

# DIGITAL



October 2016

THE  
TERROR

**MAD**MEN

into the  
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HUMANS

**HALT AND  
CATCH FIRE**

**FEAR**<sup>THE</sup>  
**WALKING  
DEAD**

# SOMETHING MORE

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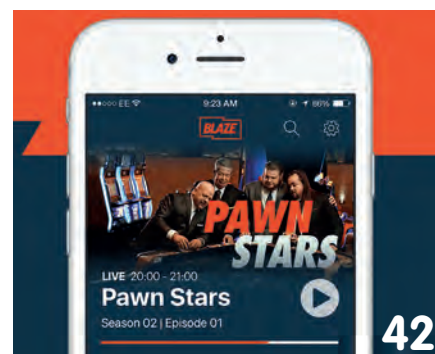
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## 10. Content Innovation Awards 2016: The preview

Following last year's highly successful debut, *Digital TV Europe* and *TBI*'s Content Innovation Awards 2016 returns to Cannes' Carlton Hotel in October with a Gala Dinner in the hotel's Grand Salon. Ahead of the event, *DTVE* looks at the shortlisted candidates across all 18 categories.



## 42. Blazing success

Pay TV channel provider A+E Networks has recently been branching out into the free-to-air world, notably with the launch of Blaze in the UK. EMEA managing director Dean Possenniskie talked to Stuart Thomson about the company's changing profile.

## 44. TV lines up for drone racing

Drone Racing League CEO Nicholas Horbaczewski tells Stewart Clarke he wants his events to be the Formula One of drone racing. Big-name investors including Sky, ProSiebenSat.1, MGM and Hearst have all backed the venture recently.



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**Issue no 328****Published By:**

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# Innovation time

**The** bulk of this issue of *Digital TV Europe* is devoted to the shortlisted entries for our second Content Innovation Awards, to be held in Cannes just ahead of the MIPCOM programming market.

This year's event, a gala dinner in the Grand Salon of the Carlton Hotel on Sunday October 16, will showcase the achievements of a highly impressive line-up of content, technology and distribution providers.

Launched last year, the Content Innovation Awards from *Digital TV Europe* in partnership with our sister title *Television Business International*, is designed to recognise innovation from players in all parts of the content creation and delivery chain.

The entries highlighted here present a snapshot of how the industry is evolving, presenting strong evidence of the ways in which non-linear and OTT video, new formats and innovations such as UHD TV and virtual reality are continuing to transform the meaning of TV. However, they also show how traditional media companies – and traditional formats, including linear TV channels – are also evolving to meet the challenges of the changing ways of viewing and paying for content.

The faster the pace of technological and behavioural change, the more pressing the need for media companies to come up with inventive new ways of creating, distributing and making money from content, so an event like the Content Innovation Awards should become ever-more relevant for the industry in the future.

Elsewhere in this issue, we look in detail at the phenomenon of Drone Racing – an example of a new content format that is attracting the interest of major media groups across Europe.

Ahead of MIPCOM, we also interview A+E Networks EMEA chief Dean Possenniskie about A+E's move into the free-to-air market and the prospects for content distribution over digital platforms.

In addition, we look at the latest technology news – including some of the technologies on display at IBC in September – and provide our usual round-up of recent industry news. ●



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# News digest

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## Netflix content chief: TV series account for two-thirds of viewing

By **Andy McDonald** >

TV series, including Netflix's own original productions, now account for two thirds of viewing time on the SVOD service, according to Ted Sarandos.

Speaking at an RTS London Conference, Netflix's chief content officer said that it was more efficient to spend money on originals than on licensing high profile content, and said that it made sense to make both TV shows and films – despite more watch-time going to series.

"With all the success of the 'golden age of television', and all the success that we've had in this period of time, about a third of the watching on Netflix is still movies. Keep in mind this is two hour movies versus 13 hour shows," said Sarandos.

He claimed the way movies are licensed to pay TV services is "probably the most out-of-step licensing window" and that making people wait to watch movies online means they don't "assign a lot of subscription value to that watching activity."



**Sarandos: pay TV licensing is out of step for the internet age.**

"To have people wait seven to 10 months in the internet age doesn't make a lot of sense. I think what you end up with in these pay deals is movies that either people saw already because they were excited about them or they made a conscious decision not to see them," said Sarandos. "We're investing in films so that we can more aggressively give the consumer what they're telling us they want, which is the movies when they open."

Discussing Netflix's original series plans, Sarandos echoed recent claims by Netflix's chief finance officer, David Wells, that the company aims to move to a 50:50 split between licensed and original content. "That's where it's heading and that's what we set out to do many years ago," said Sarandos. "If we get

to a place where we're missing more than we're hitting or that efficiency metric goes the other way, we may revisit that number, but that's our intent – to do most of our programming original."

Sarandos said that Netflix's originals should be "brand-defining, tent pole shows". He said that each programme should stand out under the wider Netflix umbrella and that the company is not trying to "do everything that feels or looks the same".

He also said that Netflix likes to work with film-makers as they enter the TV world, as big films have historically "been more global than television". This follows Netflix's recent launch of the Baz Luhrman-created musical drama *The Get Down*.

Sarandos said that doing original series makes sense not only in terms of efficient spend but also in distinguishing Netflix as a destination rather than another outlet for the same programming that other services carry.

Separately, Netflix is set to ramp up its UK production efforts, with co-production deals

in place with the three main UK terrestrial broadcasters.

Sarandos said that Netflix had already had global success with the UK shows it has licensed for its service and claimed that more UK commissions are on the way. "We are in co-production agreements right now with ITV, with Channel 4 and with the BBC on several projects. We'll announce at least four more before the end of the year of these co-productions where the British broadcaster will take the first window and we'll follow but we will launch it on Netflix around the world," he said. "What we find is that we have had such success with British programming in the US and around the world, with *Happy Valley*, *Peaky Blinders*, *River*, that it's a natural extension of that for us to commission original British programming."

Sarandos cited four confirmed UK Netflix shows. Its most high-profile is the big budget Left Bank Pictures-produced royal drama, *The Crown*, due to go live on November 4.

## France

### CAB > Watchdog says no

SFR's shares fell sharply following markets regulator the AMF's rejection of parent company Altice's move to take full control of the operator for failing to provide adequate information to shareholders about the terms of the deal. The

plan would have seen Altice take over the 22.25% of the company that it does not already own in an all-share offer and withdraw SFR's separate stock market listing. Altice said it "regrets the decision, which goes against the interests of both companies, their shareholders and employees". The cable and telecom investment group said that the SFR board

had recommended its voluntary offer, which had been deemed fair to minority shareholders in an independent assessment by Accuracy. Altice said it reserved the right to appeal the ruling. CEO Michel Combes made it clear that he failed to understand the rationale for the decision. Combes told financial daily *Les Echos* that the AMF had deprived shareholders

of their right to an independent choice. However, Altice's offer, which proposed a small premium, was contested by minority shareholders who pointed out that the terms of the offer were at the lower end of Accuracy's assessment of value and questioned the independence of two members of the SFR administrative council that looked at the deal.

### OTT > Canal+ VOD revamp

Canal+'s video-on-demand service CanalPlay VOD has revamped its website and launched new features including download for offline viewing and download-to-own. According to Canal+, the download feature is designed to enable users of the service to view content anywhere at any time, irrespective of the availability of internet bandwidth. Once downloaded, titles will be available for 30 days. Canal+ has also added a Playlist function, allowing users to find titles they want to watch more easily. New movies will be available in HD quality, provided an HD version is available, four months after theatrical release. The download-to-own function, Achat, will enable viewers to store a digital copy of a film on their computer or in the cloud.

### IPTV > Orange VR push

Orange is to launch a virtual reality TV pilot service. OCS VR, available on Samsung Gear VR and Sony PlayStation VR, will enable OCS subscribers to view the group's catalogue of premium video content in an immersive VR environment designed to look like a private theatre. From December, Orange will also provide the Orange VR Experience, a programme being run in partnership with Los Angeles-based Wevr, in which Orange Digital Ventures took a stake at the start of the year. Orange will test distribution of native VR content through partnerships with Twentieth Century Fox Innovation Lab, Warner Bros., Felix & Paul Studios, Apelab, InnerspaceVR, Okio studio and Wevr studio. The pilot will run in France for six months.

### OTT > Cstream launch

Online retailer Cdiscount, owned by supermarket group Casino, has launched an OTT streaming service that it combines video, music and books for a single monthly price of €9.99. Cstream Video will offer over 300 movie titles and 1,000 TV episodes aimed at kids, with new content to be added each month. The video offering comes via white-label video-on-demand specialist VOD Factory, which is behind FnacPlay, the on-demand player of electronic goods and music retailer Fnac. Cstream Music will be organised in 100 playlists, featuring what the company described as millions of titles for all occasions. Cstream Books will include access to 50,000 novels, graphic novels, non-fiction and kids books from French e-books specialist Youboox, along with 30 magazine titles.

## Events

### Content Innovation Awards

**Date:** 16 October  
**Venue:** Carlton Hotel, Grand Salon, Cannes, France  
**W:** contentinnovationawards.com

### MIPCOM

**Date:** 17-20 October  
**Venue:** Palais des Festivals, Cannes, France  
**W:** www.mipcom.com

### Broadband World Forum

**Date:** 18-20 October  
**Venue:** ExCeL, London, UK  
**W:** tmt.knect365.com/broadbandworldfourm.com

### Digital TV CEE

**Date:** 25-26 October  
**Venue:** Hilton Budapest, Budapest, Hungary  
**W:** tmt.knect365.com/digitaltvcee.com

### TV Connect MENA

**Date:** 31 October - 1 November  
**Venue:** Westin Dubai Mina Seyahi, Dubai, United Arab Emirates  
**W:** tmt.knect365.com/tv-connect-mena

### DISCOP Africa

**Date:** 2-4 November  
**Venue:** Sandton Convention Centre, Johannesburg, South Africa  
**W:** www.discopafrika.com

### CASBAA

**Date:** 7-10 November  
**Venue:** Studio City Macau, Macau, China  
**W:** www.casbaa.convention.com

### OTT TV World Summit

**Date:** 8-10 November  
**Venue:** 99 City Road Conference Centre, London, UK  
**W:** tmt.knect365.com/otttv-world-summit/

## Toca Boca launches kids SVOD service

By Stuart Thomson >

Sweden-based mobile-centric kids interactive app specialist Toca Boca has launched a new subscription video-on-demand service, Toca TV in 150 countries, featuring a selection of curated and original short-form videos from the web.

The service is aimed at five-to-nine year-olds – and more specifically, families with iPads. It is also available on iPhones, with Android to follow later this year.

Toca Boca has worked with around 75 independent content creators and MCNs to build a content line-up for the service, which debuted in trial form earlier in Canada, Australia and New Zealand.

The service is available for US\$4.99 in the US, £4.49 in the UK and SEK55 in Sweden.

Content partners include Freedom!, DreamWorksTV, the



kids and family brand of Awesomeness TV, Studio 71, and BroadbandTV.

The project has been spearheaded by former Sesame Street creative director J Milligan as executive producer. "There is a lot around for pre-schoolers. We are [for an age range] after that but before kids have phones or Instagram accounts," Milligan told DTVE, adding that kids in this target age range are not allowed to have their own YouTube accounts and that parents and kids alike are therefore likely to be attracted to a service that provides web-type videos. He said that Toca Boca felt that pro-

viding a service for this "tricky age group" presented "a huge opportunity".

In addition to third-party content from partners, Toca Boca is also providing its own original content based on its popular games, including some live-action videos as well as stop-motion animation shorts.

Milligan said that Toca Boca plans to launch the service globally, except in China. He said the platform could be personalised, with the ability to tailor its look to individual taste. The service includes a recommendation engine. Categories include DIY, gaming, science and discovery, funny videos and music.

The service also features tools to enable users to make their own video shorts. "We also have creation tools and platforms – something that no-one [else] has done yet in an integrated way," said Milligan.

## Global Wrap

The proportion of homes ditching traditional TV and exclusively taking SVOD is on the rise, according to new research. The overall number of subscription video-on-demand homes continues to increase globally, and within that group, the number of SVOD-only homes is also on the up, **Ampere Analysis** reports. Its data shows the US is the largest SVOD-only market, with 10.4% of TV households in that bracket. According to **Digital TV Research**, the world's top 400 pay TV operators will increase their subscription count from 778 million in 2015 to 912 million by 2021. However, the study claims that subscription and VOD revenues for these 400 operators will remain flat at US\$206 billion (€184 billion). **Viacom** and **CBS** are exploring a possible merger. **National Amusements**, which owns controlling stakes in both firms, urged the pair to look at coming together. **Twitch** has launched **Twitch Prime**, a new offering that combines **Amazon Prime** with a premium experience for users of the gaming-focused video platform. **HTC** has announced the global launch of **Viveport**, taking the virtual reality store out of private beta. VR fans in more than 30 countries will now be able to access the store. **BBC Worldwide** has launched **BBC Player**, a branded TV Everywhere service in partnership with Singaporean pay TV giant **StarHub**. Canadian on-demand service **Shomi** came close to attracting 900,000 subscribers, it revealed after parents **Rogers** and **Shaw** decided to shut the SVOD net down in the face of stiff competition.

## Germany

### SAT > UHD TV build-up

Sky will air its first UHD TV football game on October 14 via its Sky+ Pro box. Sky will air the Bundesliga match between Borussia Dortmund and Hertha BSC in the UHD format, followed by the Champions League match between Bayer Leverkusen and Tottenham Hotspur on October 18. Both will be shown on Sky Sport Bundesliga UHD and Sky Sports UHD. Sky said it would also air a selection of UHD movies on its Sky On Demand offering, including *Hotel Transylvania 2*, *The Walk*, *Salt* and *Evil Dead*. Sky subscribers must make a one-off payment of €99 for the UHD box for the duration of their subscriptions. The service is available for 12 months free to Sky Customers with HD subscriptions.

## Greece

### OTT > OTE catch-up

Deutsche Telekom-owned telco OTE has launched a catch-up TV and video-on-demand service that will be available to OTE TV subscribers at no extra charge. The OTE TV Plus service will offer films and TV series airing on OTE Cinema channels as well as OTE History documentaries and programmes. The service is available to subscribers equipped with hybrid satellite and IP set-top boxes and will include OTE Cinema titles along with new series from OTE Cinema 4 HD. OTE TV subscribers equipped with DVRs can download titles for up to 48 hours. Customers can view OTE TV Plus by connecting their boxes to the web, including via the network of third-party providers.

## Israel

### SAT > Spacecom search

Spacecom has said it is exploring the possibility of procuring and launching a replacement satellite following the loss of its Amos-6 in a launch-pad explosion. The satellite operator said that it will serve all of its current and future financial commitments and said it is developing a "plan of action" for how to move forward. Amos-6 was destroyed following an explosion of the SpaceX Falcon 9 rocket that was due to carry it into space during a standard pre-launch static fire test. It has thrown Spacecom's planned merger with companies from the Beijing Xinwei Group into doubt. The US\$285 million (€253 million) deal was contingent on Amos-6's successful launch.

## Liberty Global to increase online content focus

### By Andy McDonald >

Liberty Global will look to increasingly focus its content spend online, according to company CEO Mike Fries.

Speaking at Goldman Sachs' Communacopia Conference in New York, Fries said that Liberty spends US\$2 billion (€1.8 billion) a year on content, most of which is "on channels like Discovery". "An increasing amount of that is spent on rights for content that we provide online – that we provide in our replay formats and our SVOD platforms. That will be the nature of where we're headed," he said.

Ask specifically about M&A opportunities in terms of content, Fries said that Liberty would remain "opportunistic" when it comes to deals but played down the often speculated-about potential for Liberty to buy ITV – the UK broadcaster it



**Fries: an increasing proportion of content spend is for online.**

holds a 9.9% stake in – saying "I don't see any massive vertical integration big bangs."

"The ITV stake has been a good investment for us and I think that is a great company," said Fries. "Maybe some day it could be an interesting thing for Virgin to take another step [in], but not today."

Fries cited last year's joint investment with Discovery in Lionsgate as a "very good" relationship and said that work is now underway to "work more closely together, putting capital to work strategically together as opposed to waiting for things to fall off the tree."

He also said that Liberty and Discovery's joint ownership of UK production company All3Media is "starting to provide benefits in Ireland, where we're getting the best shows they have onto our broadcast networks".

"We are looking at some of our own independent production opportunities – small stuff though. Let's say we're moving slowly into this space and I think it's the right thing to do," said Fries.

Discussing Liberty's recently announced Netflix partnership, which will make the global SVOD provider's content available to its subscribers in 30 countries around the world, Fries said the deal is "not disruptive in the least".

"It's additive to the overall content product that we're offering to consumers and I think it's going to be a win-win," said Fries.



## Q&A: Jim Samples, Scripps Networks Interactive

Jim Samples, president, international, Scripps Networks Interactive, talks about plans for thematic channels, the free-to-air market and the company's plans for TVN in Poland.

