

ASIA MEDIA SUMMIT 2008

New Visions

A media explosion is upon us. On a daily basis, we get to know and experience new technology, innovative software and creative content. The speed of technology is blistering. The diversity of media content is mind-boggling. Consumer preferences are changing at a faster pace. Competition in the traditional and new media is getting stiffer. All these need intelligent foresight. More than ever, media stakeholders require competence in discernment or perception. The changing competitive media landscape call for new visions, characterized by a mix of effective strategies, innovative approaches and best practices that benefit both business and society.



Asia-Pacific Institute
for Broadcasting Development

Website: <http://www.aibd.org.my> • Tel: 603-2282 3719/1046/4618 • Fax: 603 2282 2761 • Email: admin@aibd.org.my

Postal Address: P.O. Box 1137, No. 16 Lorong Maarof, 59100 Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

Street Address: 2nd Floor Bangunan IPTAR Lama, Angkasapuri, Jalan Pantai Dalam, 50614 Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

ASIA MEDIA SUMMIT 2008

New Visions

AIBD



ASIA MEDIA SUMMIT 2008

New Visions



Asia-Pacific Institute
for Broadcasting Development

New Visions

Asia Media Summit 2008

Edited by
Jose Maria G. Carlos

ISBN xxx-xxx-xxxxx-x-x

Contents

		Page
Changing Media Landscape & AIBD Challenges (Opening Remarks)	<i>Ladavan Bua-Aim</i>	5
About The Asia Media Summit	<i>Javad Mottaghi</i>	7
Solidarity For Human Survival (Keynote Address)	<i>YAB Dato' Seri Abdullah Haji Ahmad Badawi</i>	8
1. Emerging 'New Broadcasters', Evolving Strategies		13
Tapping Consumer Choices, Delivering More Added Value	<i>Projit Chakrabarty</i>	15
Emerging Power of Content	<i>Ku Kay Mok</i>	18
New Opportunities for Content Providers	<i>Francois Thiellet</i>	21
2. Changing Newsrooms, Redefining Journalism		23
Empowering Journalists in the Newsroom	<i>Wadah Khanfar</i>	25
Preserving the Integrity of Journalism	<i>Riyaz Sayed-Khaiyum</i>	28
Changing Newsrooms, Redefining Journalism: New 'Mediagogy for the Oppressed'	<i>Saed J. Abu-Hijleh</i>	33
3. Regulations And New Media Business Models		43
Regulation of New Media	<i>Mogens Schmidt</i>	45
Content-Related Legal and Regulatory Challenges	<i>Venkat Iyer</i>	49
Dealing with the User & Provider	<i>Jacob van Kokswijk</i>	51
Challenges of the Internet	<i>Joaquin F. Blaya</i>	54
4. User-generated Content: Impact On Business & Society		57
What Old & New Media Can Do	<i>Maria Ressa</i>	59
Radio - Evolving into a Multimedia Enterprise	<i>Jean Larin</i>	63
User Generated Content Employment: Ria Novosti Expertise	<i>Alexander Baninsky</i>	65
Citizen Generated Response	<i>Danny Schechter</i>	70

5. Media Agenda Setting: Perspectives & Challenges		73
Build on the Momentum, Follow the Trend and Meet the Challenges: Agenda Setting in an Age of Diversification and Globalisation	<i>Lu Weichang</i>	75
International Broadcasting for Global and Open Society	<i>Toshiyuki Sato</i>	81
Setting the Agenda in the Public Interest	<i>Emmanuel Wongibe</i>	83
In Search of Balance	<i>Jan C. Hoek</i>	86
6. Connect Asia, Africa And The World: Bridging The Digital Divide		89
Horizontal Communication and Digital Gates	<i>Kiran Karnik</i>	91
World Initiatives to Address the Digital Divide	<i>Phil Molefe</i>	94
Reaching the Rural Areas through MENOS	<i>Abdelrahim Suleiman</i>	96
Environment and the Digital Divide	<i>Janet Boston</i>	98
Catching Up with the Developed World	<i>Mano Wikramanayake</i>	100
ITU's Initiatives in Connecting the World	<i>Aurora A. Rubio</i>	103
7. Media And Responsible Practices		107
The Media and the Public Interest	<i>Kreszentia M. Duer</i>	109
Social Responsibility	<i>Abdul Rahman Abdul Aziz Al hazaar'</i>	113
Media in Poverty Reduction	<i>Steve Buckely</i>	115
8. Media And Family		119
Promoting Greater Family Values	<i>Zohra Chatterji</i>	121
Being a Trusted Media	<i>Otto Evjenth</i>	124
Media Literacy Programmes for Children	<i>Ronghuai Huang</i>	126
Media's Role in Sharing Values and Normalising Behaviour	<i>Olya Booyar</i>	128
Promoting Media Discussion On Respect For Individual Humanity (Special Address)	<i>Nafis Sadik</i>	133
Special Report Of Asia-Pacific Media Aids Initiative (AMAI)	<i>Moneeza Hashmi</i>	135
Public Service Broadcasting Guidebook	<i>P. Das</i>	136

Changing Media Landscape and AIBD Challenges

(Opening Remarks)

Ladavan Bua-Aim

On behalf of the organising committee, our partners and our sponsors, I bid you a warm welcome. We have present today at the Asia Media Summit 536 media professionals from 65 countries around the globe.

Rapid technological changes in ICT, media convergence and digitisation have opened the doors to information access and exchange on an unprecedented scale, which have reshaped the way human beings communicate with each other and lead their lives. If well managed, this holds enormous promise for the people in the Asia-Pacific region and of the world at large to improve health, trade, education, governance and ultimately individual lives.

Radio and television channels accessible in the Asia-Pacific region have increased by more than 200 times in the last 15 years. At the same time, broadcasters are facing challenges not only from large telecommunications companies who have been penetrating the media market but also from media consumers as potential rivals. Individuals are publishing their own contents, whether they consist of a few photos, a personalised journal, a political comment, a radio programme, a TV programme or a report concerning some local news. As a result, the audience today may determine for themselves what broadcast product they elect to access and when and where they will view or listen to it.

Another trend is re-concentration within the media industry, thus some organisations own or control a very large number of the major TV channels and print publications worldwide. Such concentration of media power is not conducive to promoting or even reflecting a diversity of opinions and views. The dominance of commercial interests tends to erode the public's fear by creating a culture of entertainment to serve the needs of the market more than citizenship.

The other principle that media professionals should cultivate is the notion of accountability and transparency. In this context, we support the AIBD's concept of public service broadcasting in the region. The Bangkok Declaration that emerged from the first ministerial conference in 2003 has addressed several important issues such as media and globalisation, cultural diversity, public service broadcasting, information divide and human resources development. The AIBD has taken a critical role in implementing the Bangkok Declaration and addressing issues that challenge us day by day.

Responding to the challenges of today calls for all of us to get together to exchange our views and find a way forward on how best we can serve our audience. To meet this challenge, AIBD has become an international forum for dialogues among media professionals belonging to different cultures.

