through this tagging of news, brands and NGOs, users can create relevant connections and make a difference. Together the crowd will help index and curate content, creating an experience that is human, not algorithmic. Our tagline "Newstag – you're it" has a certain playfulness, but also implies responsibility. There's an impetus to share the news that matters.

How will the relationships between the different stakeholders work?

We have developed a new complementary business model that re-balances the relationship between stakeholders. Content producers, brands, users and NGOs are all inter-linked and, in the modern world, it's important for this to be recognised.

Together the stakeholders will create value. Individually they can create new connections to re-allocate this value within the system. Users will get relevant news and brand experiences and make a difference, NGOs will be able to create awareness more efficiently, and brands can communicate directly with their consumers. Brands can sponsor NGOs which in turn could inspire users to tag the brand. As a result news from around the world, such as a natural disaster, could immediately spark crowd-funding, giving users the chance to make a real difference there and then. Content owners and other stakeholders will get relevant feedback from the data generated.

What about the costs?

For news to be sustainable, there has to be funding for content. This has traditionally come from brand placement so we've tried to resolve some of the issues faced by advertisers in order to create a platform that benefits everyone. Just as content providers are struggling to reach their target audience, so are brands.

Newstag empowers the user to select the brands or campaigns that interest them as individuals, reversing the traditional advertising model. When users share content, they're distributing to their own social network, with interests that closely match their own, creating a kind of advertising that's relevant and intimate.

And as a result, we are able to offer our users the world's largest professionally-produced video network for free, and pay the content providers fairly too.

What challenges did you face?

Architecturally, it's very complicated to develop technology that uses video in the way we do and to develop our intelligent tagging system. As a result, we've spent over 25,000 hours developing Newstag – it's been an enormous project. It's also a complex business model and we've had to work together with many diverse parties. That's been a long process, but a rewarding one.

Clearly mobile use is a priority?

There's two ways to develop a service like this – you can start on the desktop, and then translate your product into an app for the phone. Or you can do what we've done, which is to start with the phone and then scale the service to work across all devices. But when you look at the growth of smartphones, along with levels of consumption and traffic, it makes sense for all technology to be designed with mobile use as a priority today, especially if you want to reach a global audience. Technology has to evolve with consumption behaviour.

Newstag content will be

A natural disaster could instantly spark crowd-funding



▲ Newstag's Editor's Choice
▼ Camilla Dahlin-Andersson



www.newstag.com

available to users wherever they are, on any device – including smartphones, tablets and desktops – and in the environments where they consume content, including social networks, blogs and apps. Newstag will be where the users are.

How does the product design reflect the service's features?

We thought a lot about design, trying to reflect the many layers of Newstag and the time we live in. So the logo, for example – a twelve sided figure – echoes the multi-faceted nature of news in the 21st century and our relationship with it in today's complex world. One of the interesting design features is our user avatar – it's a profile picture blended with the user's interests by using superimposed images and video, and it's constantly changing. It represents the overlapping and combining of different perspectives that news and individuals use.

What's your background?

I've worked in the media and digital industries for more than two decades. Recently I was Director of Digital Partnerships and Distribution in EMEA and Asia at Associated Press. Before this, I founded Kamera – one of the world's leading mobile and online distributors. I also founded PAN Interactive, one of Europe's leading game publishers and distributors.

I think one of the things that makes Newstag stand out is the collaboration with my partner Camilla Dahlin-Andersson, whose experience comes from outside the media industry. She's currently an academic with a special interest in social enterprise and she's previously been a member of parliament and also served on several boards for large institutions. This background, combined with her skills, has helped to create a new, collaborative approach to what can feel like intractable media challenges. She's helped to navigate the politics of NGOs and research organisations, both large and small.

Thank you, Henrik Eklund.

VISION OF THE FUTURE

Dolby Laboratories revolutionised the way we think about and use audio. Now Dolby is using its expertise to revolutionise image quality. Dolby Vision is the company's new solution for creating high-dynamic range, wide colour gamut images. Demos of the technology leave viewers stunned. We asked Dolby's VP Consumer Imaging **Roland Vlaicu** where Dolby Vision came from



In 2007, Dolby acquired a company called BrightSide, based in Vancouver. They had developed a technology that enables you to display high contrast images by turning the back light LEDs off on a video display, which allows you to make the dark areas of the image very dark and the bright areas very bright. It's a technology that's been around for six or seven years now and is in TVs around the world.