### ***What are your principal goals for Scripps Networks' thematic lifestyle channels business for the next year?***

We have seen tremendous growth in Scripps Networks' international division since launching the business in 2009. Today we distribute seven lifestyle entertainment brands led by Food Network, HGTV and Travel Channel in 175 countries and territories around the world. To reflect our commitment to building out our lifestyle channel portfolio across the globe, Derek Chang, who was named our new head of international lifestyle channels, will lead and set the strategic direction for our international owned and operated lifestyle channels. He will be responsible for growing distribution, launching new channels and setting priorities for new market development.

### ***How significant is the free-to-air opportunity compared with the pay TV market and what factors will determine whether you choose pay TV or free TV as your route to any given market?***

As we continue to focus on expanding the distribution of our brands, we will be flexible on our routes to market. We will continue to be primarily a pay TV business, but our international strategy is not one-size-fits all. In some instances, that will include free-to-air; in other cases it may be OTT. In Italy, we launched Fine Living on DTT based on the economies of scale there. We also have FTA networks in the UK, Poland and New Zealand. In Australia, we created a partnership with SBS to launch Food Network on FTA and with Nine Network to create an HGTV-branded programming block on NineLife.

### ***How significant is the opportunity to launch additional channel brands around the world and what are you prioritizing?***

A key priority for my team is to rollout HGTV around the world. This year, we launched HGTV in New Zealand and expanded the channel's distribution across Asia. We are anticipating launches in the Middle East, North Africa and Poland in the coming months. For Food Network, we've seen great strides in Latin America including expanding distribution into Mexico for the first time while extending distribution in Argentina, Bolivia, Chile, Colombia and Paraguay. As we move into 2017, we will look to keep the momentum going as we further build out our lifestyle portfolio in key global markets.

### ***What are your priorities for TVN for the next year and what is your view of prospects for the Polish market overall?***

Poland is a thriving economy with great opportunities in the media industry, and TVN is a very successful and highly vertically integrated media company. It's been over a year since we acquired TVN, and I couldn't be happier with the progress. TVN has strong broadcast, pay TV and DTT channels – and are now leading the charge in digital with their OTT platform Player.pl. We are actively supporting this strategy while we further integrate the TVN team into the SNI family.

### ***What plans do you have to evolve TVN's digital and thematic channel business over the coming couple of years?***

TVN already has a strong thematic channels business. TVN Style and TVN Turbo are the leading lifestyle brands for women and men in the market, respectively. We will look to complement what they are doing so well with our own lifestyle business, including sharing great programming ideas that can play well on either our US or Polish lifestyle channels and creating more productions in Poland for US and international distribution.

TVN is already a leader in digital with more than two and a half million registered users on its VOD platform, Player.pl. With more than eight hours of average time spent per month, TVN's Player has the most loyal users in the Polish OTT market, including Millennials. That's really ground-breaking, and our team in the US will work with the TVN digital team to share ideas and best practices.

### ***In populating your channels, what is the ideal balance between original content that has local appeal and content that has global reach?***

Scripps is the world's leading producer of lifestyle programming about home, food and travel, producing 2,500 hours of content a year. It's only natural that our US output provides a tremendous competitive advantage as we grow our lifestyle brands internationally. However, we know that to lead in our categories, it is imperative to have a localization strategy that connects closely with viewers in each market, reflecting and celebrating their cultures and interests. For example, in Asia, we produce *House Hunters Asia*, a local version of the US juggernaut. In Latin America, the Food Network team are currently producing *Locos x el Asado* featuring expert grill master Luciano 'El Laucha'. And, in the UK, we have produced shows like *Siba's Table*, *Follow Donal to Europe*, and most recently, *Paul Hollywood City Bakes*.

## The Netherlands

### CAB > HBO shuts down

HBO is to close its channels in the Netherlands at the end of the year. The premium pay TV network will cease to distribute linear channels HBO1, HBO2 and HBO3 in the country on December 31. Its dedicated on-demand services HBO GO and HBO On Demand are due to go dark at the same time. "HBO and Ziggo will announce later this year a different service for the Dutch market featuring HBO programming," a spokesperson for HBO told *DTVE*. HBO Netherlands was a 50:50 joint venture between HBO Europe and Liberty Global-owned Ziggo.

## Poland

### OTT > Netflix goes local

Netflix has revealed plans to localise its on-demand service in Poland, using local language and currency and adding Polish TV shows and movies in addition to Netflix's acclaimed original programming. Netflix also signed a carriage agreement with a first local partner, T-Mobile, following its Europe-wide deal with Liberty Global. This will allow the telco's customers to pay for Netflix through their accounts. Netflix said the revised product would mix Polish and Hollywood titles, originals and kids series, with more than 80% now available in dubbed or subtitled in Polish. Netflix original series dubbed or subtitled in Polish will include *House of Cards*, *Orange is the New Black*, *Stranger Things*, *Narcos*, *Marvel's Daredevil* and *Jessica Jones*, and *The Get Down*. Polish-language titles include comedy special *Katarzyna Piasecka* and *Rafał Paczes: Seriously Funny*; *Mariusz Kałamaga*, *Karol Kopiec*, *Wiolka Walaszczyk: Hilarious Trio*; and *Karol Modzelewski* and *Łukasz 'Lotek' Łodkowski: No Offense*; plus movies *Pokłosie* and *Ile Wazy Kon Tronjanski*.

## Romania

### OTT > Mobile TV launch

Vodafone Romania is to launch a mobile TV service and has signed a deal with Netflix to provide access to the subscription video-on-demand service over it, the group's Romanian unit's CEO Ravinder Takkar told local press. Vodafone will launch its 4GTV+ service in 350 towns and cities across Romania, making a number of channels and on-demand movies available on mobile devices and via smart TV. Vodafone has struck a deal with Netflix to make the latter's content available via

the 4GTV+ service. New users will gain three months' free access to the SVOD service, Takkar told journalists.

## Russia

### OTT > NTV+ goes interactive

Pay TV provider NTV+ is launching an internet-connected hybrid set-top that will enable it to offer interactive TV services including video-on-demand, pause live TV and catch-up TV. Gazprom Media-owned NTV+'s box is a joint project between the pay TV outfit and its parent company's technol-

ogy arm. The device will be manufactured by Korea's Kaonmedia with NTV+ branding. The UI of the new set-top is currently undergoing testing and development ahead of a planned November launch, according to NTV+. The new UI will allow subscribers to browse channel, order movies and manage their subscriber account as well as create a list of favourite channels. NTV+ CEO Mikhail Demin said that sales of the new box will kick off in November. He said he expected the hybrid device to account for 10% of all new box sales from launch, growing to up to 50% by the end of next year, depending on

## BBC to require iPlayer log-in from next year

By Andy McDonald >

From early next year all viewers will be required to sign into the BBC iPlayer, as part of a plan by the UK broadcaster to offer a "more tailored BBC experience". The BBC said the plans mark the next phase of its efforts to make its content, products and services more personalised to all viewers and listeners.

From this week the BBC will introduce a new sign-in system for BBC ID – a service that users can already use to get a personal experience, but is not required to access iPlayer.

This new system will require BBC ID holders to add a post-code to their account information – a move that the BBC said is "more robust and secure" than the current log-in, which only asks for an email address and password.

From early 2017, the BBC will ask all viewers and listeners to sign in to BBC iPlayer, BBC iPlayer Radio and some of its mobile apps. The BBC said that the move will benefit users and also allow the corporation to



**Hall: changes represent a transformation of public service broadcasting.**

make more informed decisions about future programming and services – based on information about how people use and like services.

"I want everyone to get the very best from the BBC. By learning about what you want and like we can take you to more of the great programmes you love, stories you might be interested in and content you might otherwise never have discovered," said BBC director general, Tony Hall.

"This is a real transformation – reinventing public service broadcasting for the digital age. Millions of people are already benefitting from this more personalised BBC, and by rolling it out for everyone no one will be left behind."

The BBC said that TV Licensing will have access to infor-

mation provided by logged-in users, but claimed this will not be used for enforcing licence fee payments. However, BBC media correspondent, David Sillito commented: "Coming less than a month after the extension of the licence fee to the iPlayer, it's hard not to see this as just a way of encouraging people to pay up."

A change to UK law came into effect on September 1 requiring viewers to buy a licence fee in order to watch programmes on-demand from the BBC iPlayer.

This marked the first time that UK viewers have been required to pay to access non-live BBC programming via the web – with the licence fee previously only needed by people who watch or record BBC television at its original time of broadcast.

The law change came after the UK government said it would "modernise the current licence fee system" and close the 'iPlayer loophole' as part of its White Paper on the future of the public broadcaster, published in May.

market conditions. Demin said that the launch of a hybrid box would give the operator an opportunity to grow its base. Gazprom Media Technology chief Vadim Fedotov said that the UI would provide access to standard broadcast, VOD and catch-up content, including exclusive premieres. Fedotov said the OTT element of the service would be further developed in the future.

## Sweden

### DTT > Com Hem closes

Com Hem has closed its SEK1.33 billion (€144 million) acquisition of rival Swedish pay TV operator Boxer. Com Hem said that Boxer will be consolidated into Com Hem's financial statements from September 30, 2016. Com Hem said that it expects the acquisition to generate approximately SEK300 million in additional underlying

EBITDA for the first 12 months and approximately SEK200 million in operating free cash flow. Boxer, the pay TV operator of the DTT network in Sweden, has roughly 500,000 subscribers that are predominantly in the single dwelling-unit market.

## Turkey

### OTT > Netflix localises

Netflix has unveiled a "more localised" version of its service in Turkey, with domestic content and its first deal with a telecoms partner in the country. Netflix said its new "truly Turkish service" uses local language in its user interface, Turkish currency for payments and adds dozens of Turkish TV shows and movies in addition to Netflix's original programming. Netflix will also start a "broad partnership" with Vodafone in Turkey. The company already has a deal in

place with Turkish TV maker Vestel, which manufactures sets under different brand names for sale around the world. Starting at TRY15.99 (€4.83) per month, Turkish viewers will be able to use Netflix to access movies like *Günesi Gördüm (I Saw the Sun)* and *Kelebeğin Rüyası (The Butterfly's Dream)* along with TV series such as TRT comedy *Leyla ile Mecnun (Leyla and Mecnun)*, Show TV drama *Suskunlar (Game of Silence)*, and Ay Yapım-produced ATV broadcast drama *Karadayı (The Uncle in Black)*. Netflix series now available with Turkish subtitles and dubbing include *House of Cards* and *Stranger Things*.

## UK

### OTT > Sky VR app launch

Sky has launched a dedicated virtual reality app that will feature content produced by Sky and the

UK pay TV operator's partners. The Sky VR App for Android and iOS smartphones will feature a range of 360° videos, including two new Sky VR experiences: Sky Sports: Closer featuring David Beckham; and Sky's first VR commission, an English National Ballet production of *Giselle*. Factory 42, a new immersive content production company set up by former Sky 3D director John Cassy will produce the two-minute English National Ballet production, which will be released later this autumn. Other VR content that will appear in the app includes: Sky Cinema-produced VR footage from the premiere of *Star Wars: The Force Awakens*, called *Star Wars: Red Carpet*; two Disney VR experiences from film *The Jungle Book*; a Fox Innovation Lab spin-off from film *The Martian*, called *The Martian Sneak Peek*; and *Suicide Squad: Squad 360* from Warner Brothers.

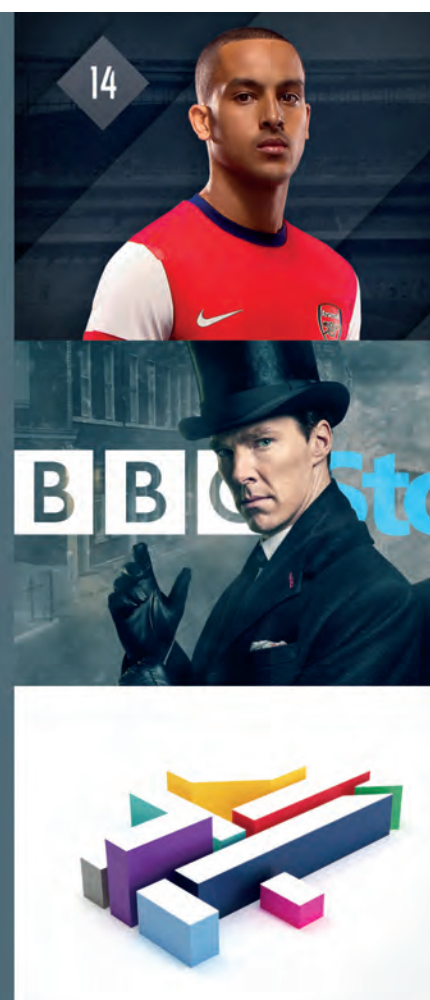
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Following last year's highly successful debut, *Digital TV Europe* and *TBI's* Content Innovation Awards 2016 returns to Cannes' Carlton Hotel in October with a Gala Dinner in the hotel's Grand Salon. Ahead of the event, *DTVE* looks at the shortlisted candidates across all 18 categories.

## Advanced TV Innovation of the Year

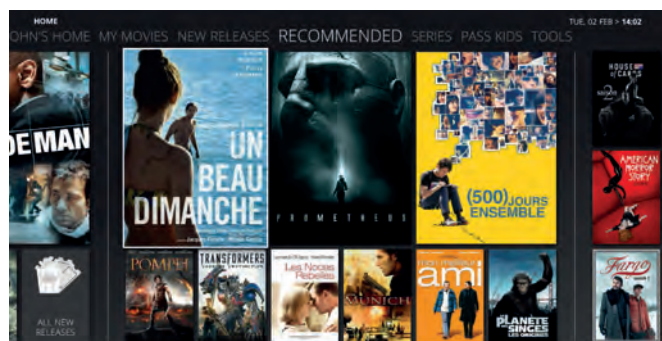
### Hotel Internet Services for BeyondTV

The TV screen attached to the bedroom wall has long been a familiar part of the travel experience. But with holidaymakers and business travellers now typically taking one or two video-capable devices with them, there is an opening in the market for a service that provides seamless access to hotel guests' own home subscriptions and accounts via the big screen.

Step forward Hotel Internet Services' BeyondTV. The company has developed a player that enables those with personal devices to view content available via their Netflix or Hulu accounts, surf the web, chat with friends on Facebook and access hotel services via the TV. The service can be linked to a property management system to enable guests to view their bill and check-out. BeyondTV is a cloud-based platform that, according to Hotel Internet Services, can be deployed by hotels irrespective of their size.

### Netgem TV for Post Luxembourg

Service providers are looking to deliver differentiated but cost-effective TV services in an increasingly crowded market for converged service



packages.

For Post Luxembourg, Netgem has provided a cloud-based TV service including a multiscreen 4K TV experience that enables subscribers to watch up to 400 channels and OTT TV services, not only on the main TV screen but – via the PostTV Go app – on multiple devices on the move.

The service as it is currently deployed offers PostTV Go, a multiscreen mobile TV app enabling subscribers to view 60 live channels as well as to remotely record programmes and use a phone as a remote control.

Cloud TV recording enables users to record up to 1,000 hours of content. As the service is cloud-based, they are not restricted by the number of tuners in the box and can record as many services simultaneously as they want. Other features include startover, enabling viewers to watch shows they missed from the beginning; the ability to 'swipe' content being watched on mobile devices to the main screen; a 48-hour replay TV service across 60 channels via the network DVR functionality; video-on-demand; and access to OTT services.

## Orange for TVlights

Ambient lighting to set the mood for watching TV was pioneered by Philips a decade ago with its Ambilight, which involved lights attached to the TV set itself.

The concept of immersive lighting has now been taken to a higher level by Orange with TVlights, again in partnership with Philips.

The design of Orange's ambient lighting system means that viewers can link their TV – irrespective of brand – with Philips' HUE lights, providing a new immersive experience in the living room. The lights automatically synchronise colours and intensity in real-time with the content watched on TV.

TVlights drives HUE connected lights in real-time according to the content watched on TV, thanks to an algorithm embedded in the new Orange Livebox itself. The concept was debuted at the Show Hello 2016 expo and will be deployed this year with TV homes in France. Orange says it could then be rolled out across its broadband footprint in multiple territories in Europe.

The key to TVlights is the ability to deliver ambient lighting synchronised in real-time with content on the TV, taking into account the location of lights around the device. The algorithm in the Livebox computes in real time all the colours displayed on every section of the TV screen. It then controls the Philips HUE Lights according to their position in the room, to the rhythm, and the colour flow of the content watched on TV. Up to nine lights can be connected to the service.

## Yospace & Channel 4 – for Dynamic Ad Insertion for Live Simulcast in All 4

Targeted advertising is increasingly seen as a crucial element in securing the future of free-to-air TV. In the UK, Channel 4 has been at the forefront of moves to build up a database of registered viewers thanks to its All 4 on-demand service.

For the All 4 launch, the broadcaster wanted to implement as similar an experience as possible across both VOD and linear channels. The company teamed up with advertising technology specialist Yospace to deliver dynamic ad insertion to its live streaming service, meeting viewer expectations that have been set high by traditional TV. In addition



to providing a seamless viewing experience akin to watching live TV, Yospace delivered a personalised advertising experience by providing a stream unique to each viewer. The server-side ad replacement platform was launched across live channels on All 4 – Channel 4, E4, More4, Film4 and 4seven – in November last year, allowing Channel 4 to make use of its extensive user data to drive revenue.