Today the AIBD is addressing efficiently some of the more complex challenges that broadcasters are facing worldwide, a role of being more than just an ordinary research and training institute. In addition to training, the Institute is taking initiatives to promote pluralism and cultural diversity in the electronic media at a time when globalisation is endangering traditional values and engendering mistrust and fear. Media dialogue is a corrective initiative to search for better mutual understanding and this is what AIBD aims to achieve in gatherings such as the Asia Media Summit.

I thank you all for joining us and for your contributions. I also thank our sponsors that made it possible for AIBD members to reap the benefits from a concerted international movement. Thank you very much.

Ladavan Bua-Aim, Executive Director of the Foreign Office, National Broadcasting Services of Thailand & Acting President, AIBD General Conference, Thailand

About the Asia Media Summit

Dr. Javad Mottaghi

At the Asia Media Summit 2008 in May 2008, Malaysian Prime Minister Dato' Seri Abdullah Haji Ahmad Badawi enjoined the mass media to foster solidarity among the human family which is vital to its survival as a species. He said that the solidarity must transcend religious, national, ethnic, cultural, class and gender identities, The Malaysian leader also said " more than in any other time in history, the media today has the responsibility of fostering understanding, compassion, empathy and unity among the human family."

His message is what the annual Asia Media Summit is all about. It has become more than a gathering of broadcast professionals from both public and private media companies, media scholars and experts and representatives from development institutions; it is more than an important forum to reflect on the critical challenges broadcasters face. The Summit opens windows of opportunities for broadcasters to get acquainted with each other, share feelings, beliefs, experiences and perspectives, reduce mistrust and fear, and build a more lasting relationship that will serve and enrich humanity.

The Asia Media Summit was the first major outcome of the Bangkok Declaration endorsed by the Ministers of Information and Broadcasting from Asia Pacific in May 2003. It was launched in April 2004 with close to 400 media professionals from 54 countries, 160 organisations and 16 international broadcasting associations/unions participating in the three-day conference.

Since then, the Asia Media Summit has grown in quality and quantity, providing unparalleled opportunities for learning, knowledge sharing and networking. Topics for discussion and reflection are relevant and timely. Speakers come from varied backgrounds and articulate a diversity of opinions. The Summit also features pre-summit events such as seminars and workshops to sharpen the knowledge and skills of broadcasting in management, journalism and human resource development, among others.

Another highlight of the Asia Media Summit is the media dialogue broadcasters from Asia-Pacific hold with their peers in other continents such as the Arab World, Africa, USA and Europe. Such dialogue facilitates radio and TV programme exchanges, sharing of human resource expertise and agreements on co-production initiatives. It also enhances camaraderie and levels of comfort for discussion and dialogue.

Every year, the Asia-Pacific Institute for Broadcasting Development (AIBD) publishes the speakers' presentations at the Asia Media Summit. Such publication is made available to the AIBD's members and partners worldwide as well as to other institutions and individuals interested in media. Thanks to its many partners in particular Friedrich-Ebert Stiftung, which have supported the Asia Media Summit and this publication.

Dr. Javad Mottaghi, Director, Asia-Pacific Institute for Broadcasting Development

Solidarity For Human Survival

(Keynote Address)

YAB Dato' Seri Abdullah Haji Ahmad Badawi
Prime Minister of Malaysia

Distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen, thank you for inviting me to this Asia Media Summit and to share some thoughts with you on these very interesting times for the media industry. I note with pleasure that this Summit has indeed become a global event. It has doubled in participation over the last few years. Sadly, we are also gathered here in the wake of disasters. The cyclone in Myanmar and the earthquake in China. Thousands of lives were lost. Millions of people have been displaced. To mark our sympathy with the people and the governments of these two countries, may I invite you all to stand and to observe a minute of silence. Thank you.

Distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen, this year's Asia Media Summit has chosen as its theme "New Visions." It examines creative ways to adopt and use information and technologies to enhance business competitiveness, enrich economies and empower communities via access to information and knowledge.

This media gathering comes after the annual meeting of the Global Alliance on Information and Development that was held in Kuala Lumpur just a few days ago. Malaysia also hosted the 2008 World Congress on Information and Technology during that period. These two meetings forge a dialogue between member nations, information technology industry associations, civil society, academia and other experts. The focus was on the links between communications technologies, business, policy and society. Global challenges in health care, education, digital divide, privacy and security were discussed.

In this Asia Media Summit, you will confer on equally weighty issues that deal with the media and with the society. These gatherings in Malaysia reinforce our commitment in creating opportunities for dialogue, coordination and the understanding needed to apply the power of communications to development. They reflect our resolve to help mobilise the human financial and technical resources required to bridge major gaps in development. New communications technologies can act as tools for efficient governance. They greatly facilitate access to government information and services.

However, poor networks and infrastructure remain a major stumbling block to address developmental problems. Many of our people do not yet have adequate access to these technologies. The traditional media such as TV, radio and newspapers is still being relied on to fill the void. While we need to invest in expanding broadband infrastructure, we also need to ensure that its advantages are not limited to a selected few. We need to enhance workforce training to support employment and growth in the information and communications sector. Training is the key to preparing our economies for the future. It is by building a critical mass of human capital in the information and communication sector that an information society can be developed. We must look at policies to strengthen the use of media and communications for development.

The explosion of media channels combined with the rapid growth of global networks such as the internet have dramatically increased their potential as an enabler for development. They offer enormous opportunities for narrowing social and economic inequities and supporting sustainable wealth creation and thus helping to achieve broader development objectives.

In our part of the world, linguistic differences still represent substantial barriers to communications and sharing of information and knowledge. We need to develop local content to remove these barriers and help democratize access to information.

Communications technologies have an important role to play in helping nations cope with the present rapid increase in global food prices. They can help in raising consumer awareness and consumer education. They can encourage changes in lifestyle that result in thrift and reduce wastage in production and consumption. The media can also provide information on sound agricultural practices and disseminate knowledge on new agricultural technologies to farmers in the local language.

In the area of health, the media can help in the dissemination of information regarding incidence of disease and impending outbreaks. It can spread knowledge about the prevention and treatment of diseases and enable doctors to make better and more informed decisions. The media can also intensify regional initiatives on HIV, AIDS, Tuberculosis and other illnesses. In these ways the media can play a critical role in saving lives and creating healthier societies. As an inter - governmental body, the Asia-Pacific Institute for Broadcasting Development could provide the impetus for harnessing the media as an engine of growth and development. The media organisation assembled here can be a driving force to empower more people to attain the benefits of new technologies.

Ladies and gentlemen, as we strive to spread information and communication technology, we should also pause to ponder the consequences of the borderless traffic in information. Indeed, I sometimes look back rather fondly to the simpler period in my life when television came on only in the evenings and public opinion was shaped by the morning newspapers. It used to be that the mass media was more mass and less media and for that reason held as an absolute good.

