

## Singapore's warring broadcasters kiss & make-up... for July

The owners of Singapore's two warring pay-TV platforms – SingTel and StarHub – have extended their four day sports truce until midnight on 1 August, the pair said at the weekend.

The original 11th hour agreement was made so that Wimbledon fans could watch the finals on StarHub even through rival SingTel had exclusive rights to ESPN Star Sports channels from 1 July.

It's not clear what exactly drove the latest extension, but sports rights holders are almost certain to be concerned about a dramatic drop in reach when the channels cross from StarHub to SingTel. Plus it gives SingTel just a little more time to install boxes...

StarHub has about 550,000 subscribers. SingTel's Mio TV IPTV platform has 200,000.

## asiacontentwatch

### Food Network Asia

Scripps Networks International launches the Food Network Asia in Singapore today (5 July), adding thousands of hours of new food-related general entertainment content to the country's booming linear channel environment.

[www.asiacontentwatch.com](http://www.asiacontentwatch.com)  
page 12

## ContentAsia celebrates 100th issue

### More, bigger, better as 5th anniversary approaches

100 issues... reason to party! And that's not all that's happening at ContentAsia from this week on.

In the run up to the fifth anniversary of our very first publication in March 2006, we've added (and will be adding) a whole lot of new stuff designed to make ContentAsia even more relevant and useful to everyone in (and interested in) Asia's media industry.

Among these is an unprecedented (and not just by us) focus on local production in Asia.

Of course we've always covered Asia's local producers and production houses in some way, but this is different. This time, we're giving this industry sector

its own place and space with a dedicated department in our magazines, newsletters and online, and regular features that will, in ContentAsia's style, do it like no one else is doing it.

To celebrate the fifth edition of our directory, *The Big List 2011*, in September this year, we've added digital distribution for the first time.

If you think you have already seen *The Big List* print+digital ... you have, sort of. Last year we tested the best ways to get almost 200 pages to you in a way that didn't take forever to load. This year, taking all feedback and comments on board, we're making digital distribution of the various sections – includ-

**More on page 7**

## Reliance, Digicable merge forces

### Alliance creates Asia's largest 3-play provider

Indian communications company, Reliance Communications, is acquiring cable operator Digicable as part of an all-stock deal that will create Asia's largest triple play service provider.

The formal announcement at the beginning of July followed days of speculation about a possible merger (*ContentAsia Insider*, 29 June).

The new entity, Reliance DigiCom, will incorporate Reliance's direct-to-home satellite, IPTV and broadband platforms and

Digicable's cable assets.

The combined subs base will be 11 million.

Reliance DigiCom is promising more than 500 digital quality and 100 HD channels on a 3D-ready TV platform as well as ultra-high-speed broadband access of up to 100 Mbps.

Reliance Communications chairman, Anil Ambani, said the new company, Reliance DigiCom, would fuel a "four-screen" strategy to own mobile, cinema, TV and computer screens.



## atiger's eyes

What's really going on out there...



The BIG Asia broadcasting intrigue out there at the moment involves Indonesian broadcaster TPI... and who will win the increasingly ugly battle over control of the free-TV station.

At the heart of the latest tug of war are newly risen (or maybe just newly public) ambitions of Siti "Tutut" Hardiyanti Rukmana, the eldest daughter of former president Suharto and a one-time Indonesian media queen.

And it looks like the queen wants part of her empire back...

Standing firmly in her way is media king Hary Tanoesoedibjo, who, in the wake of the Asian financial crisis, gathered together Indonesia's thriving, ailing and headed-for-dead media properties over the past few years and fashioned the Rp3.9 trillion/US\$429 million PT Multimedia Nusantara Citra (MNC) empire.

And the king shows no sign of giving in to what he says are "unwarranted and invalid" claims.

The ownership tussle has, apparently, been brewing

**More on page 2**



essential information only

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**From page 1: A Tiger's Eyes**

behind the scenes for ages. The argument has its roots in 2002, when Tutut appointed PT Berkah Karya Bersama to help her deal with TPI's debts. She is now claiming that the appointment was misused to appropriate a 75% ownership of TPI.

In a statement at the end of June, MNC said PT Berkah Karya Bersama legitimately acquired a 75% stake in TPI in 2005. The following year, Berkah Karya Bersama's stake was acquired by MNC. No one then or since had disputed MNC's stake in TPI, MNC said.

So why has it gone all public and so ugly now?

Well, it looks like Tutut might be emboldened by a separate graft issue the Tanoeoedibjo family are fending off.

The charges relate to a website owned, and allegedly fraudulently operated to the tune of about US\$45 million, by Tanoeoedibjo's brother Hartono. Hartono and former Justice Minister Yusril Ihza Mahendra were charged at the end of June... and Tutut made her move.

There's little question that, whatever else is happening, MNC is at the top of its broadcast game in Indonesia.

Under Hary's reign, MNC's three free-TV stations audience share rose to 35% last year, up from 32% in 2008. Revenues for the first three months of this year were up 16% to Rp1.01 trillion/US\$112 million over the same quarter in 2009 on the back of a 37% increase in advertising revenues.