Yospace's encoders are tightly linked to automation systems to allow ad markers to be placed accurately at the beginning and end of breaks. The system is integrated with ad server provider FreeWheel, with Yospace's technology polling the ad server for new adverts that are then transcoded to match the profile of the relevant Channel 4 live stream, making transitions from the stream to the replacement ads invisible to viewers. FreeWheel's ad decision system then chooses which ads to deliver to each viewer.

## Ziggo & Liberty Global for TV Française

TV apps have liberated viewing from the closed world of limited channel choices delivered over broadcast. TV Française, the French-language bouquet delivered as a TV app on Liberty Global's Horizon TV platform is a prime example of how IP-based delivery of content is changing the nature of the distribution game.

TV Française allows the delivery of eight linear TV channels, including two in HD quality over IP to Horizon boxes deployed by Liberty Global's Dutch operator Ziggo. The use of an app to deliver the service means that Ziggo has been able to expand the range of its content and cater to this specific audience without any impact on its DVB-C transmission network. Capacity challenges previously led Ziggo to remove French language channels from its regular broadcast network, leading to protests from French speakers in the Netherlands.

Ziggo teamed up with development teams from parent company Liberty Global to create a dedicated app for the Horizon platform, making more content available than before.

One in four potential customers now use the app, with 60% using it more than once a week.

The app offers access to eight French channels - Arte & France 2 in HD, and France 3, 4, 5, Ô, France 24 and TV5Monde in SD.

The app is based on a template, enabling Ziggo to extend the concept to other minority language groups in the future, something it says is being considered.

## Best Content Distributor



### Armoza Formats

One of Israel's premier television companies, Armoza has carved a niche in both format sales and development. Key talent format *I Can Do That!* (above) was named as one of TV industry analyst The Wit's top formats at the 2015/16 MIPFormats event earlier this year, while new series *Marry Me Now* has been licensed into eight territories in six months.

### Content Television



Content Media Corp's television distribution arm has been selling one of TV's hottest international dramas. *Line of Duty*, whose third season for BBC Two was a critical and ratings smash.

The series has taken multiple awards and will now transfer to flagship UK channel BBC One.

The series has sold into 195 territories and has been commissioned for fourth and fifth seasons.

### Endemol Shine International

Growing internationally-produced scripted programming has been a focus for Endemol Shine Group's distribution division.

It launched Turkish novella *Intersection* (below) at MIPTV, and sold Israel secret service drama *Mossad 101* to Turner Broadcasting Latin America in June. Additionally, the company has shopped a local version of *MasterChef* to the new Sky 1 channel in Germany.



### Global Agency

Izzet Pinto's Istanbul-based sales outfit has continued to make headlines, despite the political unrest in Turkey.

The company, which has been at the forefront of Turkish drama's global export boom, held a three-day celebration-meets-screenings event this summer in a bid to drum up more interest in its content; and went big in marketing its in-house talent show *The Legend* at MIPTV. Other Global Agency distributed content includes *Magnificent Century*, *1001 Nights*, *Keep Your Light Shining* (below), *Perfect Bride* and *Shopping Monsters*.



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## Q&A: Steven Hirsch, Vivid Entertainment

Steven Hirsch, founder and co-chairman of Vivid Entertainment, talks about the adult programmer's European channel and the needs of the European market

### ***What are your goals for VividTV Europe for the coming year?***

In the US, VividTV has the highest buy and success rates of all adult channels. We would of course love to see a similar effect in Europe and therefore we will put all our efforts into constantly improving the channel so that it will appeal to European audiences. Our concept is unique in that we come up with new trends and the market generally follows us. We want VividTV to be *the* channel that operators choose and not just one more adult channel on the market.

### ***What is the strategy behind the launch of Vivid Touch and the planned launch of a third channel?***

Vivid Touch is a soft erotic linear channel that serves either markets that take only softer channels, or those that want to include a soft erotic channel in their wider tiers, which not only has a nice appeal to subscribers but also can serve to promote the more explicit Vivid TV Europe channel that they carry. Vivid Touch offers a strong mix of top soft erotic features from the US and Europe as well as softer versions of some of our top Celebrity Sex Tapes and other best selling features. We will soon launch a third channel that will offer a bold twist to linear adult channels and will feature the best content from top producers in Europe.

### ***What is your view for the overall opportunity for distribution in Europe and what kind of distribution partnerships make sense for Vivid in this market? What can you offer to distribution partners?***

We have a great product – an iconic label that has been around for over 30 years and a strong desire to develop Vivid TV into Europe's Number One channel. We are very serious in pursuing a win/win situation with the operators by offering them a product that they are lacking in their line-up and being a reliable partner to help increase their distribution and revenue.

### ***To what extent is localisation key to the channels' appeal, and what are the key differences between marketing an adult channel in Europe compared with the US market?***

The content is different. What appeals to the American viewer does not necessarily excite the European subscriber. Our European Team has experience in this field for nearly two decades and knows what content works in which countries. We have lots of European content on our channels and are considering localisation in certain territories. Because of this, we are creating marketing programmes tailored to each country's needs and tastes.

### ***What is the relative importance of the linear channel alongside video-on-demand content and is VOD complementary to linear TV or a substitute for it?***

VOD is not a substitute for linear channels but rather an alternative way of offering our products to consumers. A significant number of operators like to package a sort of SVOD offering for those consumers who take the linear channel. Other operators look at VOD as a way to earn additional revenue as it allows consumers an easy and quick way to view a movie they may have missed when it was scheduled on the linear channel, or that they want to see again enjoying all the features that VOD allows.

### ***What other growth opportunities have you identified and how important are the channels, digital distribution and product licensing respectively to the future of the business?***

There is a comprehensive array of Vivid products out there. All of our channels are very important to us and we are continuously launching more channels to serve operator and viewer needs. We are working on some interesting projects and we'll announce details in the near future. Stay tuned!

## Best New Channel Launch

### Africanews

Launched in early 2016, Africanews prides itself on being the first 24/7 pan-African news channel, available in English and French across major media platforms. From launch, the service was available in 11.5 million homes across 33 countries thanks to alliances with pay TV platforms. In addition, several national channels have teamed up with Africanews, and will broadcast part of its output – examples being Canal 2 Info in Cameroon, MBC in Mauritius, Ouest TV in Senegal and RTA in Madagascar.

As a sister channel to Euronews, Africanews adheres to the same editorial principles: freedom of expression and editorial independence. Its goal is to cover African and international news from a pan-African perspective. It is funded through a mix of advertising, distribution, production and partnerships revenues. Advertisers include MTN Congo, Brussels Airlines, the hotel chain Accor Africa and Madagascar Fair International.

Michael Peters, CEO of Euronews, initiated the Africanews project in 2013. He says: “Africa is a land of opportunities. But why can’t we hear what Africans have to say on African affairs, and on world affairs too? The demand for unbiased news is unmet. There is a gap to fill. We launched Africanews to pioneer independent news from the African perspective.”

### AMC

AMC in the UK launched in August 2015, to coincide with the global premiere of *Fear the Walking Dead* (below). Available exclusively on the BT TV platform, the UK channel launch was part of AMC Networks’ aggressive international expansion strategy. As part of its editorial proposition, *Fear The Walking Dead*’s premiere was aired just minutes after its first broadcast in the US.

Launching AMC in the UK was accomplished with a multi-pronged campaign. Key activities included an extensive PR ramp up and a diversified marketing campaign. According to AMC, it collaborated with BT TV, leveraging their expertise in promoting live sports and

engaging their existing viewers, and BT call centre staff to help reach prospective audiences.

AMC used the premiere of *Fear the Walking Dead* to drive external messaging with audiences. In addition, an on-air campaign revolved around a promotion dubbed ‘storyteller’, produced with creative agency Holman+Hunt. Bryan Cranston (*Breaking Bad*) was key to this, and his attention-grabbing delivery was shown heavily on BT Sport, BT’s Showcase channel and social media. Besides digital media, the marketing campaign included outdoor and PR. Activation included a launch event with experiential elements and guerrilla stunts at London’s Waterloo Station and other key landmarks.

### TRT World



For over 50 years, TRT has been at the heart of Turkish media. Today, it has 14 TV channels and 18 radio stations, broadcasting in Arabic, Azeri, Kurdish, English and Turkish.

The launch of TRT World in October 2015 was a landmark move, expanding TRT’s global reach and audience. According to TRT, “TRT World aims to contribute fresh perspectives to how stories are reported, to give as many voices as possible the chance to be heard. Our ambition is to deliver international news with a 360-degree perspective, to ignite compassion and empower action, and to champion journalistic excellence.”

A 24/7 service, TRT World says its focus is on “the people living the news we report. This field-first approach aims to inspire change by empathising with our audience. Our in-depth reporting gets to the heart of every story, live on location.”

TRT adds: “Over the last 12 months, TRT World has been at the heart of all major international events such as the Turkish election, the G20 Antalya Summit, the Syrian civil war, the Mediterranean refugee crisis, Ankara and Istanbul Ataturk International Airport terrorist attacks and the failed military coup. It also covered the Paris and Nice attacks, Brexit from across the UK and is closely reporting on the US elections.”



## Best Series Launch of the Year

### All3Media International for *The Brokenwood Mysteries*

The Prime TV detective drama became a key acquisition for France 3 after a wine tasting event supported by the network and the New Zealand embassy in France helped it to a total audience of 3.6 million viewers with a 16.7% share across four episodes, which was up nearly 5% on the slot average

### Fox UK for *Outcast*



Fox's first internationally-produced drama, from *The Walking Dead*'s Robert Kirkman, truly became a TV event in the UK, where a huge marketing campaign included a digital-first debut on Facebook Live, affiliate support, a mural stunt, interactive website, and a Comic Con talent panel in London

### ITV Studios Global Entertainment for *Love Island*

The second season of ITV2's reality romance series set records in the UK, with 3.6% share, pulling shares of up to 20% of 16-34s. It became a trending topic on social media, and a dedicated app took 700,00 downloads and 5.7 million video views.

### Keshet International for *The A Word*



With autism woven into the BBC series' storyline, producer Tiger Aspect worked with advocacy groups to create a launch campaign backed by influential community figures. Positive reviews preceded strong ratings (average 5.5 million viewers) and social media engagement.

### Scripps Networks Interactive for *Paul Hollywood's City Bakes*

A significant, integrated marketing campaign – Food Network UK's largest ever investment of the kind – helped PHCB become Food Network UK's biggest original, with the slot average driven up 174%. Consolidated viewing figures increased ratings by 51%

### Zodiak Rights for *Versailles*

The Anglo-French period drama became Canal+'s best original since 2013. Anticipation built through a marketing campaign and a press event that saw selected writers taken to the lavish sets near Paris. Delegates who attended at MIPTV screening received a 250-page hardcover book about the palace's creation



## Breakout International Drama

### Beta Film for NSU: German History X



A miniseries that follows the real-life events surrounding the far-right Bosphorus serial murders in 1990s Germany. Netflix acquired SVOD rights in the UK, US, Canada, Ireland, Australia and New Zealand after the Wiedemann & Berg-produced 3x90mins series rated well on ARD.

### Fox Networks Group for 11.22.63

A Hulu-created drama in which teacher Jake Epping is sent back in time to prevent the assassination of President John F. Kennedy. With names such as Stephen King, J.J. Abrams and Kevin Macdonald attached, Fox swooped to acquire rights in 18 territories, including the UK where it debuted to 695,000 viewers.

### Gaumont Television for Narcos

The Netflix original, which charts the rise and fall of Colombian drugs kingpin Pablo Escobar, has been a critical hit. Though the streaming service refuses to release ratings data, Parrot Analytics has claimed it would have been cable TV's second-biggest show if traditionally measured.



### ITV Studios Global Entertainment for Poldark



The romantic period drama was a ratings hit in the UK on BBC Two and PBS Masterpiece in the US, where it became the highest-rated drama since *Downton Abbey*. Thanks in part to a shirtless Aiden Turner, the series has sold into more than 50 territories.

### Warp Films, Haut et Court for The Last Panthers

The crime drama, about a group of European jewel thieves, has international in its DNA, being a UK-Franco coproduction airing on pay TV platforms Sky and Canal+. Distributors Sky Vision and Studiocanal have shopped the six-partner into 122 territories worldwide.



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## Channel of the Year

### FOX UK



The last year has seen FOX cement its position as a favourite with UK pay TV audiences. Home to shows like *NCIS* and *The Walking Dead*, it has grown its average all-day ratings eight years running.

The channel underwent a rebrand in 2013 from FX to FOX – a move that reinforced its growth trajectory. In 2015 the channel was 25% bigger than in 2011 and now claims to be three-times the size of Sky Atlantic. FOX says February 2016 was its best ever month, with an average audience of 53,000. This made it the second biggest pay TV entertainment channel, ahead of Sky Living, Sky Atlantic, Comedy Central and GOLD, according to the company.

*The Walking Dead* has been supported by companion *Talking Dead* and drama acquisitions such as *Marvel's Agent Carter*, *Wayward Pines*, *Da Vinci's Demons* and *11.22.63* (above). Animation has also been a key focus with FOX recently retaining the rights to *Family Guy* and *American Dad!*. The channel increased its ratings as a result and has differentiated itself from BBC3 and ITV2's animated comedy nights. This was encapsulated by the channel's 'Funny As FOX' campaign.

### Gusto TV

Canadian food channel Gusto TV is all about real people cooking real food. While other food channels emphasise competition programmes, Gusto TV says it is doing the opposite: "Instead of hot dog wars and baited team battles, Gusto takes viewers on culinary journeys and showcases talented chefs and home cooks. We air fascinating food



travel shows from countries across the globe. We also air beautiful cooking shows with a diverse line-up of hosts, including awe-inspiring professional chefs and endearing home cooks."

Proof that the channel is doing something right is the fact that it was acquired by Bell Media in May 2016, just three years after launch. At time of writing, Gusto TV – which is broadcast in HD – has an audience reach of close to one million Canadians every month, and often ranks in the top 10 female-oriented specialty pay networks in Canada. It does especially well at retention.

Chris Knight, president and CEO of Gusto Worldwide Media says: "In 2013 we launched Gusto TV as an innovative and nimble independent network. In 2016 we partnered with Bell Media, guaranteeing Gusto TV's continued domestic success. Our goal is to build Gusto into a global brand recognised for quality entertaining lifestyle content for multiple platforms."

### The QYOU



The QYOU curates high-quality, short-form content and packages it for delivery through its ad-free, 24/7 linear channel and via VOD. Thanks to YouTube, short-form content has gone mainstream and become the most-viewed type of video on the planet. While this new breed of content was previously almost exclusively available online, The QYOU stepped in "to bring internet culture to the living room."

In terms of approach, The QYOU teams up with MCNs and innovative content creators to repackage the best of online video for the TV Everywhere world. Since Q3 2015 it has announced a number of new deployments, including with Ziggo Sports in the Netherlands, Telenor in Norway, and Fox Sports across numerous European countries. Deals like this, says The QYOU team, are evidence that subscription TV providers want to evolve their services in line with consumer trends. According to The QYOU, its business model breaks down the barriers between old and new media and paves the way for the entertainment industry to offer more integrated and flexible TV formats. Already in 30 countries, new equity funding will support further expansion, across the US, LATAM, APAC and untapped European markets.

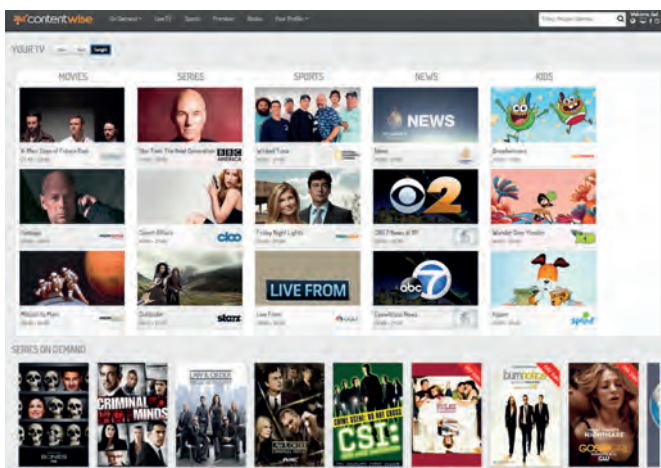
## Content Discovery Technology Award

### ADB for ADB graphyne2



ADB's next generation graphyne2 software is aimed at service providers that want to deliver video to TVs, mobile devices and computers. The client device and backend software suite offers a personalised and user-friendly interface for easy access to content, with users able to switch between video-on-demand, over-the-top and linear channels. On set-top boxes the UX runs by default on top of the graphyne2 OS middleware and operating system, on mobile devices the multiscreen UX is converted to a native app, while other use-cases are covered by HTML5 software.

### ContentWise for ContentWise 6.0



Personalisation specialist ContentWise aims to further automate and tailor viewers' TV experience with its latest software release. Contentwise 6.0 introduces real-time indexing and auto-layouts and can be used to drive TV operators' client UI and autonomously decide in real-time what each viewer should see on their home screen. Launched at IBC this year, the software aims to take the pay TV, broadcast and over-the-top industries closer to delivering a one-to-one entertainment experience.