Today of course, both the medium and the message has proliferated so much that we cannot be so sure anymore. The internet has enlarged the meaning of freedom of expression to a degree not seen since Guttenberg. Movable type printing in the 15th century would have cost money and labour. The World Wide Web has, however, lowered to near zero the barriers to entry for anyone wanting to see anything to potentially anybody and everybody, anywhere around the planet. The vastness and variety of cyberspace also works in much smaller ways to break up the audiences and markets of the traditional press into specialized niches. Not surprisingly the onset of the new media is of universal interest. Not only governments but also business, ordinary people and the practitioners themselves including, of course, politicians are seeking to come to terms with it. They may be both liberated and challenged by the unleashing of these information and communications technology.

Today there is almost unlimited choice and because of the choices available, there is competition. The old media is responding quite robustly after lagging and being on a losing end for a number of years. On one hand, it is diversifying its channels and distributions. On the other hand, the content creation is converging across platforms. It's not unusual, I am

told for a reporter to supply the facts for an sms alert, online news flash and story analysis for print all in the course of a days work. I am, therefore, not convinced by the predictions of the imminent demise of newspapers and broadcast TV at the hands of bloggers and YouTube. I believe traditional media can remain at a leading edge of providing content even as it loses its monopoly on the people's attention. Although some organisations come quite close, quality journalism is still by far the domain of the old media. Democracies still need the traditional press to hire professionals whose job is to discover and disseminate the truth. It is with this in mind that I urge you not to be too taken in by the bells and whistles of technology but to hold fast to your established virtues of accuracy, intelligence, fairness and grit. These are the values that set you apart the access in information that is upon us. These are your competitive advantages in the anarchic environment of the new age.

Ladies and gentlemen, the unrivalled alternative of blogs on the net and recent events taking place in traditional media have amplified the discourse on responsible journalism and freedom of speech. We have seen a media corporation sued for remarks made by one of its commentators about Chinese products and the Chinese government. Although it was reported that the comments represented the commentator's strongly held opinion of the Chinese government and not the Chinese people, the Chinese government on the other hand categorized the remarks as a slander against all Chinese and it was aimed to drive a wedge between the government and its people. We have also seen how published caricature of Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be upon Him) has led to uproar by the Muslim communities all around the world. Different societies can hold to different values based on their dominant culture and its historical experiences. It may be all right indeed; it may be a matter of principle for some nations with a secular tradition to be able to caricature the prophets of God but not here. We should not be shy of our cultural norms nor be abashed by our voluntary self-censorship in respect of them. It is not a moral or media sin to respect prophets and in a globalised world where news travels in a blink of an eye and is accessible to all, cultural insensitivities and arrogance can lead cultures to clash and nations to collide.

Even the most freedom loving people in the world know that there is no such thing as unlimited freedom. Freedom of speech is a fundamental right but it is not absolute. The right to freedom of speech and expression cannot be used as a pretext or as an excuse to violate and abuse the reputation and the dignity of people or even individuals, to slander and libel or to defame religion or religious symbols. If this were the case then there would be no laws of defamation or libel and laws against those who incite racial or ethnic violence. I now ask you, where do the limits of freedom of speech and expression lie? Where do you draw the line between disrespect and dissent and between opinions and opinions that defame or are seditious? This is where I believe that readers of both traditional and the new media must have the knowledge and the maturity to sieve between facts and the innuendos and unsubstantiated accusations.

My government continues to support ethical journalism and the responsible corporations that undertake it. The media as we all know and accept is central to nation building. How it is conceived, promoted and finally accomplished. It is also central to good governance. The fundamental consideration is of course that we have a media that is not only free but one that is responsible as well. We also desire for a media that does not undermine racial and religious harmony to the extent when national security and public order become threatened. This is not always easy when we have media that caters to different ethnic constituencies with special religious sensitivities.

The country also needs laws to protect people from criminal defamation. It also needs laws that protect core institutions from seditious attacks. I do not see these laws as curbs on freedom rather they are essential for the healthy functioning of a society. It may cost us perhaps a few decimal points on the world press freedom index, which is based on specific assumptions and premises. However, our security and the wellbeing of our people and our society take precedence. I am happy to note that regulations on new media business models will make up one of the sessions at this summit. I hope to hear more from you on this subject soon.

Ladies and gentlemen, more than in any time in history the media today has the responsibility of fostering understanding, compassion, empathy and unity among the human family. Solidarity transcending religious, national ethnic cultural class and gender identity is no longer an unreachable goal. It may be vital to our survival as a species. Almost all the major crisis that have confronted us in the past few years, environmental, health, economic, political security have underscored that, which is human kind is one.

An important facet of the millions of people living in the region is the diversity of their cultures, religions, traditions and ways of life. Diversity enriches all aspects of life and encourages approaches to learning that are relevant to our increasingly global environment. We look at diversity as an opportunity and a foundation for growth.

The AIBD has initiated several international and regional dialogues involving media professionals and decision makers from all schools of thought to strengthen the understanding and tolerance among broadcasters in various countries. I am confident that such wide ranging and intensive conversations would result in a better concord among stakeholders at various levels.

Apart from issues such as health, education, youth, children, gender, new technologies, HIV-AIDS, poverty elevation and the millennium development goals, the AIBD is also attempting to address culture and the media. This is a subject of great significance considering that cultural revivalism in many parts of the region has generated both positive and negative consequences. The Asia Media Summit is indeed well placed to improve dialogues among the many interested parties in the universe of the media and communications. The goal of nurturing dialogues is preventive of culture and inclusive in nature. May we in our exchanges with each other end up the better for it. I wish you a successful and productive conference. Thank you.

YAB Dato' Seri Abdullah Haji Ahmad Badawi, Prime Minister of Malaysia

Session 1

Emerging ‘New Broadcasters’, Evolving Strategies

Mobile TV and Internet TV such as Joost, Babelgum and Jalipo TV are technological advancements that offer consumers more choice, higher mobility, more interactivity and better quality. TV networks now face a changing competitive landscape as a multiplicity of ‘new broadcasters’ clamors for viewer attention. Is mainstream TV becoming the background medium? Is the viewership going flat? To what extent must we proactively embrace new platforms and new technologies? How do we surf the tides of shifting consumption and viewer patterns? Are broadcast companies prepared to address cross-platform ‘multi-tainment’? What should new content offer?

Tapping Consumer Choices, Delivering More Added Value

Projit Chakrabarty

Yes, “Emerging New Broadcasters.” There are new kids on the block, mobile TV being the first one. It fits in with the “snacking behaviour” of mobile media consumption, which is pretty much representative of the way this medium is being used. Content rights, broadcast technologies, transmissions spectrums and affordable handsets are the key issues that have to be dealt with in this sector to make it successful. Content codes need to be tailored for the media. Mobisodes, framing of shots and editing is going to be very different from the way content is being drafted in the past in terms of the television medium. Asia Pacific leads in this domain with Japan and Korea on the forefront, but recently Malaysia, China: all these countries have caught up and are very much the hub of this sector.

The region is to break the one billion-subscriber market in 2006 and to double the number to two billion mobile phone users by 2011. That is a very large market there. There are 68.4 million mobile TV users by 2010 in Asia Pacific alone, which is nearly 55 percent of the world’s total. This is where all the action in this segment is.