Terrestrial station Rajawali Citra Televisi Indonesia (RCTI) led In-

**Indonesia free-TV audience share  
All Telecast Hours, All Markets**

Channel	May-10	Apr-10
Indosiar	9.8	9.5
RCTI	15.5	15.6
SCTV	15.4	15.4
Trans TV	11.8	12
TPI	11.4	11.3
TRANS7	10.6	10.5
ANTV	7.9	7.2
Global TV	7.1	7.1
TVOne	4.7	5.5
Metro TV	2.4	2.8
TVRI1	0.5	0.5
Space Toon	0.5	0.5
Elshinta TV	0.3	0.3
O Channel	0.3	0.3
Jak TV	0.2	0.2

Source: The Nielsen Company

onesia's free-TV broadcasting rankings in May this year, with a total audience share of 15.5%, according to The Nielsen Company's latest data for Indonesia.

TPI maintains a respectable place in the rankings of 15 terrestrial channels. In May, TPI's audience share was 11.4%, which put it in fourth place after RCTI (15.5% share), SCTV (15.4% share), and Trans TV (11.8% share).

MNC also says it has the country's largest content library, including entertainment and news, and is adding more than 10,000 hours a year split between in-house production, commissions and multimedia.

MNC is also the country's most active buyer, including, among other acquisitions, significant deals with Disney and MTV.

Who is likely to give way first? We're not putting any money on any outcome other than the bets we're placing that this is going to be long-running, legally winding and very very nasty.

**China Mobile wins HK mobile TV rights**

**PCCW quits mobile TV, says no clear biz model**

The Hong Kong unit of China Mobile has won the spectrum race to deliver mobile broadcast services to the territory. The 15-year licence went for HK\$175 million/US\$22.5 million.

China Mobile has committed to using at least 75% of the transmission capacity to deliver mobile TV content and provide service coverage to at least 50% of Hong Kong's population within 18 months of the licence being issued.

Meanwhile, Hong Kong telco PCCW has ditched its mobile TV broadcast plans, saying that "there is so far no clear success case of standalone mobile TV business in any market, and it remains to be seen whether it will eventually succeed in the light of the development of mobile TV services within 3G/4G standards". PCCW exited the bidding on day one, the telco said on 30 June that continuing wasn't commercially viable.



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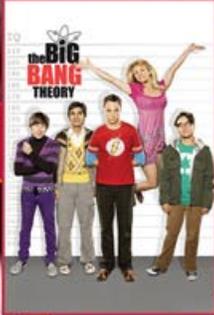
**TUE 10P/9P WIB**



**THUR 9P/8P WIB**



**WED 9P/8P WIB**



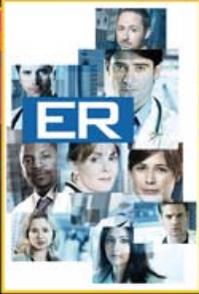
**WED 8:30P/7:30P WIB**



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## Star India 27% ahead in India

*Drivers include passion, love, holiness and a whole new mindset*

Star India appears to be at the top of its game following last year's separation from the rest of News Corp's channels in Asia and the rebrand of the flagship Star Plus channel in June.

The Mumbai-based network says its five channels are 27% ahead of the nearest competitor. And flagship Hindi-language general entertainment channel, Star Plus, whipped rivals Colours and Zee TV for week 25, with 30-min GRPs of 443 against 276 for Colors and 231 for Zee TV, according to TAM data supplied by Star India.

The 13-week average (weeks 13-25) put Star Plus at 329 GRPs against Colors' 278 and Zee TV's 259. The four-week average also had Star Plus in top spot, with GRPs of 358 against Colors' 282 and Zee TV's 246.

Star India attributes its performance to the rebrand – and the whole new mindset – unveiled on 13 June.

Star Plus' new look goes with the tagline "Rishite Wahi, Soch Nayi" ("old relationship, new thinking"). And channel bosses promise that the sentiment will



be echoed in every breath Star staffers take and every move they make.

Star India says the ruby star at the core of the logo redesign "is the beating heart of the channel, the heart of India – feminine, strong, full of energy and life". The white-hot swoosh, "lit from within, represents inner strength and quest for fulfilment".

And then there's all that red. The official quote is that there's no other colour that "epitomises India better than the colour red. Red is the colour of prosperity, optimism, weddings, celebration, hope, desire, purity, passion, love and holiness," the explanation goes.

The whole idea is to combine "the traditional and familiar star emblem infused with a very modern, fresh and energetic expression".

Unveiling the new "fresh perspectives" branding, Star India chief executive Uday Shankar said this was "the first time in the history of television brands in India that a refresh has happened in such depth of detail, permeating to the core of its business".

Some of Star's other channels are trouncing the competition as well, TAM data indicates.

Star Movies is also fighting the good fight, and winning, with a share of 0.41 of upper income cable and satellite audiences above 15 years old in seven metros. HBO had a 0.27% share of the same audience, and Sony Entertainment's Pix took 0.16.

Star says music channel, Channel [V] took top spot in the combined youth/music category for week 25 in seven metros among middle and upper income cable and satellite audiences aged 15-24. Channel [V] came in with a 0.84% share against MTV's 0.82% share.

## Frost & Sullivan supports non-exclusive content environment

Frost & Sullivan has come out in favour of a non-exclusive pay-TV content environment, with differentiation based on "quality of service, customer satisfaction and competitive packaging".

"Pay-TV providers should shift focus to non-content differentiators to enhance the experience for consumers and introduce interactive and convergence-based features," the company said in a new paper, *Pay TV Content Exclusivity: Justified?*, by senior analyst and telecommunications specialist, Adeel Najam.

"Making the content is the content providers' job, and the pay-TV providers' job is to provide the best pay-TV platform. With content exclusivity

“With content exclusivity negotiations, the content owners are getting rich at the expense of service providers and, ultimately, the consumers.”

negotiations, the content owners are getting rich at the expense of service providers and, ultimately, the consumers," the paper said.