### FUNKE Digital TV Guide for Content Discovery API



FUNKE Digital TV Guide developed its Content Discovery API in partnership with XroadMedia to provide a range of video filtering and sorting options. The API provides tools for content discovery, search, navigation, recommendation and personalisation. Service providers can access standard and advanced EPG features, from basic search to personalised content recommendations. The discovery API also offers a wide range of solutions for navigating linear and non-linear video content and catch-up catalogues on connected devices.

### Ostmodern for Maxdome

Digital product designer Ostmodern partnered with Maxdome to help overhaul the German streaming provider's video-on-demand platform. The collaboration resulted in a completely redesigned Maxdome, improved user experience and a new editorial-led approach to complement Maxdome's existing automated recommendation engine. The new approach focused on editorial recommendations to help drive content discovery, surface more of Maxdome's content library and help reduce churn across the platform. This came after Maxdome's preliminary research indicated that even the most advanced automated content discovery algorithms could not satisfy the search requirements of users. Ostmodern's involvement began in December 2015 and the project was delivered in five months.



## Industry Innovator of the Year

### Danone for Dino Adventures Series



### Keshet International

Keshet International (KI) is Keshet Media Group's (KMG's) global distribution and production arm. An innovator in television and digital media, it says it benefits from having Israeli roots, which means Keshet assets have grown up in a "startup nation" where technology is eagerly integrated into everyday life.

Examples of Keshet's innovation include real-time voting show *Rising Star*, which has aired in twelve territories, gameshow *BOOM!* and *Touch*, a new concept, that again promises to transform viewer engagement and interactivity.

According to KI, *Touch* is a piece of IP built using Keshet's new cloud-based app generator Mako Tools, which offers broadcasters a suite of features that can be mixed and matched to publish programme-related apps. Mako is Israel's number one video site and also the name of KMG's digital business arm. Mako Tools is an extension of this and allows Keshet's creators and developers to build their own app, taking all the relevant components they require to create digital experiences. Keshet now has an international version.

Keren Shahar (below), chief operating officer and president, distribution, says: "We've reached a number of milestones this year; our first Keshet UK co-production, *The A Word*, has been a huge success on BBC One and internationally. We've also substantially grown our catalogue as well as extending our global footprint."



### MP & Silva

MP & Silva is a leading international media company that owns, manages and distributes television and media rights to some of the most prestigious sports events around the world. These include the FIFA World Cup, English Premier League and NFL.

One of the company's biggest innovations recently has been the use of a cloud-based content delivery solution to maximise NFL exposure in Europe. "We revolutionised traditional NFL delivery, enabling broadcasters to receive HD quality broadcast content directly," according to the company.

Benefits identified by the company include end to end coordination, a fully-redundant delivery with dual ISP connectivity, low latency, an HD-SDI hand-off, complete end-to-end coordination, management and support, the presence of an engineer onsite at the broadcaster's facility to assist with the installation of hardware and the availability of test materials on a 24/7 loop-up to the start of the NFL season.

Use of the system has been accompanied by television audiences for the NFL in Europe growing dramatically for the 2015-16 season compared with the prior year.

### Newstag

Newstag is a mobile-first business that allows end-users to create their own news video channels, called tagstreams. The service is based on a technical platform that ingests and curates thousands of news stories daily. Users are then invited to select the tags they are interested in to create their own channel, which is continuously updating and playable on any screen.

Among potential business models, Newstag gives brands the opportunity to acquire tags – for example, Siemens may want to be associated with cleantech and will be displayed alongside such stories. However, users also have the flexibility to choose their own advertising, endorsing brands they find relevant.

Newstag wants its business model to be a partnership with established news providers and has agreements in place with the likes of CNN, CCTV, AP and Reuters. It says that funding professional journalism is central to its mission. The service launched in June 2015 and is now in 200 countries. Some 300,000 tagstreams are initiated a month and it has 700,000 monthly users

### Sky Italia for GAIA

Pay TV broadcaster Sky Italia teamed up with NTT Data to create a video filter that could be used to improve live encoding and deliver a better video signal for live streams.

The problem the technology – commercialised under the name GAIA – addresses is the perceived gap in quality-to-bitrate ratio between live and offline content encoded using the AVC or HEVC compression formats. GAIA uses a range of special techniques to produce a better outcome. The technology has been used effectively by Sky Italia to deliver coverage of live football.



# Where News Inspires Change

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## Most Innovative Digital Project

### CSG International for CSG Ascendon Digital

European electronics manufacturer, Media-Saturn, turned to CSG International to help extend its physical shops with a new digital store called JUKE. Powered by the CSG Ascendon Digital platform, JUKE offers more than 30 million songs, 15,000 movies and TV series, 1.5 million e-books, as well as 2,400 PC games and PC software applications – all of which can be launched digitally by using free apps or the JUKE website. CSG Ascendon Digital is CSG's digital services platform, designed for communications service providers, broadcasters, studios and retailers to launch, scale and monetise new digital services.

### Kindle Entertainment for Dixi:3 – Game of Dixi



*Dixi:3 – Game of Dixi* is the third instalment of online children's drama series, Dixi. A Kindle Entertainment production for CBBC, and the BBC's first online kids drama, *Dixi* is a cyber mystery series that plays out in the world of social networking. The story takes place across twice-daily, three minute webisodes which are uploaded to a specially created social networking site, also called Dixi, accessible on PCs, tablets and mobile phones. The series is targeted at kids aged six to 14 and is designed to respond to how young people use the internet and share information, while promoting online safety and responsible use of the web.

### Mahindra Comviva for Mooditt Digital Store

Mooditt Digital Store is a cloud-based platform for content discovery and distribution. The store is designed to act as a "one-stop shop" for content publishers and buyers. Content owners can post content spanning video, music, games, audio, images and e-books to the store. Once approved by Mahindra Comviva's admin team, telecom and



TV operators, media houses and application providers can buy the content rights. The platform allows content makers to earn money and distribution channels to get content that it can provide to customers.

### Mood for Magazines for LINDA.tv

Mood for Magazines, the publisher of Dutch magazine LINDA, and website LINDAnieuws.nl, launched spin-off video site LINDA.tv as a home for short films about people and their extraordinary stories. The female-focused service was set up to respond to the increase in smartphone video viewing and the decrease in linear TV consumption among its target audience of women aged 20-49. LINDA.tv launched in October 2015 as both a website and a mobile app and videos are free to view once users register with the service.

### WildEarth for SafariLIVE

WildEarth and Nat Geo Wild partnered to produce *SafariLIVE*, a web series that offers viewers a real-time glimpse of African wildlife. The live series offers viewers daily footage of sunrise and sunset safaris, allowing them to follow the unfolding narratives of Africa's animals, such as lions and elephants. The show is unscripted and unplanned, offering an authentic insight into the African bush, and is available to stream online for free.



## OTT TV Initiative of the Year

### RLJ Entertainment for Acorn TV



RLJ Entertainment's Acorn TV is a North American streaming service that provides TV "from Britain and beyond". With a focus on UK programming, the SVOD service has this year featured US premieres of British series including drama *Suspects*, miniseries *Cilla* and comedy *Raised by Wolves*. While Acorn TV was originally launched in 2011, the service has doubled its subscriber base in the past year and in 2015 became the first niche streaming company to receive an Emmy nomination for the final episode of *Agatha Christie's Poirot*, *Curtain: Poirot's Final Case*, in the outstanding television movie category.

### Curzon for Curzon Home Cinema

UK cinema chain Curzon branched into digital with the launch of pay-per-view streaming platform Curzon Home Cinema. The addition of the 'virtual cinema' gives the 85-year old brand the ability to reach film lovers at home, with films available online at the same time as their theatrical release.

Through Curzon Cinemas, Curzon Home Cinema and film distribution business Curzon Artificial Eye, the company has an integrated cinema and content business. Curzon Home Cinema features new releases alongside curated collections of films and, two years after it moved out of beta, is now available in seven million homes both online and via affiliate deals with BT TV, Virgin Media TiVo, Amazon Fire TV, Samsung Smart TV and Freesat Freetime.



### NBCUniversal International for Hayu

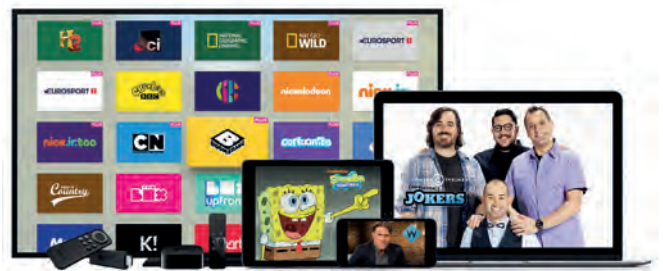
NBCUniversal launched Hayu in March 2016 as a subscription video-on-demand service dedicated to reality TV. The OTT offering includes more than 3,000 episodes of shows such as *Keeping Up with the Kardashians* and *Made in Chelsea* with more than 500 episodes to be added each year. Hayu is currently available in the UK, Ireland and Australia and offers full episodes alongside short-form content snippets and newsfeeds covering the shows and talent featured.

### Reuters for Reuters TV

In 2014 Reuters set about rethinking its video news output for the mobile age. Reuters TV was designed to respond to a change in media consumption habits and tap into Reuters' network of 2,500 journalists in 160 countries, who create exclusive content for the service. Built by an internal startup company, formed by Thomson Reuters, the Reuters TV app launched on iPhone in 2015 and has since expanded to iPad, Apple TV, Android devices and the web.

### Simplestream for TVPlayer Plus

TVPlayer Plus is the subscription tier of UK over-the-top TV offering TVPlayer. The live streaming service lets users watch more than 99



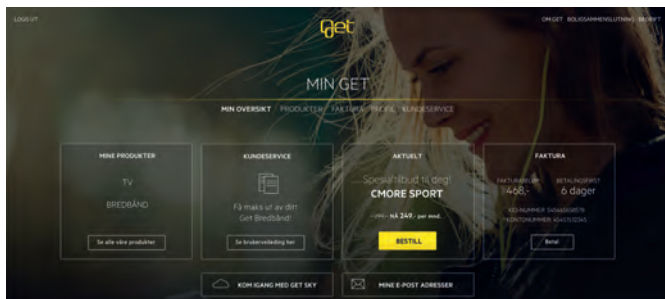
channels, including more than 30 premium channels not available on Freeview. TVPlayer Plus is on track for significant subscriber growth this year. Available across a range of devices, it was developed by video solutions provider Simplestream, but recently demerged from its parent and raised £5 million in a funding round led by A+E Networks.

### V-Nova for Fastfilmz, powered by V-Nova Perseus

Indian content provider Fastfilmz launched a video streaming service for both 2G and 3G mobile phone with the help of technology provided by V-Nova. Fastfilmz used V-Nova's cloud-based Perseus SDK compression solution for the over-the-top mobile service, targeting the 120 million Tamil speakers in India living in broadband and cash-constrained communities. Fastfilmz and V-Nova were able to distribute SD quality at sub-audio bit-rates, with the lowest profile just 120kbps for video and audio, over 2G networks that 70% of the region's consumers use for web access.

## Pay TV Initiative of the Year

### Get for Get.no customer self-service portal



Customer service management remains a problematic area for video service providers – the source of much of their operating costs and much discontent on the part of their customers. Getting customers to manage as much of the customer service journey themselves as possible is therefore a key goal for operators. However, this can be fraught with difficulty and a source of even greater frustration if mishandled.

Norwegian cable operator Get has addressed the problem by creating a new self-service portal that allows customers to self-manage their entire lifecycle within the company's service offering. Subscribers can upgrade their service, add and change the content they receive as part of their channel packages and terminate their contract. The portal also enables them to manage problems with a high and increasing degree of automation of problem-solving. The company's ultimate goal is to create a service that is completely automated with the exception of a handful of particularly challenging requests.

### Vodafone Group for Vodafone TV

The use of cloud technology to transform the economics and functionality of what has traditionally been known as IPTV is still at a relatively early phase. Some of what is possible has however been realised by Vodafone, which launched a cloud-based TV service offering live TV, DVR, OTT, VOD and search – and the country's first 4K UHD TV service – in Spain earlier this year.

Vodafone Spain's TV service is designed to get customers to the content they want in as little time and with as little effort as possible. The service includes a premium live TV experience on multiple screens. However, Vodafone's new 4K UHD TV hybrid set-top lies at the heart of the service. The box enables viewers to pause or rewind live TV as well as easily access catch-up content from the last seven days via only a couple of keys on the remote.

For Vodafone, its UI is at the heart of the innovation, providing a fluid connection between the linear and non-linear domains. The system provides a single integrated view of content across both live and on-demand, rentals and purchases, recordings, Netflix and third-party apps.

The service is available on mobile devices, with all a subscriber's content, recommendations and recordings available for viewing where they left off on iOS and Android mobile devices.

### DBS Satellite Services for Game of Thrones Pop-up channel on yes

Delivering 'pop-up' channels around specific events or programmes has been held up as a key benefit of changing channel creation economics, but has been relatively little used by service providers so far.

Israeli satellite TV service provider yes saw an opportunity to deliver additional value based on the popularity of *Game of Thrones*. The pop-up channel launched to accompany the debut of the sixth season of the show in April offered a marathon airing of all episodes from the first five seasons, alongside additional content to provide additional value.

Yes promoted the channel with activity around the series and by using short-form pieces of content to promote as well as to populate the channel itself. Additional content on the channel included DVD extra-type material such as behind-the-scenes footage, interviews, commentary and run-throughs of iconic episodes, and trivia facts. Original content produced by yes itself included an 'entertainment news' magazine show featuring the show's fictional characters.



### Ziggo for Replay TV

Liberty Global-owned Dutch cable operator Ziggo's Replay TV service is an example of how cloud technology is continuing to transform the TV experience.

The service allows viewers to restart shows that have started airing on linear TV as well as to catch up on shows that have been aired over the last seven days.

The Replay TV function can be launched direct from the linear EPG. The service is available via Ziggo's Horizon TV advanced set-top boxes as well as via the Horizon Go mobile TV service and via the web.

Ziggo says that Replay TV, which launched in April last year, has been the fastest growing TV service the company has launched to date. Replay TV is supported by up to 60 channels, over half of which are HD services, with availability depending on individual users' subscriptions. Ziggo records the programmes of participating channels, making the content available immediately after it airs.

To support the service, Ziggo built a complete cloud TV infrastructure in partnership with its parent company that has liberated customers from the need to schedule recordings on their individual DVRs.

## Power Behind the Screen Award

### CTU Systems Ltd for Eludo Payout System

Bandwidth is a key cost for any broadcaster or online content provider. The cost of streaming services over the internet can rapidly escalate as services become more popular, and managing this is of crucial importance.

Any technology that allows video providers to save bandwidth is likely therefore to be welcomed with open arms.

Payout systems provider Eludo says it has seen bandwidth savings of 90% or greater from its system, which enables operators to stream only those channels that are being watched at any given time.

A stream requested by a hotel guest will be detected by Eludo and any other guest requesting the same stream will be served from the system's memory rather than have a new stream be delivered from the server.

The system provides functionality including timeshift and start-over.

### Harmonic for Harmonic VOS Cloud

Moving video delivery to the cloud is a clear goal of service providers looking to reduce capital and operating expenditure.

Harmonic's VOS Cloud is an extension of the video technology company's VOS software-based video processing technology that enables content and service providers to manage the entire video production and delivery workflow for broadcast and OTT delivery using standard hardware hosted using a public or private cloud infrastructure.

Harmonic says that its 'cloud-native' system allows content and service providers to manage their entire production and delivery workflow from the cloud.

The technology supports the key applications that are central to modern TV services' appeal – time-shift TV, VOD and cloud-based DVR – without requiring large upfront capital expenditure. Harmonic's pay-as-you-go pricing model enables operators to start

small and build up their business. Services can be launched quickly and efficiently with minimum fuss.

The company claims that OTT providers can use it to launch a new OTT service in hours. VOS Cloud can also be used to get a service up and running while a permanent on-premises infrastructure is being built.

The platform is underpinned by Harmonic's PURE compression engine, which the company says helps operators keep CDN costs down by delivering high quality video at low bitrates.

VOS Cloud was launched in April and is currently in trials in a number of Openstack and public cloud deployments around the world.

### IBM for IBM Cloud Video Streaming Solution's partnership with Comic-Con HQ

Comic-Con International and Lionsgate launched the Comic-Con HQ streaming service in Beta on May 7 to mark Free Comic Book Day. The Comic-Con HQ subscription video-on-demand service was designed to enable Comic-Con's large fan base to view Comic-Con HQ events all year round.

Fans who signed up for the public beta were offered free access to the service throughout the San Diego Comic-Con event in July. The service initially launched in the US via the web and iOS and Android devices, before launching on Roku, Apple TV, PS4 and Microsoft devices later.

The service turned to IBM to provide its Cloud Video platform to support delivery of the service.

IBM's global reach was part of the appeal. The system can support streaming with billing and subscriber management in multiple currencies and languages.

The streaming technology also allows customers to provide tailored packages and promotions targeted at specific demographic groups and regions.