Internet TV, rapid growth of broadband access, computing power and storage capacity are the key drivers here. They enable content delivery to huge populations with almost no geographical limitation. Pricing, bandwidth and network neutrality are the key issues here. Leaders are offering user generated content rather than professionally produced programmes or films, something that we have also seen in the context of news in India in terms of citizens journalism trends. However, broadcasters and movie studios are moving in and there is increasing evidence of full-length TV shows and movies becoming more popular in this medium. The Asia Pacific region is predicted to generate a revenue of \$2.87 billion by 2010.

IPTV is different from internet TV in the sense that this is conventional television using a broadband infrastructure in terms of communication. It is television delivered through a set top box using broadband. The two-way capacity lends itself to voice on demand, video on demand, time shifted content and interactivity. It is expected to be 12.2 billion worldwide with the bulk coming from subscription and the rest from video on demand. Asia Pacific is tipped to provide to half the world subscribers by 2009. Here again, this region leads. Regional broadband penetration is tagged to increase from 16% to 31% by 2017. China will remain the largest market for broadband with 195 million family users followed by India, 140 million by 2017.

They’ve got it and they are flaunting it, the new kids that is. More choices for the consumer, customization of content offerings, mobility, interactivity and addressability with improved targeting of content and improved targeting of advertising.

And what of the idiot box - the good old television? Television will still remain the most efficient medium to reach the mass audience. Television will experiment more with new ideas on product development, product placement, contextual advertising and branded shows. It will create alliances with the new broadcasters to serve new audiences by targeting their content and their advertising more cost effectively. Programming schedules will lend themselves to greater customization by the consumer. New media will become more popular amongst the younger viewers.

A brief look now at what the situation in India is like in terms of these strengths. These three circles basically represent the circle of influence that drives media to consumers. Over a period of time, the dotted lines that are representing the communication between media and consumer will become stronger. And there would be concentricity, if I may use the word in terms of these three. That is what I think we are looking forward to in terms of the future.

How does it look like in India in terms of news? Everything is a homogenous mass clustered around the centre of the market, with a few obvious outliers in the upper right hand quadrant, being business news which is older and have a higher social economic category audiences. In terms of other genres like entertainment, the same trend is repeated. Everything is more or less centred on the homogenous mass. However, if you look at a slightly more mature market like the UK, you'll see a spacing out of audiences where you have a distinct skewer towards the younger audiences, older audiences, higher social economic categories depending on the general brand and the content that they carry.

So, what implications do these have in terms of markets, which are evolving, like in India? If you look at the viewership from a programming perspective and in terms of individual programmes, you do have a similar trend of segmentation that forms and this is what the new media is picking up on. If I were to basically read out this map as opposed to the homogenous mass that I showed you in a few slides earlier, you could broadly say that 60% of the market is undifferentiated in terms of age but moves gradually from left to right on terms of social economic category. There is a distinct high value segment that is forming in the upper right hand side of the quadrant, with segments like up market regional and the upper crust. Cricket maniacs in terms of the kind of fervour that you have probably heard of in terms of the IPL series that is happening in India, is what is driving male audiences of all kinds of age groups. If you were to look at the profiles of some of these segments, say, for example, you look at the upper crust; it's 3.7% of the market. For the higher residency of older male viewers, predominantly from the North of the country, the main appeals are the news, serials and events. The preferred channels are ETV Kannada, NDTV India, India TV and CNBC. They primarily watch during prime time and in the late evenings. This is primarily the news segment, where most of the news viewing happens. If you were to look at something like fun and games, this is a large segment, 15.7% of the market and is skewed on the section A category and predominantly from the North and the West of the country. Their main appeal is game shows, mythological and serial watched primarily during prime time and late evenings. They are predominantly Hindi with the market leaders being Star, Zee and Sony. This is what the advertisers share with a lot of focus. If you look at Mama's Little Darlings there, this is basically 7.6% of the market and skewed by a higher sector led by a 4-14 with a marginal male skewer. Thanks to the action animation that is in vogue in India today. It's led by cartoon networks. A lot of Indian animation is happening in terms of India's homespun animation channel called Hungama TV.

So, basically the point I am making against this backdrop is that there is clear evidence that there is enough consumer choice that is being exercised. I think this is one of the key issues that needs to be debated on, in terms of how the new medium can work in a partnership or an alliance with the existing broadcasters to be able to make use of the choices that are already in evidence and deliver more value to both consumers, advertisers as well as obviously the broadcasters.

Projit Chakrabarty, Head of Market Research and Strategy for the Group, New Delhi Television Limited (NDTV), India

Emerging Power of Content

Ku Kay Mok

I think that it is no longer business as usual for TV businesses. I would like to point out the fact that in the old TV value chain, the bottleneck used to be with distribution. Distribution had very limited means and it was mainly terrestrial with very limited spectrums. So whoever was a broadcaster would control the platform. It almost seemed like content didn't matter. The platform was primary and content secondary.

But what has happened since then? If you'll look at the new value chain for TV, there is a kind of explosion in terms of different delivery methods. You have terrestrial, satellite and cable. And now you have the internet so it is point to point. The challenge with the new value chain is that the power has shifted to what is called the gateway devices. Gateway could be your set top boxes, or it could be anything. It could be, let's say, the Nintendo V; you know, things that actually take advantage of the users' TV and occupy your time.

In a way, interactive entertainment has taken away your time from TV. People are spending more time playing games, for example. People are spending time watching YouTube videos. YouTube itself is a gateway. In general, a lot of these gateways are subsidies. They are offered to consumers at a subsidised rate to actually lock in the consumers. They have a lot of power. Just look at Apple. Apple is a new entrant to the market that has taken a lot of businesses away from the music companies. Now they are taking away businesses from the TV companies as well.

There is the emerging power on the content side. In the past, control of the platform was primary and the content secondary. But now users need good content. What this tells us is that in terms of strategy, we should focus on working with the gateway devices if we don't already control them and we should also focus on the back-end, which is to focus on good content creation.

This is a very busy slide but it kind of summarizes the strategy for Media Corp in our domestic market in terms of multi platform expansion. On the left hand side, the left square, the one in pink, basically says that the business model is "Free-to-Air" and the one on the right, which is blue, says that the business model is Pay TV. Generally in a developed economy like Singapore even the UK and the US, free to air advertising doesn't grow much. The per-capita on ad spending is pretty much stable and what you see in terms of growth is actually Pay TV. This is because in the richer economy, users or consumers tend to allocate more of their disposal income to paid entertainment.

If we were to look at the experience of Singapore and countries like UK, the Pay TV market has doubled every six years. It is growing at about 12 to 13 percent annually. So, basically our multi platform expansion encompasses both, starting from the Free-To-Air business model but trying to branch into the Pay TV model. The three circles that you see there are really the kinds of platforms that are emerging. TV use at home but increasingly what we are seeing is actually out of home kind of TV and on the movie kind of TV. So, that's the kind of platform that we are talking about.