In his introduction, Najam says exclusive content carriage has been a "formidable pay-TV provider strategy to rapidly acquire customers and increase market share."

However, he adds, "in the ideal pay-TV market, the pay-TV service

providers should not be forced to try to seal exclusive content deals at hefty price tags".

Najam also said that "a pay-TV provider might have the best platform but if the provider cannot secure premium and popular content, there is no way that the pay-TV provider can succeed."

The paper includes case studies from Singapore, Hong Kong, U.S., U.K., and France.

## thetweetlife

How did we not think this was inevitable? Tutut, she of Indonesia's formerly uber-powerful ruling Suharto family,...

<http://fb.me/zlmvq7wl>  
12:20 AM, July 1st via Facebook

SingTel sharing Wimbledon finals with StarHub... Dying to know what went on behind the scenes of that one.

1:36 AM, July 1st via Facebook

Sports TV \$\$ debate alive & well in Singapore

<http://fb.me/DITg4UxG>  
11:32 AM Jun 29th via Facebook

Channel [V] update (still all speculation, we have to stress). Channel [V] India and Taiwan will live long and...

<http://fb.me/D69DfBk8>  
10:07 AM Jun 25th via Facebook

Endemol Asia is loud and proud with announcements this week. Following yesterday's "Hot in Cleveland" release, the...

<http://fb.me/ykudWgvK>  
1:09 PM Jun 23rd via Facebook

One-month anniversary today of the non-appearance of StarHub's 2 new sports channels, Racquet Channel and NBA TV...

<http://fb.me/ynKUqwl>  
10:46 AM Jun 23rd via Facebook

Looks like the old Star music service, Channel [V], may not be long for this world. We're hearing Fox...

<http://fb.me/wpghbhq2>  
10:32 AM Jun 23rd via Facebook

Todd Miller's up and riding...

<http://fb.me/BoXvvAql>  
1:06 PM Jun 22nd via Facebook

And here's the thanks he's getting for it. Is 50 days in the saddle worth it... you decide!

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1:13 PM Jun 22nd via Facebook





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**KidsCo on Aora**

Children's channel KidsCo has signed a distribution deal with Indonesian pay-TV platform, Aora. The deal kicks in on 1 August. Aora carriage follows a distribution agreement with dominant platform Indovision (including Oke Vision). The channel is also on M2V.

**Animax web traffic up 17%**

Sony Pictures Entertainment Network's Animax is crediting new brand ambassadors, dubbed Ani-mates, with driving up traffic to the Animax site by more than 17% to 400,000 page views in its first three weeks. The initiative was unveiled on 1 June with Filipino model-host Stephanie Henares and celebrity cosplayer Alodia Gosiengfiao.

**Youth Olympics gets social**

The International Olympic Committee has launched a social media campaign ahead of the inaugural Youth Olympic Games in Singapore in August. The Facebook page already has 23,000 fans; there's a Flickr site; and a Twitter feed. Games highlights will air on YouTube.

**New curbs in Pakistan**

Pakistan's government has proposed new rules that will limit coverage of terrorism and comment on state activities. Penalties include fines and prison sentences. The government says the rules are necessary because local media haven't come up with their own conduct codes.

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Warner Bros. is a global leader in the creation, production, distribution, licensing and marketing of all forms of entertainment and their related businesses. We are now recruiting for the following positions based in Shanghai, China:

**Business Manager, International TV**

**Responsibilities & Requirements:**

- Assist China Director with distribution of WB programs to TV stations and new media platforms
- Manage materials delivery and handle some sales to traditional linear clients
- Manage product research, sales order and contract issues, billing, collections, financial planning
- 3-5 yrs experience in operations/supply chain management, customer or sales support, and/or financial planning at a multinational company

**Coordinator, International TV**

**Responsibilities & Requirements:**

- Support Business Manager for all China clients, including branded on-demand services
- 1-2 yrs experience in sales support, sales planning, and/or operations/supply chain management at a multinational company

**Marketing Associate, Branded Services Asia, International TV**

**Responsibilities & Requirements:**

- Assist Marketing Director on all aspects of branding and marketing Warner TV linear channels, Subscription and Ad-supported Video-on-Demand destinations across Asia
- Manage client implementation and regular review of branding elements across each service
- 3-4 years experience in marketing, communication or business analysis at a multinational company

**Intern, Branded Services Asia, International TV**

**Responsibilities & Requirements:**

- Support the Branded Services team on all aspects
- Fluent in both spoken and written English
- Knowledgeable of social media networks, internet/mobile trends, tools and best practices
- Must be willing to commit for one year, full-time

To apply, please email your CV/resume to: [elaine.yang@warnerbros.com](mailto:elaine.yang@warnerbros.com)

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## Tom rolls out Asian stars for CETV anniversary

*Hong Kong group celebrates 6th birthday of Chinese channel acquisition*



Angela Mak, Tom Group CEO; Taiwan group Lollipop

The Tom Group's mainland Chinese general entertainment channel, China Entertainment Television Broadcast Limited (CETV), celebrated its sixth anniversary on 19 June with a star-studded event and awards ceremony at the Shenzhen Convention & Exhibition Center.

Stars out for the night at the Top 10 artists in Asia Awards included Hong Kong model Angelababy, Taiwan's Mark Zhao, Mike He, Tiffany Xu, musical group Lollipop, as well as Korea actors Kim Nam-joo, Kong Hyo-jin and Lee Seon-gyun. Performers through the night included Pin Guan, Shin, Tai Ailing, Zhang Yun Jing and the New Seven Little Fortunes.