In addition to offering the ability to reach multiple screens with live and on-demand video, IBM Cloud Video's data provides usable insights to operators about users' behaviour.

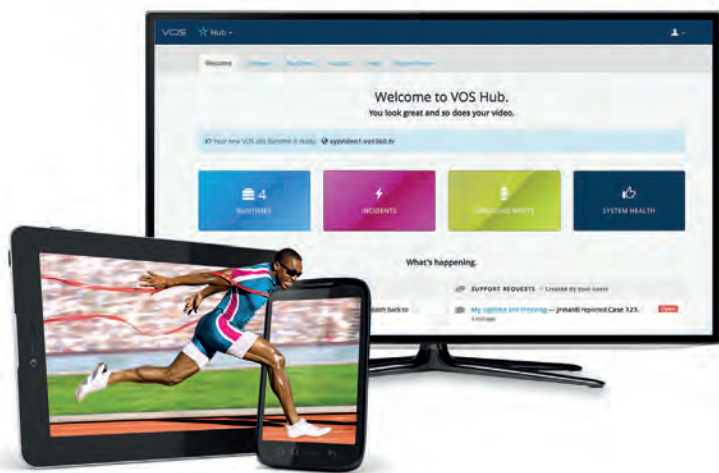
### Net Insight for Sye

Live streaming has been a key trend in 2016, with high-profile sports events including the Olympics driving interest among content rights-holders and the public alike.

Live streaming over unmanaged networks is however a challenging business – particularly when it comes to time sensitive subject matter such as sport.

Fans seeing a crucial goal moments after their neighbours have given the game away by issuing a loud cheer or groan is the most obvious case in point.

Technology providers have therefore been focusing much effort on eliminating the latency – or lag between the live broadcast and the OTT stream – that has bedevilled live sports on [Continued >](#)



## Power Behind the Screen Award (continued)

the web. Net Insight's contribution is Sye, which the company says allows live content to be streamed with frame-accurate synchronisation across any screen including linear broadcast TV.

As well as tackling the kind of problem outlined above, Sye has the potential to change the way second screens are used, enabling audiences to share live experiences and interact by synchronising the OTT stream with the broadcast delivery of sports events.

Net Insight has developed a virtualised software technology that can be deployed over private, public or mixed clouds with the terminating part of the solution being a client software development kit (SDK) that can be embedded into apps with pre-support for the most popular iOS and Android devices. The SDK includes a player that decodes and renders live video.

According to Per Lindgren, Net insight's co-founder and SVP, strategy and business development, previous attempts to deliver live OTT suffered from CDNs being optimised for catch-up and video-on-demand content, while Net Insight has created a "virtual CDN optimised for live delivery and ingest".

Net Insight signed up Tata Communications as its first public customer for Sye at the end of last year.

### Nice People at Work for Youbora Analytics

Quality of Experience is increasingly seen as a crucial part of the OTT TV mix. Gone are the days when online video consumers were happy to sit through buffering and frozen frames while awaiting their online video fix.

Nice People at Work (NPAW) have provided Youbora Analytics to address this need. The product delivers business intelligence to broadcasters, OTT companies and other media outlets to support their decision-making process.

The product comes with a set of modules: SmartSwitch, SmartTracking, SmartAlerts, SmartReports, and SmartAds. These take raw data collected by Youbora and present it in ways that content owners can make practical use of.

According to the company, Youbora gathers data in samples every five minutes – which is then consolidated on a minute-by-minute basis, to create real-time and historic data that be turned into insights to take action on.

According to NPAW, this approach enables it to look at issues in more detail giving operators better control over the QoE of users.

Youbora's SmartTracking system can collect and display a complete profile of each individual video session, including any disturbances in the stream such as reported errors and buffer events.

### Reuters TV for Reuters TV

Mobile devices have transformed most aspects of life over the past decade, and the way we consume news is no exception.

As people have turned more and more to their mobile phones to get updates on what's happening, Thomson Reuters has responded

by developing a cross-platform service that taps into its network of 2,500 journalists in 160 countries, who create exclusive content for the service.

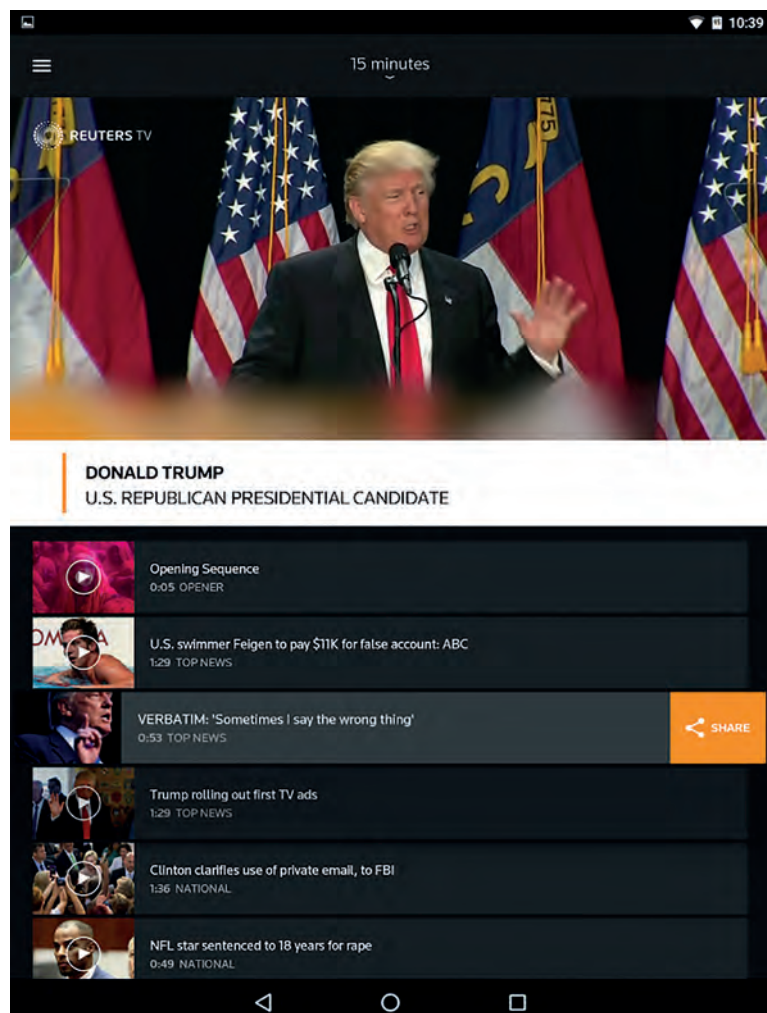
The company formed an internal start-up that hired the necessary staff and built a new video management and delivery infrastructure. The Reuters TV app assembles an on-demand, personalised news channel for each user, algorithmically adjusted to their preferences based on previous viewing behaviour.

The service features a pared-down user interface and limited advertising, with content produced exclusively for Reuters TV.

Content is produced in multiple edit lengths and organized by editorial teams in London, Hong Kong, New York, and Washington DC.

Content is streamed both using HLS and MPEG-DASH adaptive streaming and Reuters TV developed a specific technique to ensure continuity of the stream in MPEG-DASH players.

The service has grown massively in usage since launch, with the number of active users multiplying many times and the number of minutes spent on the service growing dramatically.



THE  
TERROR

HUMANS

MAD MEN

into the  
BADLANDS

HALT AND  
CATCH FIRE

FEAR<sup>TM</sup>  
THE  
WALKING  
DEAD

SOMETHING MORE

amc  
GLOBAL

Series are not available on AMC Global in all territories. Fear the Walking Dead, Into the Badlands, Turn and Halt and Catch Fire are distributed internationally by eOne. Humans is distributed internationally by Endemol Shine.

## Second Screen Experience Technology Award

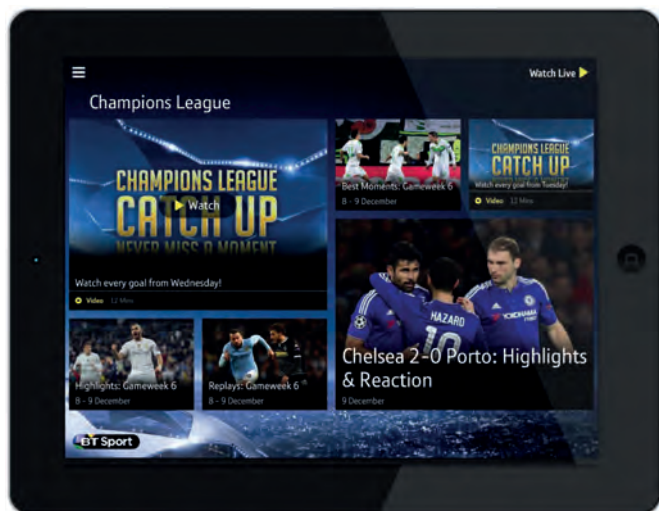
### BT Sport for BT Sport App

Live streaming of sports content is challenging. Delivering a service – including all the interactive and informative trimmings that sports consumers now expect – to multiple devices covering a football match whose drama is unfolding requires a high degree of reliability as well as an intuitive and easy-to-use interface.

BT Sport launched its sports app last year, providing the ability to switch between the many Champions League and Europa League football matches being played simultaneously on any given night.

An interactive timeline gives viewers information about all the significant moments in any game and allows them to track back to see how the action unfolded. The app also provides viewing through multiple camera angles, a vital statistics overlay and goals alerts.

Other features include full-match replays, a catch-up show and dedicated match pages.



The app has been downloaded some five and a half million times since launch and has notched up over 30 million media player views for Champions League and Europa League matches. BT has observed a significant uptick in viewing as a result of the app's availability, with Champions League viewing rising significantly.

### Netgem TV for EETV

For the UK's EE, now owned by BT, Netgem designed a TV experience that was intended to be fully multiscreen from the start.

With features that included Fetch, an innovation that enabled users to take recorded and live programmes with them on to mobile devices, the service is highly mobile-focused. Fetch allows viewers to take content they are watching to a mobile device within the same WiFi network. The related Flick functionality enables users to move content to a second screen devices with a flick of their finger. Content can also be 'flicked' back to the main screen.

Netgem's TV app enables users to control their set-top boxes as



well as viewing content via their mobile devices. The app also enables viewers to see programming information within the app alongside the ability to interact on social media.

Viewers can synchronise their mobile with the TV and see what's playing on other channels and services without interrupting what they are watching. It also includes a function that allows the viewer to select a point to skip back to, rather than having to use the rewind function.

### Orange TV for Apple Watch

Voice search is very much seen as a coming technology and a central element of next-generation content search and navigation.

Orange's TV remote control app for Apple Watch is built with voice search front and centre. Users can request episodes of shows via the app that will then be presented on the main screen.

But in addition to voice, the app comes with a face recognition system that enables it to identify actors and actresses on the screen, enabling viewers to search for other shows or movies featuring actors whose names they may not know.

Voice recognition is provided by Nuance, while facial recognition technology comes via Reminix.



### Red Bull Media House for Digital Opera Guide

Red Bull's Digital Opera Guide was first deployed last year for a production of The Marriage of Figaro at the Salzburg Festival. The second screen browser solution and app is designed to enable viewers to engage with classical music via the provision of additional information and content, and also social features that enable them to share what they are watching with friends and family.

Red Bull's guide does not require an app download, seen as a barrier for short-duration event-based second-screen experiences. The company tapped an IBM-based CDN to manage high traffic volumes and offered broadcasters the opportunity to operate and moderate content and metadata within their existing workflow arrangements.

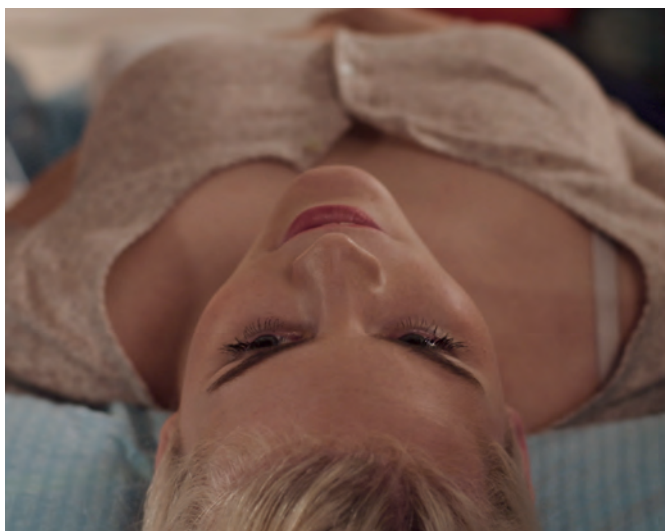
## Social TV Innovation of the Year

### DirecTV for Rock, Paper, Scissors



Rock, Paper, Scissors is one of pay TV operator DirecTV's main corporate social responsibility programmes, which aims to improve schools and sports facilities for children in the Americas. Launched in 2009, the scheme – known as Piedra, Papel, Tijera in Spanish – is active in Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, Puerto Rico, Trinidad and Tobago, the United States, Uruguay and Venezuela. Some 9,247 DirecTV employees – 73% of the company's total workforce – have donated almost 80,000 hours of time volunteering and the scheme has also been the subject of a TV documentary series.

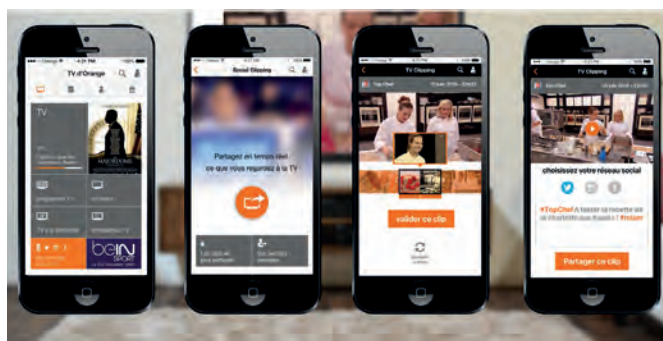
### NRK for Shame



*Shame* is an online drama series from Norwegian public broadcaster NRK. The coming of age high-school drama, which has the tagline 'when young girls grow up', concerns heartbreak, partying and all the challenges young people face as they begin high school and move towards adulthood. *Shame* runs daily online, is published on Instagram, Facebook, Snapchat and other social platforms, and an omnibus episode is published for viewing in browsers and on linear TV each week.

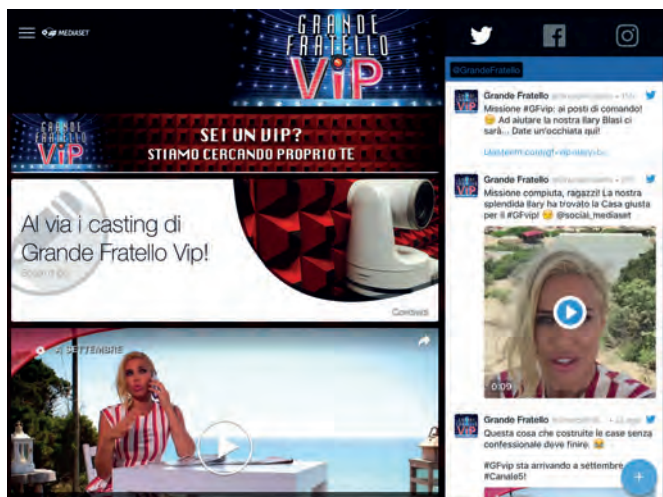
### Orange for TV Clipping

Orange's TV Clipping service is designed to let users 'clip' scenes from TV to share on Facebook, Twitter or Instagram. Using the Orange TV app, viewers are able to see scenes from their TV screen on their smartphone, which can then be posted to social media. Orange developed TV Clipping in partnership with French startup Wildmoka and European multiscreen agency Dotscreen. Targeted at millennial viewers, the service is exclusively available in Europe and was announced in March by Orange's CEO Stéphane Richard as part of an annual innovation keynote speech.



### Piksel for Mediaset app

Piksel worked with Italy's Mediaset to develop a new approach to second screen applications. In partnership with Mediaset's RTI Interactive Media department, Piksel set about designing a solution that would help Mediaset offer its customers an increased range of content and services, specifically tailored to mobile audiences. An updated version of the Mediaset Connect second screen mobile app launched in June 2015 for iOS, Android and Windows and live streaming and video-on-demand content was added to the service in October of the same year.



## The Millennials Award

### Endemol Shine Beyond for AwesomenessTV

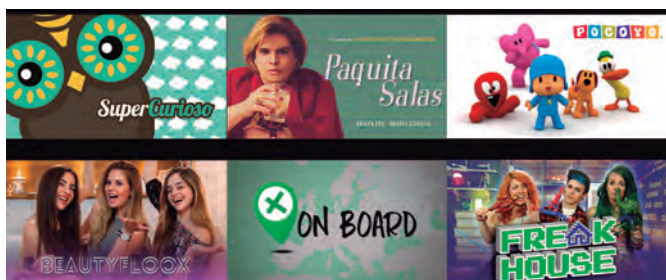


Endemol Shine Beyond teamed up with AwesomenessTV to extend the reach of the youth media brand to key markets outside the US. The pair announced their strategic alliance in October 2015 and earlier this year rolled out localised versions of AwesomenessTV in Brazil, France, Germany, Spain and the UK.