That was step one. Then we thought we could do something even better than that by actually making the signal better, and this is something they hadn't done before. Picture quality improvement efforts have mostly focused on the TVs themselves.

However a TV manufacturer decides to present the image, it's always on the basis of the same signal. If you turn on a broadcast or BluRay or over the top streaming, it's always the same signal in terms of visual fidelity. Everybody gets the same signal and tries to do the best they can with it.

“We're delivering the higher quality signal to the TV, then it's up to the TV manufacturers to do their magic”

The idea behind Dolby Vision was to actually go further upstream and change the signal that is being delivered to enable televisions to do a better job of creating a better looking image.

With Dolby Vision, we didn't only invent a better version of high dynamic range, but we also added a wider colour gamut capability at the same time. It can be combined with HD video or Ultra HD/4K video. Resolution is orthogonal to the enhancements that Dolby Vision brings and so is frame rate, so you can combine the Dolby Vision signal with any frame rate or any resolution.

How will Dolby Vision change TVs?

Our Dolby Vision prototype reference display that we showed at the last NAB not only shows high dynamic range video but also shows wider colour gamuts.

Dolby Vision TVs, when they become available, will know exactly how to map this super high quality reference signal down to exactly what each TV's capabilities are and what each TV can show. Each TV

panel and each TV backlight design will be slightly different, so you need to be able to map this down precisely in order to make sure you maintain the right look.

What makes this system so appealing is that it's not just some processing done in the TV, which a lot of creatives despise. With Dolby Vision, you can create a reference look that is then relayed all the way into the home.

This doesn't prevent TV OEMs from differentiating. The last thing a TV manufacturer wants to hear is that you're forcing them to make their TV look a way which is identical to the competition. Dolby Vision enables those TV manufacturers to tune their picture quality off a much better original signal. We're delivering the higher quality signal to the TV, then it's up to the TV manufacturers to do their magic.

So we're building out the entire ecosystem all the way from content production. And we already have announced some camera manufacturers who are putting in the right type of technology into the cameras in order to shoot in Dolby



Vision natively or to facilitate the creation of Dolby Vision content, then all the way through the post-production chain, into the final content delivery and encoding to the home, whether through OTT streaming providers or traditional broadcasters.

How much would a broadcaster need to change to adopt Dolby Vision into their workflow?

Everyone who looks at new technology wants to minimise the impact of having to buy new equipment or change entire workflows. And we understand that very well. We have a long-standing history with broadcasters around the world from our audio business, and we understand what it takes to get new technologies adopted by those broadcasters.

What we have done is develop mechanisms in Dolby Vision that allow broadcasters to fairly seamlessly integrate it into their workflow. We are working with broadcast camera manufacturers to integrate our technology components in ways that are fairly

straightforward to pass the signal all the way through the broadcast chain and through to the final delivery mechanism. Those are not all in place yet. We're at the early stages. We're starting with movies – and movies are, of course, always a much simpler use case for these kinds of things. But we have started to think about the live broadcast cases and we're making some good progress there. We'll be showing some advances at IBC in Amsterdam.

Where is the Dolby Vision content going to come from?

We have just announced a partnership with Deluxe. They are starting to grade movies in Dolby Vision, and so they are the first officially certified colour grading facility for Dolby Vision. We're also working with manufacturers of colour grading tools. The first company we've been working with is Filmlight, based in London. Their tool, Baselight, is the first grading tool equipped with Dolby Vision capabilities. SGO is also going to announce Dolby Vision capabilities in Mistika.

All this needs to be in place now,

“It's really mind-blowing and game-changing for content creators”

www.dolby.com

so when we launch Dolby Vision at the end of this year with the first consumer TVs, and the first service providers, there will actually be movies available to stream and to watch. The partners that we will start with in the US include Amazon, Netflix, Hulu and Xbox Video.

What is the reaction from the content creators themselves?

It's been phenomenal. They absolutely love it. We've shown this to basically all of the A-list directors. From every single one, the reaction was that they cannot imagine a future without Dolby Vision. They actually all got pretty depressed over the fact that they've had to work without Dolby Vision in the past, seeing what they were seeing.