In general, the first thing that Media Corp is focused on in home TV is to upgrade the viewing quality of the Free-To-Air TV. We have launched a High Definition TV at the end of last year. We believe that HD TV is critical in bringing users back to watch TV, to appointment viewing. It's much like viewers who are willing to go to a movie theatre at a specified time to watch a movie because it is of high quality. So, that is one strategy for us to actually bring back the audience to watch TV.

On the Pay TV side- In-Homes, we are positioning ourselves as a content provider. This is specific to the situation in Singapore. The Pay TV operators are the Telcos, whether they are cable or IPTV, which are actually owned by the Telcos. Our strategy there is to become a content provider. Based on the experience of the economies around the world, it has been shown that whoever owns domestic content; there is demand from users. So, Media Corp being a provider of domestic content has a valid proposition to these Telco operators. At the same time, we do operate our own internet TV. So, internet TV in a sense is fairly open. There is no infrastructure needs. We do run a subscription-based video on demand service that is hosted on the internet. In terms of Out-Of-Home, what has changed in Singapore is the transit providers are now the new media owners in a sense. This is because our island is actually very concentrated.

About three million people take the public transport such as the subways and buses everyday and they spend at least an hour on the system. So, from the time they walk down the escalator to the station and waiting for the train and on the train itself, that is a lot of eyeball time. In this area, we are providing what is called transit TV. It is essentially a platform that we sort of own ourselves and we're thinking of co-owning it with the transit providers, showing our entertainment content. It's a branded content kind of play because it's our domestic content interspersed with advertisement.

In countries like China where there are companies like Focus Media that show purely advertising terminals on the elevators, on the transit itself because of the longer travel time there is a need for entertainment content. You just cannot show advertising only kind of content because you'll turn off the commuters. In a sense we believe that the sweet spot for us as broadcasters is actually transit TV, where there is a long enough travel or waiting time and where you just cannot show the commuters advertisements. It has to be advertising properly accompanied by entertainment content.

The last platform is On-the Move. This is a new platform that we are co-owning with the Telcos, this is mobile TV. Mobile TV represents a new genre altogether because it's a personal TV. There are certain restrictions with traditional TV where you have to share it with your family. But mobile TV is really personal. You can carry it with you all the time and it is also much more interactive.

In Singapore, interactive TV has not really taken off because, in general, when somebody is watching TV at home, he tends to be more laid back, so the need to interact is not there. On the mobile phone, part of it is a phone and part of it is actually a kind of users. These are typically young users who have more propensity to interact. This is a new business model altogether, beyond just kind of Pay TV or paid content but it could be a very interactive kind of content bordering on content that can stimulate a demand for shopping, for example. So, there could be new models coming from there.

Moving beyond the domestic market particularly Asia, what we are looking at is a Pan-Asian English content market. Currently over 80 % of the finished TV product market is in English. This is in the US, UK, Canada and Australia. We are looking for like-minded broadcasters in terms of creating a sort of affiliation or alliance in Asia for a very practical thing that we could do together in terms of buying such English programmes. I think with the rise of India, China and the Gulf economies what's going to happen is that there will be more demand for English content in Asia. So, the first thing that we could do is bulk buying. I recently visited Dubai, particularly NBC that launched the NBC action channel and they are very successful. They signed up with Hollywood studios in order to guarantee that they get the American shows into the Pan-Arab region.

Similarly in the Pan-Asian region, that could be something we can start off with and form affiliations in term of getting better rates in buying some of these English programmes. And of course, once we go beyond buying we could do things like regional co-productions. In Singapore we have a very limited talent pool. We are definitely interested in working with other countries in the region to widen talent access but also lower production cost. Our cost of production is higher and we feel that by sharing the cost, like if we co-developed an English show that is shown on multiple platforms, the cost will be lower.

The last thing is really international co-production, specifically working with the American studios. I think what you're seeing is the globalisation of TV. American TV shows like Heroes and Lost are like movies now. They go for world tours and they feature Asian and Middle Eastern actors and actresses in them as well. They are defining TV market as a whole world market. We are definitely in talks with some of these American movie studios to co-produce international shows but perhaps with some Asian elements like marshal arts or with CGI that are done cheaply in Asia. That's definitely something that we're interested to explore.

Ku Kay Mok, Business Development Director, MediaCorp TV Pte Ltd, Singapore

New Opportunities for Content Providers

Francois Thiellet

There exists a crucial reality of the billions of people who are the consumers. I do believe that the alternative offer must not only reflect but also feed and favour this diversity. The second point that we have seen in the last five years is a real explosion and implosion of the media. We see diversity of content in so many channels that are premiere channels all over the world. There is also a diversity of technology. We used to have only terrestrial. Now we have cable, satellite, DVDH and many kinds of distribution possibilities.

A major evolution is the quick development of broadband access worldwide. In our little market in France, we now have almost five million homes over a total of TV homes of 30. We now have five million homes subscribing to IP Television and this number is quickly growing. This is paving the way for major changes. With the broadband access reaching to a high gig rate over one Meg, a number of possibilities have opened up. We used to have a simple life. We had a tri media, the press, the radio and linear channels. But now everybody is creating some of his own content. Everybody is blogging, broadcasting, and streaming content. It's no longer fixed content or a fixed programming grid. Everybody can recreate his own grid. Everybody is an actor somehow of his own television.

This phenomenon is mainly important for the new generation. And for this generation, the TV set is no longer the main screen that they go to discover content. They prefer to surf the net, lead a second life and meet their friends on Facebook. For the content providers and for channels and TV operators, our first difficulty is to see to it that our tools keep on attracting the viewers. Fragmentation of the youth genesis has been a key factor, particularly in France. It has been spectacular for the first time this year.

Our main broadcaster, TV France with over 50% of market share, has fallen below 30%. During the last five years, market share went down to 25%. The first thing this channel did was to address the fast changing environment and launch web-TV, internet platform, and blogs. It also launched a new radio station called Sky in France, targeting young audiences. Now the value of their blog platform is five times the market value of the original radio station itself. And as a content provider, I do hope that this will last forever.

Content remains king, because whatever the technology is what really makes the decision is actually the content. The right channel is the one that is best run, managed and eventually spread out with the best technology backed with the best programmes and the best grids and especially offering the right content to the right population. And for any channel that's starting and when you go and see a Pay TV operator, you'll have to convince him on three points, Will he gain subscribers? Will the channel help him in reducing his cost? And finally how will this affect his output?

As a content provider during the last two years, we had to see, especially in Asia how to adapt our office to this evolution. We are trying to develop, what I could call the "AT-AW-AD" strategy. It's a new name, which stands for any time, anywhere and on any device. What we need is to provide to the end consumers the kind of content that he is seeking at any moment and to reach him with any possible mobile, whether it is a TV handset for mobile TV, his computer at the office with broad-end TV that allows full viewing when he wants to see a specific content or a specific programme or whether it is a normal linear channel when he is a bit too lazy to recreate his own programme grid. This is what we have been developing with four new channels for Asia. One is LUX TV. This is all about luxury and LUX TV is available on satellite in high definition and in satellite on low resolution, SD. We are also now providing short clips, three minutes mainly for 3G or linear channel and 26 minutes programmes for VOD.