Since launching internationally in March, AwesomenessTV has gained nearly half a million subscribers and 25 million views with the channels continuing to see daily growth in viewers. AwesomenessTV was first founded in the US in 2012 to provide relevant and original online programming for a millennial audience on platforms like YouTube, Snapchat and Facebook, while Endemol Shine Beyond is Endemol Shine Group's digital production and distribution studio that specialises in premium online content and channels.

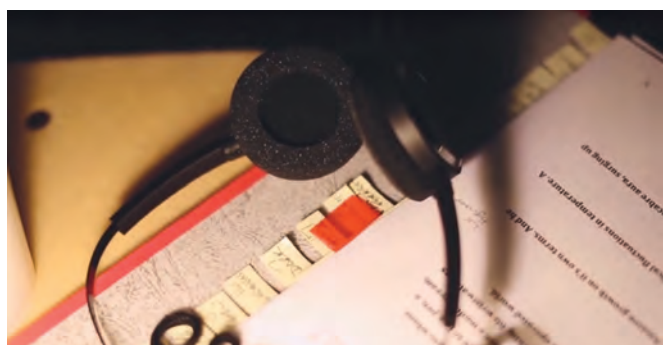
### Atresmedia for Flooxer

Spanish media group Atresmedia's premium online video platform, Flooxer, is designed to bring together the best and most-watched content creators in the Spanish market. Spanish content creators – including popular social stars like AuronPlay and Wismichu – have uploaded some 10,000 premium videos to Flooxer. More than 150 creators and video artists are currently uploading selected content on Flooxer across a wide range of content categories – including series, challenges, literature, sports, stand-up comedy, science and technology, tutorials, health and beauty and music.



### The Space/Complicite for The Encounter Live Stream and VOD

Digital arts commissioner The Space and UK theatre company Complicite worked together to bring stage-show, *The Encounter*, to a wider, younger audience online. Complicite approached The Space for support and funding and the one-man show was live-streamed on YouTube and then hosted on *The Guardian* and other partner websites – including that of the Barbican, where the show was staged.



During a one week transmission window, the play attracted more than 67,500 views with 55% of that audience under the age of 34. *The Encounter* was performed by Complicite's Artistic Director Simon McBurney, and tells the real-life story of a journey into the depths of the Amazon rainforest, inspired by Petru Popescu's book *Amazon Beaming*.

### Whistle Sports for The Whistle Sports Network

Whistle Sports is an online media company that aims to cater to millennial sports fans with shareable, shortform content. Since its launch on New Year's Day in 2014, the Whistle Sports community has grown to more than 400 creators and 200 million total fans and followers – and is growing by an average of two million followers per week. Targeted at a mobile-first audience it aims to connect with videos about traditional, popular sports as well trick-shots and other types of content like juggling and extreme pogo-ing.



## The Multiscreen TV Award

### Edgeware for Edgeware TV CDN

Efficient content delivery remains a major challenge for programmers, operators and content owners. Edgeware's CDN architecture is designed to enable them to stream live TV or VOD over the web to multiple screens via their own private CDN.

The CDN enables streaming over HTTP, broadcast and multicast networks, with content providers able to avoid relying on third-party CDNs and take control of their own content distribution. According to Edgeware, the CDN enables content companies to take control of the quality of distribution while cutting costs significantly.

### Eutelsat for SmartBeam

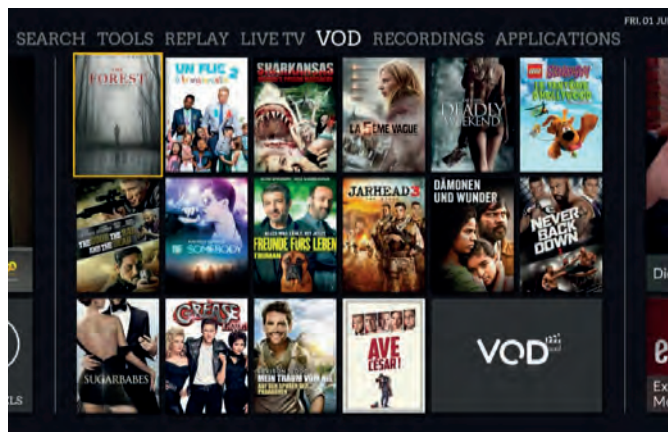
The migration of viewing to non-linear and multiscreen platforms poses a particular challenge for satellite TV, particularly in cases where there is not an opportunity to deploy hybrid satellite-IP boxes that can deliver content via the web as well as via a dish on the roof.

Eutelsat's Canaletto platform is designed to enable delivery of IP content to mobile devices using a combination of satellite and local WiFi distribution. The system can deliver free-to-air and DRM-protected content using a small, low-cost satellite receiver that acts as a local CDN, delivering TV and VOD content via satellite, served locally to mobile phones and tablets over WiFi. The receive side is complemented by a dedicated mobile app.

### Netgem for multiscreen 4K TV solution for Post

Netgem's system for Post Luxembourg uses cloud technology to support the delivery of services to multiple devices live or on-demand. The technology supports services including PostTV Go, the operator's 60-channel mobile TV service. The app can also be used to remotely record programmes and can be used as a remote control.

Swipe functionality enables viewers to flick content from the mobile device they are using to the TV, while NDVR functionality enables Replay, allowing the viewing of content from more than 60 channels for 48 hours after their initial broadcast.

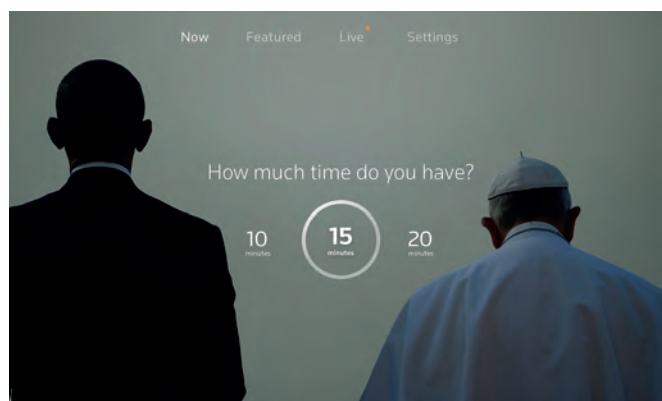


### Perception TV for Perception platform

Video is now everywhere, and fixed and mobile telecom providers need a video offering to complete their service portfolio.

Delivering stable and reliable online TV is challenging and costly. Perception offers a white-label platform that simplifies the delivery of video to the TV and mobile devices, using cloud technology to provide NDVR and VOD services across devices. The system enables the delivery of cloud-based seven-day catch-up TV, with access via a backwards EPG along with live TV, cloud recording and playback and video-on-demand.

### Reuters TV for Reuters TV



Reuters TV is a news service that is available across iPad, Apple TV, Android and the web, having initially launched on iPhone last year. It is built around a flagship service, Reuters Now that enables users to choose any length of programme with content that is personalised for their interests and location.

Reuters TV can be viewed offline, while the web app provides a full-screen video player. The Apple TV app version supplies a big-screen interface that packages content according to the length of time the user has to view it. According to the company, session frequency and length has grown dramatically following the launch of the service.

### Sky Italia for D-Zero

OTT TV has suffered from latency – the gap in time between the original broadcast and playback – that is problematic for viewing live events – especially sports.

Pay TV operator Sky Italia has worked with NTT Data to provide a live OTT TV solution that delivers an experience more akin to what viewers have come to expect from satellite TV.

D-Zero deploys an origin server that uses techniques that Sky says can reduce the latency typical of adaptive bitrate streams from up to 39 seconds down to only a few seconds. The broadcaster used the system during live streaming of Italy's X-Factor final to synchronise a 360° mobile feed with the live event on DTH.

## UHD Initiative of the Year

### BT Sport for BT Sport UHD

BT broke new ground in July 2015 by launching Europe's first consumer 4K, ultra high definition sports channel, BT Sport Ultra HD. Part of BT's new Total Entertainment TV Pack, the network made its first ultra HD broadcast from Wembley Stadium in August, covering the 2015 FA Community Shield match, which marks the beginning of each new Premier League football season.

Since then the UHD channel has broadcast sporting events including FA Cup and Premier League football, the UEFA Champions League final, the UEFA Europa League final, European Rugby, Moto GP, Squash and NBA basketball.

### Harmonic for NASA TV UHD



NASA and Harmonic made television history last November by launching the first non-commercial consumer Ultra HD channel in North America. NASA TV UHD was designed showcasing striking images of space in Ultra High Definition, 2160p60 resolution, accompanied by New Age music or actual background noise – rather than commentary. The concept was to produce a like-you-are-there experience with unhurried shots arranged in an “ambient” format. Harmonic provides the end-to-end UHD video delivery system for the new NASA channel.

### TERN for INsight TV

INsight is Television, Entertainment & Reality Network's (TERN's) first ultra high definition TV channel. Launched during MIPCOM 2015, INsight broadcasts more than 200 hours of original INsight-commissioned ultra HD content per year. The channel is targeted primarily at a male-skewing audience and its programming to date includes titles like *Dracula: Escape The Castle*, *Power & ...*, *Extraordinary Humans* and *Spartan X*. INsight says its programming is designed to demonstrate the best of Ultra HD – from vivid cinematography to high-speed action, all filmed at 50 frames per second.

### MTG Broadcasting for Ultra HD set-top box and Viasat Ultra HD channel

From this autumn Modern Times Group is launching a hybrid Ultra High-Definition set-top box in conjunction with an Ultra HD sports channel for its Nordic Viasat customers. The hybrid UHD set-top box was developed in partnership with Samsung and Cisco, and supports all three of MTG-owned operator Viasat's key distribution methods – DTT, IPTV and OTT. The zapper-style box can also be upgraded with DVR functionality via a USB hard drive that is stackable underneath the box. The new sports channel, named Viasat Ultra HD, will broadcast selected UHD events from Viasat's sports portfolio.

### Plimsoll Productions for Camp Zambia



Camp Zambia is an ambitious, UHD wildlife-film project that kicked off last spring. Plimsoll Productions was commissioned by Blue Ant Media, working in conjunction with Smithsonian Networks, to make 50 UHD wildlife programmes in less than two years. The films will be shot at a fraction of the usual budget of high-end natural history programmes. All the filming was done over an intensive four-month period at the South Luangwa National Park in Zambia where 157TB of footage was processed to make the 50 films.

### V-Nova for RAI UHD channel powered by Eutelsat and V-Nova Perseus

Video compression specialist V-Nova partnered with Eutelsat in contributing 4K, ultra high definition live broadcast for Italian public broadcaster RAI during seven UEFA Euro Championship football matches this summer. V-Nova Perseus provided lossless video contribution to RAI's remote production van on the outskirts of Paris. The UHD content was provided by RAI and transmitted via Eutelsat satellite. The project started from the quarter-finals onwards, giving RAI viewers tuned in via free-to-air satellite platform Tivùsat the option to watch in Ultra HD.

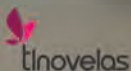
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A globe is the central element, with various Spanish-language media images attached to it. The images include a train, a group of people, a movie poster for 'El Hotel de los Secretos', and a stage performance. The globe is set against a background of yellow and red brushstrokes.

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## Virtual Reality Initiative of the Year

### Accedo for Project Himalaya

Project Himalaya was developed by Accedo's innovations team to help consumers navigate content and menus within virtual reality headsets. The interactive user interface has evolved through a series of tests – designed to pinpoint the most obvious and least intrusive set of functions for users – and the experience is geared towards content through video player controls, menus and lists.

Actions within the experience are triggered by a 'gaze cursor', rather than physical controllers, and menus and other items are tucked away in 'trigger areas' that only appear when users look over in that direction. Actions are triggered when the gaze cursor stays on a given control for a certain amount of 'dwell time' – a period that can be tweaked to the specifications of the user.

### Du for Dubai360 VR

United Arab Emirates-based telecoms operator Du partnered with content company Dubai Films to produce the Dubai360 VR app. Described by Du as a first-of-its-kind collaboration, the 360°, virtual reality app is designed to let anyone experience the sights and sounds of Dubai from an Android or iOS smartphone.

Dubai Films shot high-resolution, 360° content – including panoramic images and time-lapse videos – which Du incorporated this into the free app, using its previous experience in app development. The companies launched the project during GITEX Technology Week in Dubai in 2015 and produced Dubai360-branded cardboard viewfinders that could be used to watch the content.

### Plug-in Media for Angie's Party

Angie's Party is an animated sitcom pilot created by Brighton-based digital media production company Plug-in Media. Commissioned by BBC Connected Studios and with a target audience of 16-24 year-olds, the format takes viewers inside the birthday house party of 16 year-old Angie while her parents are away for the evening.

Accessible via an Android phone and a Google Cardboard viewing device, the interactive app features 13 total minutes of animation depending on the path a viewer takes through the storyline – or 6 minutes in real-time viewing.

### Red Bull Media House for Helicopter Aerobatics

Multi-platform media company Red Bull Media House devised its Helicopter Aerobatics virtual reality experience as a way for viewers to experience daring feats of flying skills from the perspective of the co-pilot's seat.

The project was done in collaboration with the Flying Bulls – a group of aviation enthusiasts with a passion for rare and historical aeroplanes and helicopters.

Users get a virtual chance to ride along in Flying Bulls helicopter alongside pilot Siegfried Schwarz – Austria's first civilian helicopter



student and the winner of two gold medals representing the Flying Bulls at the Helicopter Freestyle Championships in Russia in 2012 and Poland in 2015.

### Viaccess-Orca for Viaccess-Orca End-to-End Virtual Reality Solution

Viaccess-Orca's virtual reality and 360° online video platform solution is designed to address the needs of operators, broadcasters and content rights owners. By providing components including a VR player, cloud-based security, and analytics, Viaccess-Orca aims to make it simple for content owners and pay TV operators to deliver premium live and on-demand content in a VR environment.

Viaccess-Orca claims that with its platform solution lays out a complete roadmap for VR playback, experience and content protection. VO is also partnering with Harmonic on video encoding and VideoStitch for capture and stitching, offering flexibility that is says goes beyond what is available with other proprietary VR systems.

### ZDF for Volcanoes in 3D and 360 Degrees

German public service broadcaster ZDF launched a video experience that lets viewers get up close to the natural force of an erupting volcano.

Lava bombs, volcanic lightning and ash clouds can all be seen in Volcanoes in 3D and 360 Degrees – the first immersive clip to come from ZDF, which it developed with digital image specialists Faber Courtial Digital Productions.

Viewers can experience the computer-generated video clip using a smartphone, which, when placed in a virtual reality headset, will respond to the viewers' head movements.

Users can also navigate the scene from a PC or laptop using the mouse cursor. Volcanoes in 3D and 360 Degrees grew out of ZDF documentary series *Terra X* and was developed as a form of explanatory infographic with photo-realistic computer-generated images. ●

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# Technology in focus

Infrastructure equipment and product news for digital media distribution

## In Brief

### Amazon updates Fire TV

Amazon has launched its updated Fire TV Stick with Alexa Voice Remote in the US, priced at US\$39.99 (€35). Amazon said the new streaming device is up to 30% faster than the original version, includes the Alexa Voice Remote and is available now for pre-order. The new Fire TV Stick will begin shipping to US customers on October 20.

### Harmonic in Comcast deal

Harmonic has agreed a deal with Comcast that will enable the US operator to buy common stock shares in Harmonic based on sales. The warrant agreement is based on CableOS and other Harmonic sales and deployment milestones during the term of the deal. Harmonic president and CEO, Patrick Harshman, described the agreement as a "significant validation of our new product investment strategy".

### Liberty teams with Ericsson

Liberty Global has agreed a new two-year deal with Ericsson that will see two of Liberty's Latin America-based operators expand their DVR services. VTR in Chile and Liberty Cablevision in Puerto Rico - both part of Liberty Latin-America and Caribbean (LiLAC Group) - will both use Ericsson's Video Storage and Processing Platform (VSPP) to widen the reach of their Catch-up TV and Restart TV DVR services.

## Akamai tackles OTT latency issues

Akamai used its presence at IBC in September to highlight technologies that can improve the delivery of OTT video services, including the reduction of latency for live OTT experiences.

Speaking to *Digital TV Europe* at the show, Ian Munford, director of product marketing, media solutions EMEA at Akamai, said that most of the innovations the company was highlighting at the show were related to improving OTT.

Munford highlighted live and on-demand workflow innovations that can improve the delivery of online video, including live premium ingest acceleration software. "This allows you to improve the throughput of live streams, including 4K," he said. "It allows you to have better consistency of live streams."



**Munford: We are showing sub-10 seconds latency on HD streams.**

Munford said that Akamai was addressing the thorny problem of the latency associated with live OTT services. "People want reduced latency of live streams. We are showing sub-10 seconds latency on HD streams here," he said at IBC. "We are using a live transcoding capability which will be beta-trialled in 2017."

Munford said that one of the key applications of reducing latency for live OTT was to enable more compelling second screen experiences, and social sharing of live experiences by viewers.

Akamai's ingest acceleration tool uses UDP technology rather than TCP-IP, whose error correction features contribute significantly to latency, to deliver a higher throughput and better consistency of video, according to the company. Error correction is in this case provided by the client software.