What we did was actually regrade clips from their own movies. We went back to the original master – not the one that was released in cinemas, but further upstream. With J.J. Abrams' *Star Trek Into Darkness* we went back to the original source files at Industrial Light and Magic and regraded from those and achieved a much higher fidelity version of that same movie. J.J. Abrams thought he had already seen the ultimate version of that movie, until he saw the version that we were able to produce, and he just couldn't believe it. So it's really mind-blowing and really game-changing for these guys.

Thank you, Roland Vlaicu.



PROFILE



NAME Alla Salehian
JOB CEO
COMPANY TIMA

MY CAREER

As a teenager I was focused on a career in Law after getting hooked on *Rumpole of the Bailey* and, later, *LA Law*. My form tutor thought that I should consider a career in the diplomatic service but I didn't think it was a realistic option for me. I did go on to study law, specialising in corporate law and enjoyed it greatly.

My introduction into media started when my girlfriend at the time (now my wife) started work at the news agency WTN, which a few years later became APTN. It was so different from the law and obviously more interesting to all our friends as they all wanted to hear about her day and were not the least bit interested in mine. A friend called me one day to say that there was a vacancy at a relatively new Arabic language channel in London, MBC, for a researcher on the Business News desk. I applied for the job and a few months later started my media career.

As a young broadcast channel that was starting to make its mark in the global media landscape, MBC was a great place to learn every aspect of broadcasting – editorial,

production, technical and management. I was thrown into every area of the broadcast process including filming and two-machine editing! Within a few years I was promoted to the position of Managing Editor, a position that I held until I left MBC when the company was relocated to Dubai. I have great memories of my time at MBC and I am still in touch with many of my former colleagues.

I left MBC to join the Associated Press (AP) as Manager of Middle East Custom Coverage, a broadcast production and services unit specialising in producing customised news reports for Middle East broadcasters. The unit was going through a challenging time and I was tasked with restructuring it and returning it to profit, which was achieved in just over six months. We went on to successfully cover all the major world events for broadcasters including 9/11, Iraq and Afghanistan. I later put together and executed a plan to merge three other divisions of the AP with the Middle East unit to create the Global Media Services department, which is responsible for providing production and broadcast services to broadcasters around the world and contributes significant revenues for the AP. However after 10 years at the AP I reached a stage where I had to decide the next path in my career and while it was not an easy decision I decided that it was time to take the plunge and go it alone. After a short time as a media consultant I set up TIMA in 2012.

Although I did not go into the diplomatic service as my teacher had suggested, my career in international media has certainly required a lot of diplomacy.

ABOUT TIMA

TIMA (The International Media Associates) provides production facilities, content production and events' coverage worldwide. Its London headquarters opened in spring 2012 and were swiftly followed by bureaux in Washington DC, New York and Paris. TIMA also has operations across the Middle East in Sanaa, Damascus, Baghdad

and Tehran. In Tehran we have an exclusive licence to cover news and events and to provide services to accredited broadcasters.

Our central London studios have unparalleled 360 degree views of London's major landmarks and provide single and multi-camera studio facilities to suit all productions and budgets. Our largest studio is home to Africa's global news channel, Arise TV, which broadcasts 18 hours of programming daily. Other clients include CCTV and Al Jazeera. Video content across all genres is at the heart of TIMA's work and guides the services it offers, from filming and studio facilities to producing news and current affairs reports. Everything TIMA does is aimed at developing new ways of producing and distributing content.

LATEST INITIATIVES

A growing area of our business is producing long-form programmes. This requires different processes than the usual news report so we are now looking at creating a production unit within TIMA that focuses on developing ideas for studio-based programmes, feature reports and documentaries across all genres. We are also in the process of expanding our global presence, especially in the Middle East where we have unique access to cover news and events for broadcasters.

FUTURE STRATEGY

Original and live content will be the main drivers for growth in this industry. Our strategy is to position TIMA as a core content creator and facilitator across all genres and delivery platforms. To achieve this we are working with key broadcast technology companies to look at the best way to utilise new and emerging technologies in the field of content creation, storage, retrieval and distribution. We will also expand on our current online video initiative and will be working with certain websites to provide relevant and customised video content.

OUTLOOK

Very exciting and a lot of hard work! ■

AIB's growing global membership



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