*Ed's note: CETV actually launched in 1995 as a "no sex, no violence, no news" channel. Owner Robert Chua battled on his own until 2000, before tying up with Time Warner. In July 2003, Time Warner sold a controlling 64% stake to the Tom Group, and ceded management control.*

more pics at [www.asiacontentwatch.com](http://www.asiacontentwatch.com)



Richard Lee, CETV CEO; Angelababy



Lambert Chien, KK Box chairman; Ken Yeung, Tom Group CEO

## Channel NewsAsia ups on-screen info

Singapore's dedicated news channel, Channel NewsAsia, launches its revamped info bar today as part of a refresh that also includes a refresh of long-running financial magazine show, *Money Mind* (Sundays, 9.30pm-10pm) and a renewed commitment to in-depth local and regional content.

A second programming change folds business programme, *Singapore Business Tonight* (10.20pm-10.30pm week nights) into general news show *Singapore Tonight* (10pm-10.20pm) to create a half hour nightly slot that will cover all news. The merged show pairs hosts Timothy Ouyang and Yvonne Yong.

Additional space has been claimed from the lower third of the screen for more information, including upcoming programmes and website details, as well as sponsorship. Breaking news alerts also appear in this space.

Donovan Castillo-Mohlman, vice president, network programming and promotions, says these and other changes

"reflect the concerted effort to focus on the dynamism in the region, with a strong crop of documentaries, and revamping staple programmes... to enhance the regional perspectives".

Castillo-Mohlman says the channel, which is part of monopoly free-TV broadcaster MediaCorp, is "also responding to the demands of a media industry that is undergoing a revolution, and so more is expected of media owners to deliver content, faster and better."

At the same time, Castillo-Mohlman stresses the need "to provide more information with less clutter".

He promises only "subtle" changes to the channel's acquisitions policy, and he gives no indication that there's any extra spend involved.

"We aren't necessarily spending more on acquisitions, but we are more targeted about our selections," he says.

Channel NewsAsia commissions about 50 hours of content a year. This includes sponsored content.



CNA new ticker

Docs in the Sunday slot (7.30pm- 8.30pm) include *The Age of Stupid*, *Fahrenheit 2010*, *Life After People*, *Garbage Dreams*, *Food Inc* and *Lost Voices of 911*.

Channel NewsAsia continues to draw heavily on its in-house team around the region for features such as the recent *In the Name of Our Fathers*. The docu (5 July, 9.30pm-10.30pm) examines the role of political dynasties in the Philippines, with interviews with families from the country's Aquino and Marco families.

Indie production house In Focus Asia was commissioned to make *A Crisis Within* (scheduled to air 18 July), which examines Thailand's political crisis earlier this year.

## & v. quickly...

### Ampersand sets up in HK

French producer/distributor Ampersand is setting up its Asia HQ in Hong Kong, and is on the hunt for local content to add to its global catalogue. Teremoana Seguin will head the Asia operation.

### AETN adds Beasts and Brides to Asia schedule

AETN has acquired pan-Asian rights to Associated Producers' HD docs, *Beasts of the Bible* and *Science of the Soul*. The network has also bought Scopofile Productions' 60-minute special *Shanghai Bride* from Toronto-based factual distributor BuzzTaxi Communications. *Shanghai Bride* looks at the effects of China's one-child policy, combined with a rapid revolution in the country's values and lifestyles.

### Granada debuts Winner

Regional entertainment channel Granada TV adds Michael Winner's *Dining with Stars* to its prime time Wednesday schedule from 7 July. The series features chef wannabe's testing their culinary skills on guest of honor, famed (and often brutal) restaurant critic Michael Winner. July's schedule also premieres *Popstar to Operastar* on Saturday nights from 24 July. The show tests pampered pop stars' ability to perform like true divas.

### Japanese drama over political commercial

Japanese stations' latest drama is whether (or not) to run a Liberal Democratic Party commercial or the upcoming House of Councillors election featuring House of Representatives lawmaker Shinjiro Koizumi. Japan's policy is only to feature party heads in political commercials. They're split on where Koizumi fits into that definition.

people

**ABU's Astley joins The Media Alliance**

Former Asia-Pacific Broadcasting Union secretary general, David Astley, has joined The Asia-Pacific Media Alliance for Social Awareness as executive chairman.



The Media Alliance is a Singapore-based non-profit organisation that aims to deliver pro-social messages through public service ads, entertainment and editorial content.

The Media Alliance is modelled partly on the U.S. Ad Council and partly on the BBC World Service Trust.

The alliance is currently developing a major regional initiative to engage the entertainment and creative industries to raise public awareness of climate change through the production of PSAs and documentaries, and the staging of live concert tours.

The Media Alliance says that while US\$400 billion is spent annually on commercial advertising, less than 1% of that amount is spent in promoting pro-social or sustainable development issues.

**Park Yong-ha dead at 32**

Korean actor and singer Park Yong-ha hanged himself in Seoul at the end of June. The 32-year-old actor shot to fame with his role in Korean Wave drama *Winter Sonata*.

**Asia-Pacific ad market up 18%, Nielsen**

Global consumer confidence in the first quarter of this year has rebounded to the highest level since the third quarter of 2007, the latest data from The Nielsen Company shows. Asia Pacific posted the highest increase in confidence of all regions – up eight points. Ad spending in main media across 12 markets in the Asia Pacific reached US\$31.16 billion in the first quarter of this year, an increase of 18% over the same three months last year.