"We can provide 4K live streams at 50Mbps with 12 seconds latency. It shows the power of the technology," said Munford.

Munford said that Akamai was being asked to make its platform more open and visible to users. "A lot of customers have asked us to take more responsibility end-to-end," he said.

"The OTT industry sees it needs the same level of quality [as broadcast] and needs the arms to do that."

## Arris expands DOCSIS 3.1 range

Cable technology provider Arris has expanded its range of DOCSIS 3.1 high-speed broadband devices and has launched a partner development programme to open up its Touchstone platform to software development partners.

Arris has expanded its range of DOCSIS 3.1 modems, broadband gateways and telephony gateways with the addition of three new devices.

The Arris TG3442 supports Gigabit broadband speeds and whole-home video over WiFi, while the TG3452 telephony gateway supports faster speeds

and carrier-grade video over WiFi, according to Arris. The TG3462 telephony gateway, meanwhile, includes multiple Internet of Things radios and 8x8 WiFi.

Arris says that its DOCSIS 3.1 devices support video-overWiFi with Quality of Service features, a dedicated video SSID and dynamic and adaptive airtime management capability.

Arris is also launching the Touchstone Development Partner Programme, which it says is an initiative designed to recognise the broadband gateway's paramount importance as a hub of the



connected home. The programme opens up the Touchstone platform to software development partners, and Arris said it is working with companies including embedUR Systems and SamKnows to provide access to an application framework with a growing set of APIs across platform and service layers.

## Roku hails biggest device launch in its history

Roku has introduced five new streaming devices in what it described as the biggest player launch in the company's history.

The new device line-up introduces new entry-level options as well as high-end 4K and high dynamic range (HDR)-capable devices.

The full line-up consists of the Roku Express, Roku Express+, Roku Premiere, Roku Premiere+ and Roku Ultra and ranges in price from US\$29.99 to US\$129.99 - undercutting both Google's US\$35 Chromecast at the low-end of the market and the US\$149 Apple TV at the top-end of the market.

The entry-level Roku Express models - priced at US\$29.99 (€27) for Express and US\$39.99 for Express+ - are Roku's "most affordable streaming players ever", according to the company, offering 1080p HD streaming from a simple dongle device.

At the top-end, the Roku Ultra box offers HD, 4K at up to 60 fps and HDR streaming. It also supports Dolby Digital and Dolby Digital surround sound.

The mid-range Roku Premiere

and Roku Premiere+ boxes will retail for US\$79.99 and US\$99.99 respectively. The Premiere also supports 4K UHD playback while the Premiere+ includes HDR support.

"Roku stands for streaming innovation and today we're celebrating the biggest player launch in our company's history, including the introduction of the Roku Express player which delivers a complete streaming experience for a shockingly low price of US\$29.99," said Roku Founder and CEO, Anthony Wood.

"Whether consumers simply want fast HD streaming via an inexpensive device or are looking for a top-of-the-line player with advanced features such as 4K and HDR, Roku is an easy choice."

At the same time, the streaming device maker said that Roku Search had hit a milestone, with content from more than 100 channels now available as part of the search function - up from 50 channels in June. Roku Search is designed to give a cross-service rundown of content, in order of what is free or the lowest price for viewers.



Roku said that its five new streaming players complement its popular, April-introduced Roku Streaming Stick, and offer consumers "the most complete streaming player line-up".

"With this new lineup, though added mid-range and high-end depth will address the growing 4K TV set market, Roku's most disruptive product in the new lineup is undoubtedly the new entry-level Express model," said senior analyst at IHS Technology, Paul Erickson.

He predicted that Roku Express' delivery of "full standalone capability at an even lower price point" will result in a strong consumer response, similar to the impressive sales of Google's Chromecast in recent years.

The new Roku devices will be available over the coming weeks in the US, Canada and Mexico.

## In Brief

### Snapchat hardware move

Snapchat is making its first move into hardware with the launch of video camera-equipped sunglasses, called Spectacles. The glasses can be used to create Snapchat Memories - a feature the company introduced earlier this year to let users save Snaps and Stories. Spectacles connect directly to Snapchat via Bluetooth or WiFi and transfer Memories directly into the app. Snapchat claimed that Spectacles will incorporate "one of the smallest wireless video cameras in the world" that is capable of taking a day's worth of Snaps on a single charge.

### TDC taps Vlavi

Denmark's TDC Group has tapped Vlavi - formerly JDSU - to provide field-testing equipment for the upgrade of its network to support DOCSIS 3.1 services. Vlavi will provide its OneExpert ONX-620 CATV signal analysis meter as the core of the field test platform to support a nationwide upgrade of TDC's HFC cable network, which provides services under the YouSee brand.

### SES teams with CCNL

Satellite operator SES has teamed up with Cable Channels Nigeria Ltd (CCNL) to train over 50 satellite installers as part of the country's digital switchover process. The Nigerian Broadcasting Commission licensed CCNL to aggregate content and provide platform services for the country's free-to-air DTT and DTH platforms. CCNL signed a contract with SES in May to use the latter's 28.2° orbital slot to deliver content for the DTT platform as well as DTH services.

## Discovery launches Seeker VR YouTube channel

Discovery has launched Seeker VR, an OTT 360-video and virtual reality offering.

The YouTube channel will have a raft of 360° content from digital content specialists. A selected team of 'creators' will travel the world, with Discovery providing production resources and expertise to track their journeys and create 360 and VR experiences.

Discovery launched its Seeker online platform earlier this year, bringing DNews, TestTube, Seeker Stories and Revision3 under one umbrella. The service is designed

to attract millennials with digital content and younger-skewing Discovery fare.

The new experiences will include *Edge of the Earth*, which follows a weather balloon to the outer reaches of the earth's atmosphere. Discovery said it was the first VR experiment in such extreme conditions.

Other experiences will include *Rhinos on the Move*, tracking Nepalese rhinos, and *Hearing Colors* about the neurological condition synesthesia.

"Seeker is dedicated to

producing and empowering the most interesting, engaging and thought-provoking content in science and exploration. One of the great ways to achieve that mission is to employ every storytelling technology we can and that certainly includes VR," said former E! executive Suzanne Kolb, who is now EVP, Discovery Digital Networks.

"We're thrilled to bring original VR programming produced by our outstanding team and our talented creative partners to Seeker's 46 million-plus subscribers while also attracting new viewers."

## In Brief

### Vestel for Freeview Play

Multi-brand TV manufacturer Vestel is gearing up to launch a range of Freeview Play TVs in the UK market. Vestel's Freeview Play range will include HD TVs and 4K Ultra HD models, allowing users to access Freeview's connected DTT platform without connecting to a separate set-top box.

### Vodafone Iceland taps Nordija

Vodafone Iceland has tapped Denmark-based middleware provider Nordija to provide technology for the next generation of its TV offering. Vodafone Iceland will use Nordija's fokus-On software to power its TV service. Vodafone Netherlands - currently in the process of merging its mobile service with cable operator Ziggo - already uses Nordija's platform.

### Starman taps SeaChange

Estonian cable group Starman has tapped SeaChange to supply the technology for its new OTT video service. Starman is using SeaChange's Adrenalin multiscreen video platform to provide a library of on-demand movies and TV shows, with features including re-start TV and network DVR. Starman launched on-demand TV services in Estonia with a prior version of Adrenalin in 2012.

### Cisco teams with LeCloud

Cisco has teamed up with China's LeCloud Computing to build a DRM cloud platform that is compatible with multiple DRM protocols. LeCloud tapped Cisco's VideoGuard Everywhere system to comply with content protection requirements from the English Premier League.

## Liberty, CableLabs join MulteFire

International cable operator Liberty Global and US-based cable technology body CableLabs have joined the MulteFire Alliance, a consortium set up to develop next-generation wireless technology.

The pair said they aimed to collaborate with the alliance to make wireless technology more widely available. The MulteFire Alliance's main goal is to ensure that LTE mobile standards are compatible with shared and unlicensed spectrum, meaning that wireless technologies can coexist with WiFi and other technologies.

Success in ensuring compatibility with shared spectrum would give operators that do not have access to licensed spectrum the ability to offer wireless services.

MulteFire is based on 3GPP Release 13 License Assisted Access LTE (LAA) and Release 14 enhanced LAA (eLAA), which uses 'Listen-Before-Talk' (LBT) etiquette to share spectrum in a manner similar to WiFi. However, unlike LAA, MulteFire will operate entirely in unlicensed or shared

spectrum, so that operators without licensed mobile spectrum can use the technology to offer wireless services. This concept has been proposed in the 3GPP standards body for both LTE and 5G. Other members of the alliance include Qualcomm, Intel, Nokia and Ericsson.

"We appreciate that the Alliance is committed to transparency and collaboration, given the importance of unlicensed spectrum to broadband access," said Rob Alderfer, vice president of technology policy at CableLabs.

"As we move toward ever greater sharing of scarce spectrum resources, reliable coexistence across technologies is essential as we continue to innovate. It's what we believe is the most critical aspect of the Alliance, and one that will be important as the industry moves toward 5G standards."

Cellular technologies could potentially cause problems for high-bandwidth WiFi networks, although the extent to which this is likely is contentious.

## Intelsat 36 enters service

Intelsat's latest satellite Intelsat 36 has entered service, providing additional DTH capacity for leading African pay TV operator MultiChoice.

Built for Intelsat by Space Systems/Loral (SSL), Intelsat 36 was launched aboard an Ariane 5 launch vehicle in August. The satellite, co-located with Intelsat 20 at 68.5° East, includes a Ku-band payload used by MultiChoice and a C-band payload targeted at Africa and the Indian Ocean region.

"There are dynamic changes taking place across the global media landscape, and Intelsat 36 supports our customers as they address the growing demand for content throughout the African continent," said Brian Jakins, Regional Vice President, Africa Sales, Intelsat. "This satellite will enable our customer, MultiChoice, to extend high definition channels throughout the region. The C-band payload will provide additional redundancy for media customers."

## Afrostream taps Wiztivi for SVOD service

Francophone African subscription video-on-demand provider Afrostream has tapped user interface specialist Wiztivi to help it deliver its service to telecom operators.

Wiztivi supplied its TimelessVOD HTML5-based user interface, providing a modular UI that can be adapted to different markets, according to the company.

Afrostream, which is backed by Orange Digital Ventures and Y Combinator and was founded by theatre producer and entrepreneur Tonjé Bakang, styles itself as "the Netflix of Afro-American and French films" and offers a range of content for a monthly fee targeted

at the African diaspora in Europe.

The service is available on the Orange and Bouygues Telecom networks in France.

According to Wiztivi, the deployment will enable Afrostream to provide a consistent user experience both online and on set-top boxes.

"Afrostream is now available on the biggest internet service providers in France, Orange and Bouygues, thanks to Wiztivi's TimelessVOD which provides the best user experience possible. The technical partnership between Afrostream and Wiztivi will open new possibilities to bring Afrostream to every



screen possible," said Ludovic Bostral, co-founder and CTO of Afrostream.

"We are thrilled to partner with Afrostream on the deployment of such an innovative VOD service. By choosing to go with TimelessVOD, the integration of the Afrostream service into operator set-top boxes is made easier," said Thibault Demartial, sales director at Wiztivi.

## Nagra looks to post-CAM world with USB security

Nagra used the recent IBC event in Amsterdam to highlight new innovations in content security including a TV Key product that is expected to be shipped by Samsung at the end of this year.

"It's a USB key with enough space to put a logo on it. It's a great innovation," Simon Trudelle, senior product marketing director at Nagra told *Digital TV Europe* at last month's IBC.

Trudelle said that the key could be used by pay TV providers to give free trials to would-be subscribers without the need to deliver a set-top box by using the key to enable services to be delivered to TVs. However, the device could also be used as a longer-term option to replace traditional CI+ conditional access modules.

"We expect the technology to be used for flexible packages,"



**Trudelle: It's an exciting set of options for service providers.**

said Trudelle. This could include weekend or day passes to premium content or other packages that could extend pay TV to reach new audiences that are unwilling to sign up for a full-fledged service.

The USB 3.0 device has a secure chipset. "This is next-generation CI in many ways," says Trudelle, who sees hybrid deployments of premium broadcast and OTT content as a potential application.

Trudelle said that Nagra and Samsung ultimately hope to open up the technology to other manufacturers to create a stand-

ard-based approach to security that could potentially replace CI+.

"It's an exciting set of options for service providers. You lose a lot of control in terms of the user experience because you have to leverage the UI of the TV set or an HbbTV-based UI. It's not as sophisticated as a set-top box," he says.

The USB key is one of a range of options that Nagra is looking to deliver. Others include a more sophisticated HDMI dongle with Chromecast-like functionality to deliver OTT services to the TV, while the group can also provide a set-top with integrated Nagra security that can also deliver OTT services. The USB is expected to sell for under €10, while the dongle will likely sell for between €15-25 and the box for between €25-30.

## BBC experiments with holographic TV

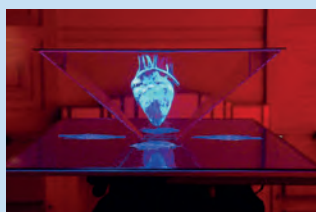
The BBC has created an experimental 'holographic' TV device as part of its exploration of emerging technologies for future audiences.

Describing the project, the BBC said that the device was designed to assess how the 'floating' images of augmented and mixed reality devices might be used to view BBC content in the future.

The BBC built the "low-fi and low-cost" device using a 46-inch TV and a custom-made acrylic pyramid to create, what it described as, a modern-day version of "an old Victorian theatre technique" to create the illusion of holographic-style images.

The UK public broadcaster then enlisted the help of UK-based visual effects and hologram specialist MDH Hologram to format and adjust BBC archive footage to work effectively in this medium.

"Our experiment was fairly sim-



plistic, but the new technologies on the horizon have the potential to completely change the way that audiences experience media content in the future," said BBC head of digital partnerships, Cyrus Saihan.

"You can imagine a world where instead of watching a film star being interviewed on the sofa of a TV chat show, they feel as if they are sitting right next to you on your own sofa in your living room, or where instead of looking at a 2D image of Mount Everest, it appears as if the snow on the mountain top is falling around you."

**The BBC is looking at the future implications of augmented and mixed reality.**

Saihan added that the success of mobile game *Pokemon GO* is just "the tip of the iceberg" when it comes to augmented reality, with major companies investing in mixed and augmented reality.

"If devices such as Microsoft's HoloLens and the Google-backed Magic Leap also capture the public's imagination, we could soon find ourselves in a situation where the lines between digital content and the real world become increasingly blurred," he said.

The news comes after the BBC in June unveiled its first "true VR" pieces of content, marking a step forward its experiments with virtual reality technology.

## In Brief

### Hungarian lab for Telekom

Deutsche Telekom's research and development arm, T-Labs, has opened its first affiliated institute in Hungary as part of the operator's new EU Labs programme. The scheme will see T-Labs further expand its network and strengthen international collaboration, which includes partnering with European universities. The new institute is part of the Eötvös Loránd University in Budapest and is T-Labs' first joint applied research Lab in Hungary.

### BT TV selects Accenture

BT TV has selected the Accenture Video Solution (AVS) platform to support current and future BT TV offerings, including BT Sport. The Accenture-developed software platform supports live streaming and video-on-demand across multiple devices including smartphones, tablets and computers. Once deployed, the platform will enable BT TV to provide personalised experiences at scale, reaching a broad audience with numerous video offerings, according to Accenture.

### Knippr teams with Ericsson

T-Mobile Netherlands has selected Ericsson to power its new over-the-top TV service, Knippr. The multi-year deal will see Ericsson provide an end-to-end online video service, covering content management, digital rights management and content delivery networks. Ericsson will deliver both live and on-demand TV content via Knippr, which launched last month and is available via a web browser, as an app for tablets and smartphones and is compatible with Chromecast and Apple.

# Blazing success

**Pay TV channel provider A+E Networks has recently been branching out into the free-to-air world, notably with the launch of Blaze in the UK. EMEA managing director Dean Possenniskie talked to Stuart Thomson about the company's changing profile.**

**While** the demise of pay TV has been greatly exaggerated, the business is reaching maturity in many developed markets and channel providers are searching for new avenues to growth – either by launching a direct-to-consumer digital offering, or a free-to-air linear channel.

A+E Networks has delved into the free-to-air market in EMEA in a significant way with the launch of male-focused Blaze in the UK. The group also entered the Turkish market with a free-to-air version of Lifetime in April in partnership with local player MCD Media.

According to Dean Possenniskie, managing director, A+E Networks EMEA, taking the plunge into free-to-air in a strong pay TV market like the UK made sense because there was an opportunity to use A+E's content without damaging its pay TV business or threaten distribution partnerships.

"We were fortunate that with the A+E pipeline of content we could go different ways. We have strong distribution partnerships and we continue to grow our channels," says Possenniskie. "We value our partnerships highly. Blaze is complementary in terms of windowing, scheduling and the brand, and can be used to cross-promote to content on pay TV like *Pawn Stars* on History."

In addition to launching Blaze as a linear channel, A+E has used the launch to debut its first TV Everywhere service in EMEA, providing access to Blaze content on a catch-up basis on multiple screens.