The second channel is Euro News, an international news and current affairs from a European perspective. It's a channel that is only strong in Europe and as neutral as possible. It offers a comprehensive coverage of what's happening worldwide. Euro news is available on satellite as well as the linear channels, satellite cable, IPTV and whatsoever. But it has also developed a second feed for mobiles because the projection has to be adapted somehow to these devices. And this channel is also available partly on the internet. You can download some of the videos and some of the programmes from the web site. The channel is also providing some major programmes such as 'No Comment' to a number television stations.

Another example is C Music, C for Classical Music, C for Cinema and it's a new format dedicated mainly to classical music and to the music from movie soundtracks. And I think it's a new way to rediscover classical music. The channel is really bold as a linear channel on cable, satellite, IPTV and so on, and we have facilitated subscription to the channel through the internet. We are also providing another news station for mobile in 2.5 or 3G. We are also producing 26 minute content for VOD, so that people can listen to classical music, as they have never done before.

A new approach since it's on satellite over Asia is Mellow Designer. It's a completely new format where it's one video with three different audios. The video is full HD and I think that you all know it's getting more and more difficult to launch new channels that are not in full HD from now on. This channel in full HD with different soundtracks helps people in their daily life by giving some advices and recommendations to improve their well-being. This is a linear channel in full HD that is also available in SD on the same satellite. We are looking at the possibility of distributing and offering VOD. I don't think that this kind of content is suitable only for mobile but also for 3G at least. So, we are not going to go much in this direction.

For content providers like us, I do think that this quick evolution in the last five years is opening up new opportunities. This is true also for the producers including independent producers who have to deal with the growing concentration of the main media companies worldwide. What is important is not only to be creative and innovative but also to find ways to adapt marketing and distribution strategy to the kind of content that you have.

Francois Thiellet, Founder, Thema TV, France

Session 2

Changing Newsrooms, Redefining Journalism

Some media companies are converging, triggering new configurations of the organisational dynamics and functions of the newsrooms. The changes bring positive outputs such as better flow of information, better use of resources, more communication and more sharing of content. New forms of journalism such as blogging and citizen journalism are emerging, blurring the line distinguishing professional journalists from the ordinary person who now has the tools to disseminate information, ideas and opinions to a wide audience. What do these changes tell us about changing news consumption patterns? How will they impact the organisational/training needs of the newsroom and the gate-keeping functions of media? Should citizen journalists enjoy the same legal rights and privileges as 'professional journalists'?

Empowering Journalists in the Newsroom

Wadah Khanfar

I would like to start by saying that when I was a correspondent, a field correspondent and if you were to ask me what my view of the newsroom at that moment, the newsroom that I refer today in order to feed my stories and to plan with my colleagues and stuff like that, I would have really complained about the newsroom. It is because as a field correspondent, I would always see the newsroom as it's there to constrain, it's there to control, it's there to direct and it's there to be authoritarian and to be central. It was definitely a source of misery for us, the correspondents in the field. And I have found that most of the correspondents for different networks would view the newsrooms as how the opposition would view the government or the way the actors of several of societies would view the authorities. So basically that was the concept of the newsroom.

Then later on, I became in-charge of the newsroom. I would again listen to my colleagues from the field who come to Doha and meet with me. I listen to their frustrations and their arguments as to how come that day, there was a great story involving someone somewhere in the field and your guys here in the newsroom would hold a brisk conference for I don't know what politicians who are talking nonsense and ignoring this magnificent development that was taking place in the background. So, there is always this kind of dynamic dialogue between the field and the newsroom.

In my opinion, the newsroom right now or we in the newsroom should really re-visit the concept of the newsroom because like it or not, the structure that you adopt or use in your newsroom should be based on the philosophy and the way that you would like to see your screen and on the philosophy of reporting the news itself. In Al-Jazeera in particular, we were aware from the first day that our strength was in the field, in concentrating on putting the human being as the centre of our editorial policy and the human being was available in the field. The newsroom always has a tendency towards the macro picture (which is true sometimes and very important) but also has a tendency towards something that is already packaged. News agencies are always feeding the newsroom all over with images and pictures. These images and pictures and stories sometimes amongst our editors in the newsroom would be viewed as sacred sources of confirmation, while the correspondents of the field might be in a way or the other not given the importance that they deserve.

So, number one for me is that the newsroom should voluntarily reduce its authority and give it to the field; give it to the correspondents and to the journalists out there in order to empower them and give them confidence and give them the authority to chose their story, to run with it and to decide actually what to do. That is an important concept and very crucial for the newsroom.

The second issue is sometimes what scares me, that we the media elite have started to think of ourselves as a circle of interest. Don't forget that we have started this profession initially in order to benefit the audience, in order to have allegiance to the masses and that is why they call us mass communication organisations. Our goal is to impart and give the right knowledge to the ordinary people, to question power and centres of authority, and to say things as they are and not to be diplomatically correct all the time. This is what we are here for. This is why we claim we originally started with this mission. We originally started because we would like to take the side of the people.

However with time, with the commercialisation of news and with more and more interest and capital put in the industry and benefits expected by end of the month, I am scared that we will ourselves become a centre of power. And then we will kind of start losing this kind of enthusiasm and mission for the sake of maintaining our power, maintaining our strength and our interest. Therefore, we may become dissociated elite from our audiences. And this could be the end of professional and independent journalism. Therefore the newsroom should be aware of these grand ideas.

I think that more and more our newsrooms are becoming technical. We are concerned about technicalities, hierarchies, structures, instructions, handing over, receiving, output and input. There is less and less brainstorming, thinking, contextualizing, political discussion, enthusiasm and brainstorming sessions in our newsrooms. We journalists are becoming technical operators. That is actually a disaster if it continues because if I were to view an ideal newsroom, I would view global people who would monitor what's happening around them and the area that they are covering, they are monitoring the trends of politics, cultural, social and economic trends that are happening. They have big thoughts of how the formation of this landscape in front of them is taking place and then they are supporting, advising and providing the journalists, producers and the reporters with this kind of guidance.

So, right now we are more on technical rather than that kind of big picture in our newsrooms. We need to reduce our power and we need to empower our field reporters and our correspondents and we need to think of journalism of depth rather than the superficiality of carrying a press conference. Everyone can carry a press conference but the way that we could teach our audience to think about the press conference and to put the press conference in context and to educate them about the cracks in the picture that they see neatly displayed on the screen on the political scene and the way that we could impart in an investigative way, to start digging deep to uncover and understand what is really happening. This is the value and this is the great content that we need to be concerned about. This is how we should empower our newsroom to think and this is how we should empower our journalists.