Television, Newspapers & Magazines across 12 Asia Pacific Markets	\$US000's Q1 '10	\$US000's Q1 '09	% Change
China	20,866,346	17,769,420	17%
Indonesia	1,904,854	1,514,553	26%
Hong Kong	1,856,918	1,487,726	25%
India	1,662,416	1,255,012	32%
Australia	1,363,222	1,304,387	5%
South Korea	1,007,449	887,415	14%
Philippines	814,811	658,760	24%
Thailand	556,582	502,962	11%
Malaysia	418,625	339,732	23%
New Zealand	293,035	270,468	8%
Singapore	277,682	244,061	14%
Taiwan	143,938	119,965	20%
<b>TOTAL FOR PERIODS</b>	<b>31,165,378</b>	<b>26,354,462</b>	<b>18%</b>

Source: Nielsen

**From page 1: 100 issues**

**100** ing channels and content distribution companies – a permanent part of what we do.

We always have and will continue to explore new and fabulous ways to get our products to you.

For starters, our digital magazine is now optimised for iPhone (and of course iPad) and Android mobile users. It's still in Beta mode, but have a look: all you need to do to view our latest issue is type [www.bit.ly/issuetwo2010](http://www.bit.ly/issuetwo2010) into the browser on your iPhone, Android phone or iPad. And there's plenty more where that came from...

This smartphone focus follows our initiative to develop a separate *ContentAsia* voice for social media.

Sometimes we (like almost every other international publication) put our headlines up on Twitter, but we're much more interested in using platforms like Facebook (and Twitter) to develop in a direction not possible anywhere else.

We think we're making it happen. Have a look! We're at <http://bit.ly/ContentAsiaFacebook> on Facebook, and you can follow us on Twitter at [twitter.com/contentasia](http://twitter.com/contentasia).

We've also revitalised our Blog, *On, Off & For the Record* (<http://contentasia-offtherecord.blogspot.com>) and promise regular insights into what we're seeing, thinking and hearing.

Other fun stuff we've added in the last few months includes a new Gallery section for industry parties via sister site, *AsiaContentWatch*. It's the best (and maybe the only) place to see who was where... everywhere.

We've also added a video application to our Programme of the Day feature on [www.asiacontentwatch.com](http://www.asiacontentwatch.com). The aim of the section is to provide as comprehensive a view as we can of the shows cleared for distribution in Asia as well as a platform for the region's most active programme distributors.

*AsiaContentWatch* ([www.asiacontentwatch.com](http://www.asiacontentwatch.com)), the online service we premiered at MIP-TV this year, now offers monthly

schedules of 77 channels in Asia, along with the most comprehensive list of buyers and what they want (and why) available.

If we've dramatically ramped up our digital presence, we've also expanding in the other direction – with good old-fashioned live face-to-face on-the-ground discussion and networking.

On 7 December this year, *ContentAsia* will host the 2nd *ContentAsia Summit*. The one-day event in Singapore brings together the region's most important buyers and programming executives from every platform across the region, including traditional free-TV broadcast, IPTV, on-demand, online and over-the-top.

And, finally (although we're by no means finished looking for ways to add value), we've partnered with leading trade media platforms around the world to form global platform *Global Media Update* ([www.globalmedia.update](http://www.globalmedia.update)). The idea is to increase profile and awareness of Asia's media industry and its leaders from on the ground in Asia.

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# Canal Overseas remodels Vietnamese direct-broadcasting

## *French media giant rolls out landmark marking, branding & packaging strategies*

French media group, Canal Plus, and its international subsidiary, Canal Overseas, have just celebrated the first anniversary of their Vietnamese direct-broadcast joint venture, green lit by local authorities in June 2009.

Now, six months after the actual launch of direct-to-home platform brand K+ in January this year, the platform has upped channel numbers from 25 to more than 65, launched its first in-house packaged channel brands, has organised the customer value proposition into a three-tier offering, and has its eye firmly on HD.

Plus, in April, the platform opened Vietnam's first dedicated pay-TV showroom, signalling a major shift in the way pay-TV is sold in the country. The first K+ branded outlet, in commercial capital Ho Chi Minh City, will act as a showroom for the pay-TV product.

By the end of this year, K+ (already fully digital) will have moved to a combo standard definition/HD offering.

The entry price point remains about US\$3 a month, with a post-paid facility replacing the previous flat pre-paid fee. The new family pack costs about US\$5 a month and the premium pack is around US\$12.

The platform is targeting Vietnam's mass market, says Jean-Noël Tronc, chairman and managing director of Canal Overseas.

"We're not just targeting elite audiences, we want access for everyone," he says. The key words in presenting the platform to the market are "exclusivity" and "service".

In the next three years, K+ hopes to have 22 million households signed up to the service, which operates from two transponders on Vietnam's Vinasat-1 satellite.

"We think this is achievable, but we will have to work hard at putting in place the right value proposition and the right distribution channels," he says.

Average revenue per user (ARPU) targets aren't being disclosed. Tronc says ARPU could reach US\$5 or US\$6 "but it could evolve rapidly... we don't have exact numbers... as in other markets we have issues like piracy."

At the same time, he says firm official action is being taken by authorities determined to play a more credible role on the regional stage.

"Vietnamese authorities are very keen to regulate the market to include fighting piracy," Tronc says. He illustrates this with an anecdote about the administration cracking down on illegal sports broadcasts. "It's a sign that things are moving in the right direction,



Jean-Noël Tronc

he adds.

