

International broadcast & media briefs

A monthly summary of web-based news

June 2004

Asia

TVB to spend US\$ 38.5 m on digital broadcasting

Hong Kong's Television Broadcasts Limited (TVB) plans to spend at least US\$38.5 million building facilities for its launch of digital broadcasting in 2007.

Source: www.abu.org.my

Canada

CRTC calls for comments on proposed incentives for English-language Canadian television drama

The Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission is seeking comment on a proposed package of incentives designed to encourage the broadcast of more original, high-quality hours of Canadian English-language drama, and to increase viewing to and expenditures on this type of programming.

More: www.crtc.gc.ca/eng/NEWS/RELEASES/2004/r040506.htm

Europe

Scandinavia tops 'digital life' study

The first 'European Digital Life Index' report has revealed that a 'digital hierarchy' has seen Nordic countries speed away from their southern European neighbours.

Source: www.netimperative.com/cm/viwdoc.jsp?cat=all&docid=BEP1_News_0000064577

EBU position on the interoperability of digital interactive television services

In response to the public consultation launched by the European Commission, the EBU has submitted its position on interoperability of digital interactive television services.

More: www.ebu.ch/en/union/news/2004/tcm_6-12454.php

Sky Italia to launch Playjam

OpenTV and Sky Italia have signed a multi-year agreement for the deployment of the OpenTV middleware on the Italian DTH satellite platform.

Source: Broadband TV News 20 May 2004
www.broadbandtvnews.com/

Adverts louder than programs

What many television viewers have long suspected turns out to be true, according to a French study.

Source: www.advanced-television.com

President of TV network resigns

The president of Italy's state-run television network, RAI, resigned in protest at government interference. Lucia Annunziata had promised to quit when the media bill pushed by Silvio Berlusconi's government became law, which it has done.

Source: www.economist.com (1-7 May 2004)

New Zealand

One in three programs is New Zealand made

A third of the programs screened on New Zealand television last year were locally produced, according to a survey report released by NZ On Air.

More: www.nzonair.govt.nz/pag.cfm?i=724

New radio transmitter takes New Zealand to the Pacific

The New Zealand government is to purchase a new US\$1.6 million digital transmitter for Radio New Zealand International (RNZI).

More: www.abu.org.my/public/compiled/p252.htm#Article483

Half million-plus for art and music TV shows

NZ On Air has announced the investment of more than half a million dollars in arts, culture and performance television programs for broadcast on TVNZ's two networks.

More: www.nzonair.govt.nz/pag.cfm?i=723

Plans for TVNZ's third channel revealed

Television New Zealand Limited (TVNZ) has announced its plans for a third channel. Chief Executive Officer Ian Fraser said the channel would be a mix of re-runs of current affairs, local shows, minority programs and live broadcasts from parliament.

Source: www.abu.org.my/public/compiled/p252.htm#Article448

NZ On Air 2004 research program

NZ On Air has announced its 2004 research program to investigate the role and importance of local content on television and radio in New Zealand.

More: www.nzonair.govt.nz/

UK

Digital switchover: The next steps

According to the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, Tessa Jowell, the UK Government is continuing to work with the broadcasting industry and consumer representatives to facilitate the switch to digital television.

More: www.digitaltelevision.gov.uk/press/2004/ministerial_statement.html

Digital switchover moves step closer

The government is to take its first tentative step towards analog switch-off with a trial scheme in Wales to give away free set-top boxes to households.

More: www.broadcastnow.co.uk

Junk food ad bill is presented to Parliament

A private members' Bill supported by 114 national health and consumer groups to ban junk food advertising was presented to Parliament on 18 May.

Source: www.broadcastnow.co.uk



Analog hang-up sours digital dream

A new report by Informa Media Group, *Global Digital TV*, argues that analog switch-off is extremely unlikely to take place in any of the 43 countries covered by the report within the next six years.

More: www.variety.com

DITG to launch William Hill betting channel

William Hill is to launch its own branded television channel on Sky Digital. The betting shop has teamed up with Digital Interactive Television Group, the company behind the Avago channel, ahead of the launch slated for late 2004.

Source: Broadband TV News 20 May 2004

www.broadbandtvnews.com/

Avoiding the meltdown

The BBC is planning extensive coverage of the Summer Olympics over broadband. If it's too popular, the Internet could be in trouble.

More: Broadband TV News 20 May 2004

www.broadbandtvnews.com/

Ofcom publishes annual plan for 2004-05

www.ofcom.org.uk/about_ofcom/reports_plans/annual_plan_2004-05/

Ofcom publishes wireless broadband update 2004

www.ofcom.org.uk/research/consumer_audience_research/wireless_update/?a=87101

BBC report on progress towards digital switchover

Culture Secretary Tessa Jowell has underlined the Government's commitment to digital switchover as she welcomed a new report into the issue. The BBC report, *Progress towards achieving digital switchover*, describes progress so far as 'astonishing', stating that it 'puts the UK in an enviable position'.

More: www.culture.gov.uk/global/press_notices/archive_2004/dcms043_04.htm

Campbell ruling spells trouble for TV news

News broadcasters could be sued for inadvertently filming members of the public following model Naomi Campbell's privacy victory against the *Daily Mirror*, legal experts have warned.

More: www.broadcastnow.co.uk

BBC: program download service

The BBC is launching a pilot project for viewers to download programs online.

Source: www.advanced-television.com/pages/pagesb/newsdaily.html

Top-Up TV extends reach by 500,000

Freeview pay-TV service, Top-Up TV, is to be made available in a further 500,000 homes following a deal to allow owners of digital television sets to access the service.

More: www.broadcastnow.co.uk

US

FCC will look at violence

Federal Communications Commission chairman Michael Powell has ordered the agency's Media Bureau to rearrange its 2004 work schedule and dive into drafting an inquiry examining the impact of television violence on children.

More: www.broadcstingcable.com

Online trading of TV episodes grows

Millions of unauthorised media files being traded on the Internet. The television industry fears being 'Napsterised'.

More: www.usatoday.com/money/media/2004-05-20-tv_x.htm

New threat to broadcasters

The Senate Commerce Committee has launched a drive to overhaul the 1996 Telecommunications Act, the law that ushered in a wave of consolidation in the broadcast and cable industries and kicked off the broad rollout of super-fast Internet services.

More: www.broadcastingcable.com

Channels big and small go High-Def

Not only are cable- and broadcast-network executives increasingly interested in the quality of HDTV picture, but they're encouraged by the quantity of HD sets flowing into the marketplace.

Source: 3 May 2004 www.broadcastingcable.com

Some CBS affils could drop live news

CBS affiliates are telling the Federal Communications Commission that unless it changes its ruling about profanities on-air, many will have to stop doing news outside of the 10 pm-6 am safe harbour for indecent speech.

More: www.broadcastingcable.com

Against à la Carte

Lobbyists for big cable companies aim is to kill 'à la carte' pricing, a controversial plan that allows pay TV customers the right to buy only the channels they want.

More: www.broadcastingcable.com

FCC begins rulemaking proposing to allow Wireless broadband operations in the 3650-3700 MHz band

More: www.fcc.gov

New technology

Thomson Top Up TV box ready next month

The first 'Top-Up TV Ready' set-top box is to be available in the shops from mid-June.

Source: Broadband TV News 20 May 2004

www.broadbandtvnews.com/

SCM begins shipment of Top-Up TV modules

SCM Microsystems has begun the delivery of conditional access modules to be used with the UK DTT subscription service Top Up TV.

Source: Broadband TV News 20 May 2004

www.broadbandtvnews.com/