Our journalists in the newsroom are sometimes converted into receivers of instructions. Rather than that I would suggest that we integrate them into the process of thinking. This is why, for example, in our network now, we have second meetings for editorials on a daily basis. Three editorial meetings daily, sacred and not technical. Not only to say, "Okay, yeah, who's going to receive the report from this correspondent? Who is going to feed it? Who's going to put it on air? No, this is not our business. As senior editors of the newsroom, our business is to have editorial meetings whereby we can think collectively and we can brainstorm ideas. That means that we can be in-touch because I had also warned against another issue, that some of our seniors in the newsrooms in this industry, the broadcasters, in particular, don't even watch the news bulletins. They won't even read the newspapers. They don't know exactly what's happening because they are really busy organising meetings, doing executive duties and marketing, distributions and firing and hiring and doing all these types of issues. Who cares about the screen?

So, I think really our duty is to be there and to understand what's happening and by the end of the day we are digesting this whole complicated input and then after that we concentrate on the big picture on the screen because eventually what appears on the screen defines our identity.

In general we need to re-visit the concept of the authoritative newsroom and de-centralise it and give up power for the field producers and empower the journalists in the newsroom to be more involved in content and content analysis and democratise the newsroom as well. Give them the right to raise their voices when they think that there is something wrong.

It is beautiful to have a newsroom that is rebellious sometimes. There are people that suggest strange ideas and crazy thoughts. These crazy thoughts and strange ideas sometimes make excellent and fine journalism. Thank you very much.

Wadah Khanfar, Director General, Al Jazeera Network, Qatar

Preserving the Integrity of Journalism

Riyaz Sayed-Khaiyum

Bula from Fiji. I will give you a Fijian perspective on this topic.

If communication is the basis of life, as someone has said, then perhaps at no other time in the history of the world is that becoming more self-evident than now.

The world of journalism has not been isolated from the communication revolution, to the point where television stations in the Pacific are calling on more members of the public to report on incidents and shoot footage of events in their neighbourhoods.

I personally am all for the idea of reviving calls for the public to report to our newsroom as they see things happening.

I believe there will also come a time when, like with other more developed countries, people in Fiji will put out their own news on the web.

Blogs are already in existence and are growing at a fast rate.

At the center of these profound changes is the fact that user-friendly technology is increasingly allowing members of the public to gain greater access and participation in the flow and exchange of communication.

This trend puts what was previously in the domain of professional journalists squarely in the hands of the public.

It is inevitable that the public should be allowed to participate. Doing so otherwise would perhaps be trying to stifle development.

It is not the job of journalists to manipulate development of any kind, in this case, technological, for the sake of preserving their “domain”.

However, it is the responsibility of every journalist to ensure that what they are best trained to do does not end up getting distorted for the sake of accommodating the pressures that advancements in technology, or elsewhere, will bring.

Power vs responsibility

Journalists are entrusted with a power that would be well within their boundaries in ensuring news is used only for the purposes for which it is destined – to inform, educate, and generate discussion – primarily as one of the spheres of civil society that facilitate the advancement of social progress.

I suspect that how this can be balanced with the increasing role of “citizen journalism” brought on by technological advancement – will be the challenge for the media industry for much of this century.

It can be safely concluded at this stage then, that leave alone patterns of news consumption, the very nature of what is news will very soon, if it isn't already, be challenged because of the involvement of the consumers of news, in the news gathering process.

In terms of how this will impact the organisational/training needs of the newsroom and the gate keeping functions of the media, the question is, to what extent is the media willing to hand over its role to the citizenry? No one else can answer this better than the media because any industry practitioner will understand the industry's significance in terms of the larger social architecture.

If the systems of law, order and justice need to remain intact for society to remain intact, it is no less important that the integrity of the media be preserved.

The old temptations for practitioners will remain - including wanting to be the first to "break" a story, will be further enhanced by the availability of more instantaneous forms of media. Gone are the days when radio was the only medium that provided this urgency created by its greatest advantage - immediacy.

Should citizen journalists enjoy the same legal rights and privileges as professional journalists?

No. Because professional journalists are trained to do their job and therefore, it can be expected of them to carry out their duties with a degree of responsibility because they have certain professional and ethical standards along which to operate and function.

While citizen journalists can contribute to newsgathering in a unique way through offering first hand reports and description by virtue of having been present at the scene, it would not be safe to assume that their "reports" are all that journalists can go by.

The issues of personal bias, emotion, political and religious affiliation, are just some of the things that will have to be factored into "reports" received by and through them.

If citizen journalism is to be encouraged, journalists must be trained in how to use this trend as a tool, and purely as that alone, for the purpose of helping crystallize events and information surrounding everyday incidents.

While journalists are encouraged to operate within the boundaries of professionalism, it can be safely assumed that members of the public will be tempted to exaggerate, or "perform" while before the public gaze.

Therefore, if the standards of objectivity, accuracy and truth are to be maintained in the practice of journalism, then citizen journalism and every other development brought our way through advancements in communication must be weighed against such standards.

At stake are issues central to the practice of good journalism. These issues can only be ignored at our own peril.

Other equally important issues which arise and must be considered are:

How far can citizen journalism go, in terms of who will not only take responsibility for information, but also be accountable for it?

Who will receive and handle complaints for an individual/family/organisation impacted adversely by bloggers?

Who will judge what is fair comment and will there be any limits on the depth and sensitivity of information shared on the web, so that one's private/personal life does not end up being splashed worldwide?

And subsequently, what of the rules governing defamation and the impact on a person's social standing through a comment made in public verbally, electronically, or in print?

Recently we had a case of a story written about Fiji by a New Zealand journalist who relied on an unnamed blogger as his source regarding a story that did much harm to my country.... the bloggers information was grossly incorrect and the journalist never apologized.

The explosion of multi-media has made the creation of citizen journalism, blogging etc, and the subsequent blurring of lines with professional journalism, inevitable.

But it will be up to media organisations themselves to ensure the blurring does not lead to the complete distortion of the role of the media, and the necessary part that public comment/input and views play in helping articulate current issues.

The Fiji Broadcasting Corporation Ltd context

In the local context, FBCL operates within a world, which, in terms of news and information demands, is as complex as Fiji's demographics.

A population of more than 800,000 is spread out over a little more than 300 islands, only a third of which are populated, and, which are spread out over a total area of 18, 270 square kilometers.

Our six different stations target as many different audiences.

This perhaps also explains why Fiji has a plethora of radio stations, magazines, newspapers, and now, with the issuing of free-to-air licenses by government – what looks set to be a competitive number of television stations expected to provide much awaited and needed healthy competition and alternatives to Fiji Television Ltd.

Part of our audience is made up of highly IT-literate consumers, whose needs are made more complicated by their exposure to the internet, television and a multi-media environment which extends into schools, the workplace and even the home.

This segment of the local population has become so immersed in this multi-media culture that even in our homes, it has become the norm rather than the exception for families and individuals to have multiple mobile phones, Blackberries, computers, USBs, and other such gadgets.

This is apart from other modern-day techno paraphernalia such as TV sets, DVD players and recorders, digital cameras, etc.

On the other end of the scale exists FBCL's duties to its rural listeners.

Challenges

Within the overall context of these changes and challenges in local culture, the same challenges and constraints that faced journalists more than a decade ago, remain.