K+ is the culmination of more than five years of relationship building on the ground, including an early appointment as technical partner.

Canal Overseas, which has 2.5 million subscribers and is involved in seven platforms around the world, signed the joint venture agreement with VTV for Vietnam Satellite Digital Television (VSTV) in 2008. The Canal+ Group will invest an initial US\$20 million in the venture.

The partners started working together in September last year. At the time, the platform consisted of 25 Vietnamese channels and about 100,000 subscribers.

While the Vietnamese operation is not exactly green-field, K+ is starting from scratch on lots of levels, including marketing and customer service.

"What we are investing in is contributing to making the Vietnamese pay-TV market evolve from what it is today – a box-driven market," Tronc says.

Consumers are being wooed in a few ways, including new market standards. Tronc says the subscriber's previous relationship was "with the box", which they could buy anywhere, and a pre-paid subscription model.

K+'s plan is to change that to a personal relationship between subscriber and platform. "More and more people are asking for customer service," he says.

Tronc says the first major challenge is to establish quality of service and customer

relationship. The second is "to create a differentiation in the quality of the product".

"The goal is quality service and quality product through affordability," Tronc says, adding that he believes there is demand for HD among certain sectors of Vietnam's population. "In 2009, more than 500,000 HD-ready television sets were sold... from this figure we see a growing penetration of HD TV in Vietnam," he says.

Are customers ready to pay extra for HD? "Yes," Tronc adds. "On condition you link it with programming".

The goal is a "programming equilibrium" between three kinds of content: Vietnamese channels and content that is already out there, some of the best international channels, and a bouquet of in-house channels packaged specifically for the Vietnamese subscription television market.

"Our policy has always been that we need to acquire the best and package our own branded channels," Tronc says. K+ has just launched its own K+1 premium sports and movies channel.

The sports strategy kicked off with exclusive rights to La Liga Spanish football and Calcio from Italy, along with the French League 1 and the European Championship. Vietnamese commentary is being added as part of the platform's localisation

commitment. K+ has also added its first Vietnamese drama to the K+1 channel along with Korean series.

"We believe that whatever the audience, you need to have local content, and not just localised international content," Tronc says, adding: "It's a dead-end strategy to distribute international channels with no localisation. This is why we will focus on local content development." K+ has already reached out to local producers with a range of proposals that include co-productions.

The platform already carries a significant number of international channels, including AXN, HBO, Star Movies, MGM, Discovery, Nat Geo, Australia Network, Disney, KidsCo, CNBC, TV5Monde, and Eurosport.

Tronc's answer to questions about Canal Overseas' enthusiasm for Vietnam is simple: 80 million people, 20 million households, a scattered population (70% of which is lives in rural areas), low pay-TV penetration, an emerging middle class, high personal income growth ... "The growth potential is one of Asia's most significant," he says.



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*ContentAsia's 20/20 interview asks those who have been in the industry in Asia for the past decade at least to look back – and forward – and tell us what they see. As part of a series that will run through 2010, Peter Jackson, AsiaSat's outgoing chief executive, talks about the biggest influences of the past 10 years, about quality vs quantity, big China disappointments, and more.*

**What do you think the biggest influence on Asia's media industry in the past 10 years has been?**

"Unquestionably technology. In a little more than 10 years it has moved the industry from analogue to digital and this has reduced the bandwidth required to transmit content and allowed massive increases in the number of channels available via cable or satellite. It has also facilitated the telephone operators to offer TV services over their existing copper networks and allowed satellites to provide DTH services. This has changed the competitive landscape and governments are no longer restricted to only having one or two broadcasters covering each geographical area."

**10 years ago, lots of companies said they were totally digital. What's the biggest difference between what you remember as the digital of 2000 and your digital of today?**

"In 2000 we just saw digital as a way of increasing the quantity of channels and making it cheaper to distribute. It did improve the quality but quantity was the name of the game. Today, when we talk of digital it is just the quality; be it High Definition, 3D or simply all the special effects that are possible because of having the content in a digital format."

**Of all the things we have known and been excited over in the past 10 years, what do you think is the one (or two) that failed to live up to expectations?** "The biggest in Asia must be that China has failed to grow its television service in terms of both local Chinese channels and foreign channels being allowed to be included on the existing platforms. With its rapidly developing economy

and the growth in disposable income of its urban population, it seems incongruous that the television offering has remained almost static for the last 10 years. The government has just resolved the issue of being able to offer IPTV but I do wonder how it will differentiate itself from the cable systems other than lowering the pricing. We have all seen competition in countries that do not allow differentiated content and it just results in financial losses for the operators as the only thing they can compete on is price. I would also have thought that a China-wide DTH service would have been available by now, and not just the present system that is designed for remote areas. The lack of differentiated and interesting content has driven the population to try to watch illegal foreign satellites where the government has no control. Well-regulated competition offering a wide range of content in both DTH and the terrestrial services would certainly limit the attraction of the illegal foreign satellite services."

**What are the biggest operational differences you have seen over the past decade?** "The way broadcasters and content providers have moved from doing everything themselves to outsourcing. They can now outsource almost every aspect of their business so they can just concentrate on what they are really good at – developing new channels or content."

**The forecasts that didn't come true... Or the ones that came true but not in the way you expected.** "I anticipated that multiple DTH platforms would be available in every country in Asia as a large



The

20/20  
interview

“Quantity was the name of the original digital game... today when we talk about digital, it's all about quality.”

percentage of many Asian countries are not well served by cable TV networks and governments could not justify a DTH monopoly in all but the very small countries. However, I would never have guessed that some governments would license three or more operators in one country, I suppose the jury is still out on what will happen next."