Possenniskie is clear that A+E is not diluting its commitment to pay TV and points out that the company also has a strong business supplying content to free-to-air broadcasters. "We have to think very carefully about what is the best avenue for us," he says. "Internally, we don't qualify our brands as being defined by platform. It's really about where we feel the opportunity is."

Similarly, whether to go it alone, as in the UK with Blaze, or with a partner, as in Turkey, will depend on whether A+E has a strong

existing presence in a particular market.

The key in either case, says Possenniskie, is to analyse the market and plan the launch carefully. "In the UK we spent time on looking at the market and the content offering and the brand. It has to take some time. It is important to get it right," he says.

For the launch of Blaze, A+E tapped the

in which market."

For both free-to-air linear channels and non-linear digital direct-to-consumer services, having a compelling pipeline of content remains key. For A+E this has also gone hand-in-hand with diversifying its content line-up to embrace more scripted as well as unscripted content. The development of A+E Studios



**"We don't qualify our brands as being defined by platform. It's really about where we feel the opportunity is."**

Dean Possenniskie, A+E Networks

TVPlayer platform, for which it has now led a £5 million investment round (€5.7 million). "We always look for new opportunities to develop new digital technologies and services and TVPlayer was looking for a strategic partner," says Possenniskie.

Aside from free-to-air, the other main non-core opportunity that channel providers have addressed is digital platforms that can be made available either to pay TV customers only or as a direct-to-consumer service, either free-to-view or as a subscription offering.

A+E has taken the plunge into digital in the US with the launch of Lifetime Movie Network and History Vault. Possenniskie says that History Vault is seen as a key opportunity in EMEA. He is agnostic about whether such a service should be rolled out as a standalone offering or part of a joint effort with pay TV partners, adding that it could be rolled out in different markets either as a direct-to-consumer offering or via pay TV partners.

"Aside from supporting our platform partners with non-linear content, we are looking at building a standalone SVOD product that can add something to the platform," says Possenniskie. "We keep an open mind on what model would work best

in the US has been key to this. Content developed by the in-house production unit has been aired on Lifetime and History. For Possenniskie, while drama and movies have been core to Lifetime, the real opportunity is to add scripted content to History, with *Vikings* and, more recently, its remake of the groundbreaking 1977 mini-series *Roots*, standing out as examples of content that can enhance the profile of the channel. *Roots* is currently set to premiere in Italy on History.

And for all the recent focus on the free-to-air market with the launch of Blaze, A+E continues to populate pay TV platforms with its portfolio of services including History, H2, A&E, CI and Lifetime. Possenniskie says that there continues to be strong opportunities for pay TV launches in EMEA, notably in Africa, where the programmer now has an established presence in Johannesburg.

"Our optimal presence is to have four to six brands in each market in pay TV. If you have only two brands, such as History and CI, there may be potential to launch Lifetime or FYI or whatever. In terms of whether to go for pay TV versus free-to-air, it is hard to have a cookie-cutter approach, but some markets will support a full portfolio of services." ●



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# TV lines up for drone racing

**Drone Racing League CEO Nicholas Horbaczewski tells Stewart Clarke he wants his events to be the Formula One of drone racing. Big-name investors including Sky, ProSiebenSat.1, MGM and Hearst have all backed the venture recently.**

In a US\$12 million (€11 million) funding round completed in September, the Drone Racing League (DRL) raised cash from Hearst, MGM, ProSiebenSat.1 and Sky, as well as former MTG Digital chief Rikard Steiber, now at HTC's VR division Vive; Machinima co-founder Allen Debevoise; and Matthew Bellamy, lead singer of rock band Muse. US sports channel ESPN also came on board as a partner and will televise DRL races on ESPN2.

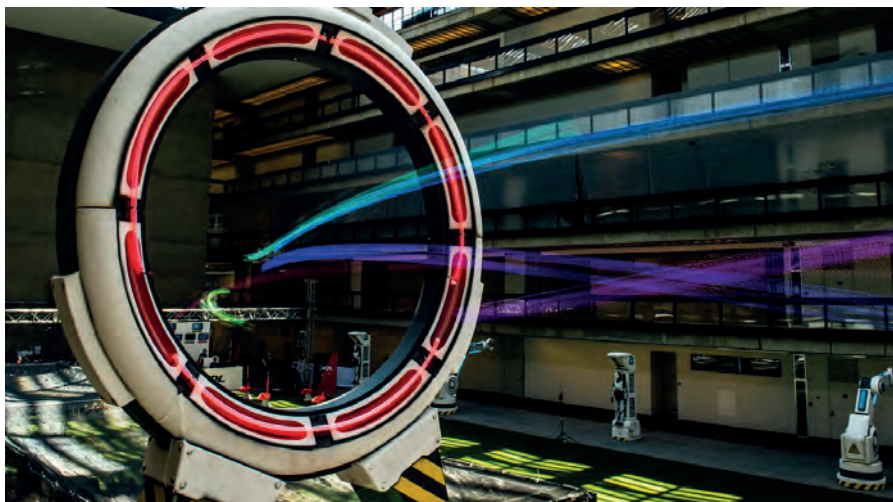
"With DRL we are building a new pro sport, and the kind of ecosystem you would expect around a pro sport," says Nicholas Horbaczewski, CEO of DRL. "We are building a global fanbase. There is a global group interested in drone racing, but almost no [TV] coverage. We can now put DRL on around the world, in the UK with Sky, in Germany with ProSieben and in the US with ESPN."

Drone racing as a competitive sport started in Australia, with an explosion of interest kicking in a couple of years ago.

The format, and how to capture the action, needed a lot of work if it was to break out beyond the hardcore racing community. Horbaczewski highlights three challenges: the drones themselves, which the DRL got around by designing its own (all racers compete using the same machines); the technology needed to ensure several pilots could race at once at high speed, which was not commercially available; and learning how to film the events and build professional race circuits.

The design and tech challenges were largely solved in-house. "At our core we are a tech company," Horbaczewski says. "Half of our employees are engineers." The filming and production challenges became the preserve of former professional athlete and CrossFit exec Tony Budding. He is now DRL's director of media, and an exec with experience of launching a new sport, having been behind the mixed-gender team athletics event National Pro Grid League.

The difficulty with filming drone racing is how you capture a fast-moving small object



and make it exciting. "People expect to see something like the pod racing in *Star Wars* [Episode I: *The Phantom Menace*], so it has gone wrong if they are left just seeing little dots go around in circles," Horbaczewski says. "Others have tried to film drone racing, and even very experienced companies have

around the pilots and the technology, and other facets of the sport. There are a lot of incredible stories in there."

The core viewership is 18-to-34-year-old males who love technology and are into eSports. The eSports crossover could be seen with an event being shown on the Amazon-owned Twitch online gaming channel. The next biggest viewer group are 18-to-45s who don't necessarily know about the tech, but are heavily into motorsport.

Each of the regular season events will run to two hours and be split into two one-hour shows for TV. The races last one-to-three minutes, and each event has 12 competitors at the start. The number is then reduced to six, who compete in a winner-takes-all final, with the victor getting a pro contract for the 2017 season. The broadcasters will take 10x60 mins across the 2016 series, including two *Intro to Drone Racing* shows. The Sky and ProSieben connections mean the UK and Germany will both host rounds in the 2017 series. Sky will cover the events on its Sky Sports Mix service and ProSieben on unspecified free- and pay-TV channels.

The goal for DRL is to be "the F1 of drone racing", says Horbaczewski. Sky, ProSieben, and MGM are with DRL on the starting grid, and the race begins in late October. ●



**Horbaczewski: DRL is building a new sport, with the ecosystem expected of a professional event.**

failed. You are attempting to film something the size of a dinner plate flying at 80 miles-per-hour down the equivalent of a hallway – it's not easy. Some producers have said, 'Cool, I make TV; let's go and do drones', but it has been a complete disaster."

The sports broadcasts will be complemented by a reality element, with MGM and its content boss, producer Mark Burnett, working on this aspect.

"Sports TV is exciting but not the only form of TV, and we want to broaden the demo and reach of DRL," Horbaczewski says. "Mark Burnett and MGM will be creating content

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# On the move

**Yousef Al-Obaidly** has been named CEO of Digitürk following the Turkish pay TV operator's



acquisition by BeIN Media Group. Al-Obaidly, who played a key role in the launch of BeIN Media and spearheaded the group's entry into the French market, was appointed to head up the Turkish outfit by BeIN Media Group chairman and CEO **Nasser Al Khelaifi**. Al-Obaidly is currently deputy CEO of BeIN Media Group and president of BeIN Sports France, Americas and Asia Pacific.

Altice Media Group president **Bernard Mourad** has resigned, reportedly to take on the role of campaign director for would-be French presidential candidate and former economy minister Emmanuel Macron. Mourad, in addition to his Altice role, was recently named deputy CEO of SFR Media, the closely related media unit of the French service provider majority-owned by Altice, and vice-president of SFR Presse, the group's print and online media arm. SFR said that he has resigned to devote himself fully to a public role.

Netflix has appointed former Universal Television president, **Bela Bajaria**, as its vice-president of content. Bajaria will lead the team at Netflix responsible for licensing content from the major US studios and agreeing co-production deals with the major US networks. She will also oversee a new team developing original unscripted programs for Netflix, as the subscription video service looks to up its original

production output. Bajaria was previously president of NBC's network and cable production arm, a role she stepped down from in June. Here she oversaw creative programming for the studio, producing series including *Master of None* and *Unbreakable Kimmy Schmidt* for Netflix.

Discovery has hired **Gunnar Wiedenfels** as CFO, poaching the finance chief from German



broadcast giant ProSiebenSat.1, where he has worked for seven years. Wiedenfels will join Discovery next April and fill the shoes of **Andrew Warren**, who had previously announced he was leaving the group. The new CFO will be based in New York and report to Discovery CEO and president, David Zaslav.

The BBC has promoted director of strategy and education, **James Purnell**, to a new role that will see him take charge of the public broadcaster's radio division. Purnell will bring together network radio, arts, music, learning and children's as director of the new radio and education division, taking over from director of radio **Helen Boaden** who is retiring from the BBC.

Ukrainian cable operator Volia's president, **Sergey Boyko**, is to leave the company. Boyko has helmed Volia, the country's leading cable player, for 15 years. According to the company he is leaving to pursue an independent career as a business consultant, but will continue to advise Volia CEO György Zsembery, who

joined the Ukrainian group from Hungarian operator Invitel three years ago.

Deutsche Telekom has appointed the chief technology and IT officer of its Hungarian subsidiary, **Walter Goldenits**, to director of technology at Telekom Deutschland. The Magyar Telekom executive will succeed **Bruno Jacobfeuerborn** in his new role and will also take over a leading management position in the newly established board area, technology and innovation, which will be headed by **Claudia Nemat**. With the move, which becomes effective on January 1, 2017, Jacobfeuerborn will transfer to Deutsche Telekom AG Holding, taking on the post of chief technology officer for the group in the new technology and innovation board department. He will also be MD of Telekom's radio tower unit Deutsche Funkturm.

4K UHD TV content and channel provider Love Nature has named former Red Bull Media House executive **Anthony Jewitt** as director of partnerships. UK-based Jewitt will oversee Blue Ant Media and Smithsonian Networks-backed Love Nature's global SVOD and linear television distribution, excluding North America.

NBCUniversal has given **Kevin MacLellan** an expanded role at its international business as part of a restructure following the exit of **Ted Harbert**. Harbert, a former E! boss, is leaving his role as president of broadcasting



at NBCU. His exit has sparked a rejig at NBCU, with several execs upped to new roles to cover the varied responsibilities held by Harbert, who leaves in mid-October. MacLellan runs NBCUniversal's international business, working across TV, film and digital. As chairman, global distribution and international, he will take on domestic distribution and new media sales. He will remain in NBCU's London offices.

Sky News has named **Cristina Nicolotte Squires** as director of content, placing her in charge of output across all Sky platforms including TV, mobile, social media and radio. As part of her role, Squires will also head up special programming including Sky News documentaries, debate programmes and weekly panel show, *The Pledge*. She is due to join in the New Year.

BBC Trust chairman **Rona Fairhead** will step down when a unitary board replaces the BBC Trust, after being informed by the government that she would have to re-apply for her job. In a statement, Fairhead said that she had been "strongly encouraged" by UK prime minister Theresa May to take part in a new appointment process for what would be a four-year term as BBC chairman. However, she said she thought it would "be better to have a clean break and for the government to appoint someone new". ●



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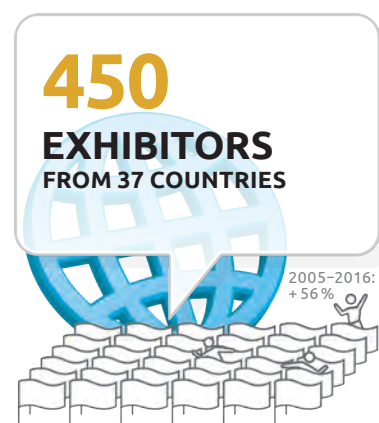
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**"It's almost hard to believe that it was only two years ago that then-student Palmer Luckey launched a Kickstarter fund to raise money for a virtual reality headset called Oculus Rift."**

# A dose of virtual reality

**The** end of pure TV as we know it is nigh. In fact it's probably already here, what with the growth of on-demand, online and cross-device viewing and the decline in linear TV viewing. This is not good news for the TV space, but as the chairman of NBCUniversal International Kevin MacLellan recently told an RTS conference in London, the fall in viewing of professional video content is "not ideal but it's not the disaster you might be led to believe." That's because producers and distributors – like NBCU – are thinking outside of the TV box.

One area that is attracting a lot of attention and money right now is virtual reality (VR). While the jury is still out on whether VR is the next big thing, broadcasters, content creators and major technology companies such as Facebook are all putting big bets on the technology. However, there are still issues to work out. Alex Mahon, CEO of The Foundry, a leading visual effects company, told an audience at IBC in Amsterdam in September that we are "a few hardware cycles away from the product being mass market". The main problem, she added, is that: "I need to be able to pick up my glass of wine while watching the content."

Content makers are forging ahead, often with hybrid consumer offers. Deutsche Telekom recently streamed a Red Hot Chili Peppers concert in 4K 360° VR to 675,000 viewers on YouTube Live. Look at NBCU's latest foray into VR with its Syfy series *Halcyon*, a scripted show that debuted in September and was made for linear, online and, partially, to be viewed via the Oculus Rift VR platform.

Meanwhile, a 12-minute narrative experience for USA Network series *Mr. Robot* has been available on a number of VR devices since July.

It is still early days but technology pioneer Sky launched a new VR app in October 2016, which has as its debut piece of content a film fronted by footballer David Beckham. Shot in 360° video, the film is clearly a promotion for Sky's TV content across its sport and entertainment channels, with Beckham, in this case, wandering through recent sporting moments. But there is also VR-rendered footage from the film *Star Wars: The Force Awakens* as well as a 360-degree report from Sky News on the Calais refugee camp. Sky has invested in cinematic VR firm Jaunt and although the operator is starting with 360° video, Sky's head of content Gary Davey has already launched Sky VR Studios because he says he is a "big believer" in VR.

Capturing VR content is complex but there are a plethora of independent VR producers popping up, including a new production company set up by John Cassy, former head of Sky Arts. Cassy's Factory 42 has been commissioned by Sky to produce an immersive VR experience inspired by the English National Ballet's production of *Giselle*. Cassy says that the new studio will work at "the intersection of TV, film and games to create multi-platform stories" using both augmented reality and VR. Cassy is not alone. James Milward's company Secret Location has produced some 14 VR projects over the last two years and has another five in production. In 2015 the producer won the first primetime Emmy award for a VR project for its work on Fox's *Sleepy Hollow*. Demand for this kind of content is increasing: Damien Collier, the 'Charlie Bit my Finger' social media entrepreneur who founded Viral Spiral recently launched a new venture called Blend Media, an online platform for 360° video and VR

producers and creators to showcase and sell their content.

It's almost hard to believe that it was only two years ago that then-student Palmer Luckey launched a Kickstarter fund to raise money for a virtual reality headset called Oculus Rift. His company was very quickly purchased by Facebook and 2016 will likely be the launch year for mass market VR gaming, according to Enders Analysis. Meanwhile, Facebook and Google have each built platforms for user generated 360-degree content but professionally made narrative content from studios is going to be a slower burn. For example, Netflix's Ted Sarandos, who heads up content at the SVOD service, is doubling down on 4K as a differentiator rather than VR, because he's not convinced that VR really works yet for narrative content.

One area where VR content is already starting to show up is in advertising. You can imagine that a car maker thinks the ability to virtually walk around and even drive a car in VR would be a big pull for sales. *The New York Times* has been a pioneer in using the Google cardboard VR viewer to attract its subscribers to VR-created content including VR news stories and ad-funded content from companies including General Electric. The paper won a Grand Prix Cannes Lion award earlier this year for its VR app and it clearly sees it helping to attract advertising money at a time when the paper is struggling to move from an analogue to a digital world.

TV business, take note. ●

**Kate Bulkley is a broadcaster and writer specialising in media and telecommunica-**

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