**Is there anything that might have happened that didn't (or hasn't yet)?** "We have seen some satellite operators sell capacity under the real cost for some time. That model is unsustainable and I always expected these operators to realise that they had to change their pricing strategy well before the time when they had to finance their replacement

satellites. However, what we saw was more new satellite operators coming into the market and then chasing down the prices, so perpetuating the situation. Now some operators are unable to afford to replace their existing satellites or protect their hard won orbital slots so they will be forced to adopt new business models in the future."

Jackson also says what he thinks of social networks, talks about what he's still deeply unsure about and things he takes into business meetings, and gives a few clues about what he would never do again no matter how much money he was offered. Read the full interview at [www.contentasia.tv](http://www.contentasia.tv)

ContentAsia's ongoing focus on Asia's most important buyers explores how they think and what they want.

**Khairul Mizan, Astro Entertainment's vice president for content development unit, buys content for Astro-branded Malay vernacular channels: Astro Ria, Astro Prima, Astro Ceria, Astro Warna and Astro Oasis. His shopping list includes formats and canned shows ranging from drama, entertainment, to comedy as well as movie rights for pay-TV and IPTV.**



**What kinds of sales pitches do you respond best to?** "Pitches come in all shapes and forms. However, if I were to sum up the best ones it would be the pitches that were made face to face with simple yet thought-through ideas. A short two or three page document explaining the title, logline, unique selling point of the show followed by some explanation of the show. A format pilot or sizzle reel would also be nice."

**How much of a programme/episodes of a series do you watch before you decide to buy?** "It really depends on the genre. For example in the case of international formats, we would typically ask for three to five episodes of the first season. Specifically – the first episode, some middle episodes and the finale. That way we can get a good understanding of the serial flow and structure. However there are many other factors that come to play before a programme or format is acquired."

**Do you remember the first programme/series you bought and what you were thinking at the time?** "That would be *Hole in the Wall* a few years back when it first screened at Mipcom. The promo was played on the jumbotron/large LED screen in front of the Pal-

ais and also in a few cafes nearby and everyone (essentially from the international TV industry) was watching smiling and laughing. I thought 'what a crazy yet simple idea' for a show and was already intrigued by the response it was getting. However, acquiring it was a challenge and it took me a good five to six months to close the deal. Probably one of the longest acquisition deals (for a format) for me!"

**What is your best buy ever – and why?** "I'm still looking for it. The content world is huge and ever evolving."

**Is there anything you wish you had bought, but didn't?** "Till this moment nothing. However, there are always shows that you personally favour but may not be suited for the target audience. It's very important to acquire what's best for your audience rather than choose personal favourites."

**What is/has been your greatest television extravagance?** "*Akademi Fantasia*. We've just finished our eighth season and I remember eight years ago when I directed the finals. I felt 10 feet tall once the credits

had rolled but little did anyone know I was nervous as ever just before the show went live... it was indeed one of the highlights in my career."

“There's always that element of risk.”

**What do you find most difficult about the programming/acquisition process?** "Finding a sure-fire hit... you can take calculated risks, you can try your utmost to get to know your audience but there's always that element of risk. I guess it's also the reason why I find the work so exciting too."

**What do you hate most about the acquisitions process?** "In certain cases, especially when it comes to international formats, the actual contract negotiation is rather time consuming. Going through the contract line by line with your lawyer and rewording and renegotiating every item when on a tight deadline and in different time zones from the seller is one of the biggest challenges. Thankfully once you've done it for the first time it gets a lot easier for the renewal."

**Is there anything you wish programme licensing and distribution people would do that they**

**are not doing now?** "Leverage the lower costs of production and talent in Southeast Asia. There's good talent and great facilities in Southeast Asia, not to mention the tropical holiday weather. It's simply ideal for Westerners to come here to create great content with us while getting a cool tan!"

Khairul Mizan also spoke about his attitude to risk, the key trade events he will be attending this year and his biggest ratings success. The full interview is in the buyers section at [www.asiacontentwatch.com](http://www.asiacontentwatch.com)

Khairul Mizan is among about 500 buyers in Asia featured on ContentAsia's online subscription service, [www.asiacontentwatch.com](http://www.asiacontentwatch.com). For more information, please email [i\\_want@contentasia.tv](mailto:i_want@contentasia.tv) or call +65 6846-5988.

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# Food Network Asia

by Malena Amzah

Scripps Networks International launches the Food Network Asia in Singapore today (5 July), adding hundreds of hours of new food-related general entertainment content to the country's booming channel environment. Plus there's a strong digital/

multimedia application from day one, with an HD option for any platform driving its HD take-up, an iPhone app that offers everything from TV schedules and email to recipes and shopping lists, and a website at [www.foodnetworkasia.com](http://www.foodnetworkasia.com).

The network launches on cable platform StarHub with celeb chef show *Luke Nguyen's Vietnam*, and has its first locally commissioned series scheduled to air this summer. The first 26-episodes of the local series, *Eat Like a Local*, features

Asian chefs and journalists telling stories about food and culture across Singapore, Malaysia, Taiwan and Korea. Scripps has also commissioned a second series of *Luke Nguyen's Vietnam*, as well as another **More on page 13**

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
9:00AM	Quick Fix Meals with Robin Miller						
9:30AM	Quick Fix Meals with Robin Miller						
10:00AM	Cooking for Real						
10:30AM	Ten Dollar Dinners	Simply Delicioso	Spice Goddess	Ten Dollar Dinners	Simply Delicioso	Spice Goddess	Ten Dollar Dinners
11:00AM	Barefoot Contessa						
11:30AM	Boy Meets Grill						
12:00PM	Paula's Party						
12:30PM	Paula's Party						
1:00PM	Food Network Challenge						
1:30PM	Food Network Challenge						
2:00PM	Good Eats						
2:30PM	Good Eats						
3:00PM	Quick Fix Meals with Robin Miller						
3:30PM	Quick Fix Meals with Robin Miller						
4:00PM	Cooking for Real						
4:30PM	Ten Dollar Dinners	Simply Delicioso	Spice Goddess	Ten Dollar Dinners	Simply Delicioso	Spice Goddess	Ten Dollar Dinners
5:00PM	Barefoot Contessa						
5:30PM	Boy Meets Grill						
6:00PM	Unwrapped						
6:30PM	Unwrapped						
7:00PM	Food Network Challenge						
7:30PM	Food Network Challenge						
8:00PM	Extreme Cuisine with Jeff Corwin (P)	Giada at Home (P)	Iron Chef America (P)	Food Network Challenge (P)	Luke's Vietnam	Ultimate Recipe Showdown	Ultimate Recipe Showdown
8:30PM		Giada at Home			Luke's Vietnam		
9:00PM	Luke's Vietnam (P)	Spice Goddess (P)	Throwdown with Bobby Flay (P)	Ultimate Recipe Showdown (P)	Extreme Cuisine with Jeff Corwin	Chopped	Iron Chef America
9:30PM	Luke's Vietnam	Unwrapped	Throwdown with Bobby Flay				
10:00PM	Iron Chef America	Food Network Challenge	Diners Drive-Ins and Dives (P)	Chopped (P)	Throwdown with Bobby Flay	Unwrapped (P)	Chopped
10:30PM			Diners Drive-Ins and Dives		Throwdown with Bobby Flay	Unwrapped	
11:00PM	Diners, Drive-Ins and Dives					Diners Drive-Ins and Dives	Extreme Cuisine with Jeff Corwin
11:30PM	Good Eats					Diners Drive-Ins and Dives	
12:00AM	Unwrapped						

Source: Food Network Asia (As of 17 May 2010), for 3Q 2010

Key: Primetime P= Premiere slot Change from Prior Month/Quarter

Sub-genre: Cooking show (71 hours/42%) Competition (47 hours/28%) Info/food investigator (36 hours/21%) Talk show (14 hours/8%)

The full schedule along with more than 70 others is available at [www.asiaccontentwatch.com](http://www.asiaccontentwatch.com)

**From page 12: Food Network Asia** series of *Spice Goddess*, featuring Indian chef Bal Arneson. And there will be more, network bosses have promised.

Although the U.S.-based Scripps has long had a vibrant programming syndication business in Asia, much of its culinary content – including competitions, travel series, and “in the kitchen” cooking shows – has never been seen before in Asia.

The launch schedule includes 19 HD shows that will be aired here for the first time. These include *Barefoot Contessa*, *Diners, Drive-Ins and Dives* and *Spice Goddess*.

Food Network Asia will schedule 1,000 fresh hours of HD content on the linear service a year.

The target audience will skew female 25-54, but Moyer says he fully expects all adults in that age bracket to make up a “good percentage” of the audience as well.

Prime time is from 6pm to midnight.

“Many channels offer high-quality food programming. But very few offer consistently great content in this genre 24 hours a day.”

Flagship show *Luke Nguyen's Vietnam* follows Sydney-based celeb chef Luke Nguyen on a back-to-his-heritage culinary journey through the southern regions of Vietnam. Season two goes into production this summer.

Tentpole shows for the next six months include *Cook Like an Iron Chef*, in which *Iron Chef* Mike Symon and other guest Iron Chefs share skills.

Perhaps the biggest challenge for the new food network in Asia is the popularity of food programming, says Scripps International president Greg Moyer. This, indeed, was the very reason Scripps chose food from the bouquet of lifestyle brands – including lifestyle and travel – it operates in the U.S.

“Food programming has become so popular that many



Luke Nguyen's Vietnam

channels offer high-quality food programming. But very few offer consistently great content in this genre 24 hours a day,” Moyer says.

Moyer adds that the network's biggest asset in launching a dedicated Asia service is its experience in operating dedicated food channels in the U.S. and producing hundreds of

hours of content a year.

An advantage is ownership of all content rights. “This gives us great flexibility to participate in all forms of video distribution,” Moyer says, adding: “We hope to provide our viewers with a 360-degree food experience”.

Food Network Asia's launch rides the region's rising appetite for special interest channels, as well as a strong push towards HD channels everywhere from Singapore, Vietnam and Taiwan to Korea and the Philippines.

In Singapore, Food Network Asia will run in both SD and HD in StarHub's lifestyle pack. Broad distribution is targeted by early 2011.

Answering one last question – If you were tweeting about Food Network Asia, what would you be saying? – Moyer says: “What's for dinner?”



Extreme Cuisine with Jeff Corwin



Spice Goddess

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*ContentAsia* refines today's info-deluge into usable, digestible, and reliable intelligence about entertainment content creation, funding, financing, licensing, distribution, and technology across the region. *ContentAsia's* products – including electronic, print and online publications – are tailor-made to deliver just what you need whenever you want it.

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