There are more pressures but the same meager financial resources from which to operate, in remuneration, facilities and equipment, all of which erode job satisfaction and therefore aggravate the sometimes-vicious job cycle of dissatisfied, under-enthusiastic and over-stressed journalists.

It is for these reasons that, as philosophical as journalists are in danger of becoming most times, the bottom line is the bottom line must improve in order to benefit workers across media organisations – including journalists themselves.

As Fiji's oldest broadcaster, the Fiji Broadcasting Corporation Ltd. has gone through a reorganisation that has reduced its relationship with the State to an annual subsidy for its two public radio stations - Fiji's oldest and first radio stations – which now operate in a semi-commercial mode while maintaining a public service-oriented programming format.

FBCL's other four stations have moved into a completely commercial mode, with the relevant organs of the State applying the pressure on FBCL to deliver financially – just like any other statutory body.

Critical importance

This is where having a sustainable newsroom is of critical importance to us.

FBCL has always had a reputation for good broadcast journalism – something we have been working hard at restoring, in the aftermath of the news blackout FBCL suffered following Fiji's first coup of 1987.

As a national broadcaster, the responsibilities on us are enormous – we are often the only medium that reaches the rural-based listening public in the outer islands and the highlands. Therefore, to highlight their plight and needs, we must ensure we do not stray from the practice of developmental journalism.

While on this point, we have started replacing some of our old supposedly cost saving ultra cheap transmitters and other broadcasting equipment in the past few months. However, there is still a need to replace more, which could cost us between one to two million dollars. It's money we don't have. Certain management decisions of the past have put us in a precarious situation. We want to develop, we need to develop but we can't get to a position where we will finally say yes now we can take on our competition on a level footing.

At the same time, we must meet the fast-developing information needs of the IT-sophisticate component of the populace that expects an up-to-date and vibrant web-based news service.

This, needless to say, is a pulsating news sector in itself, with several independently-run news-based websites hosted in Fiji, along with sites operated by all of the media organisations in Fiji, be they broadcast or print.

Along with a website, we also text our news headlines to mobile phone subscribers.

As ambitious as all these endeavours may sound, the sad reality is, our newsroom is only treading water because our journalistic aspirations are limited by financial constraints.

To begin with, our commercial competitors have had a 20-year head start on us, and it could be said in all fairness that unlike broadcasters such as ourselves, who are a mix between commercial and public programming, all-out commercial outfits do not always operate with the national interest at heart.

It is therefore left to media organisations such as ourselves to help bring journalistic balance (no pun intended) to a large section of Fiji's broadcast media, by virtue of our responsibilities as a public broadcaster.

The market dynamics are further complicated by the more lucrative financial base of television stations – which are able to pay journalists up to three times more than what we can afford.

As David Robie, former University of the South Pacific journalism program co-ordinator, puts it in his compilation, *The Pacific Journalist*:

“Starting salaries are low in many Pacific news organisations – in Fiji, for example, a journalist can be paid as low or as less than half (\$F7000 a year) the starting salary for a secondary school teacher.”

Those figures are from a publication of seven years ago. They remain largely the same for radio journalists in Fiji and therefore affect the quality of reporters we are able to recruit – and therefore, determines how far above the game we are able to lift the quality of our news service.

Concluding remarks

To end, the new world of the multi-media, cyberspace-based existence, with its converged advantages of speed, capacity and conveyance of image, has truly come to Fiji, as it has in other parts of the world. It can be safely said that this new world will forever change the face of journalism – creating, perhaps, a ‘new world journalism’.

The challenge for us in Fiji is perhaps the same for those of you that represent other parts of the region, in this: How far are we prepared to go to ensure that the foundations of journalism are not compromised in favour of the glamour and virtual advantages of this new world journalism.

Thank you.

Riyaz Sayed-Khaiyum, CEO, Fiji Broadcasting Corporation Limited (FBCL), Fiji

Changing Newsrooms, Redefining Journalism: New 'Mediagogy for the Oppressed'

Saed Jamal Abu-Hijleh

New advancements in Information and Communications Technologies (ICTs) are dramatically changing the media landscape. Major developments in the electronic media are occurring at unprecedented rate creating new interconnected platforms that offer wider public participation. An ongoing revolution in digital technologies is radically altering patterns of news production and consumption on the local, regional, and international levels.

The Internet has been transformed into a multi-layered and interconnected media platform facilitating better flow of information and enhanced sharing of content in different formats. The Internet developed from a medium that allowed the interaction between one-to-one, then one-to-many, and now many-to-many. Web 2.0 is the term used to describe the development in the World Wide Web infrastructure and web-design software that led to the evolution of web-based communities. These developments resulted in a massive increase in User-Generated Content (UGC) on the internet that can be found on weblogs, newsgroups, mailing lists, bulletin boards, chat forums, and independent news websites.

Accordingly, new forms of participatory journalism have emerged expressed in an explosion in the number of blogs and citizens' journalism¹ websites that started to challenge the monopoly and hegemony of mainstream media on, what I call, news production assembly lines, and to challenge the ability of the big media conglomerates to set the global news agendas deterministically as has been the case for many years in the past.

These changes are creating more opportunities for broader participation from marginalized and colonized communities around the world. More space is available for these communities to report on unreported, misreported, or underreported news in their localities.

Since mass media, especially the news media, has always been used in the process of the reproduction of oppressive socioeconomic and sociopolitical orders by serving the interest of the elites in society, the disenfranchised people around the world must utilise these changes in media landscapes and platforms to participate more in the newsproduction assembly lines. What is needed is what I dare to call a new 'Mediagogy of the Oppressed'.

¹ Many argue that the term "citizens' journalism" should be replaced with terms like "grassroots journalism", "people's journalism", or "participatory journalism", since there are millions around the world who are considered stateless or without citizenship (like refugees or illegal immigrants).

production assembly lines. What is needed is what I dare to call a new 'Mediagogy of the Oppressed'².

This Mediagogy is based on a comprehensive understanding of the new media landscapes and the intricate mesh of interconnected platforms that can be accessible. It should be an integral part of empowerment strategies for the oppressed by offering new venues to participate more effectively in the development process of their communities. This will help marginalised communities to take control of how they are portrayed in the media; to move away from negative imagery of helplessness or victimization into the positive image of people who are struggling to take mastery of their lives and who are endeavoring to change the oppressive structures that marginalised them in the first place; to move from passive receptors of media and news content to active participants in generating media and news.

The suggested Mediagogy includes actions that work to change the structural media biases present in the "propaganda model" of capitalist societies put forward by Edward S. Herman and Noam Chomsky in their classical book (Manufacturing Consent: The Political Economy of the Mass Media) first published 20 years ago. The "propaganda model" describes the systemic biases in the mass media and seeks to explain them in terms of structural economic factors. It postulates five general classes of "filters" that determine the type of news that is presented in the media: ownership of the medium, medium's funding sources, sourcing, flak, and anti-communist ideology. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, Chomsky and Herman argued that the "anti-communism" filter has been largely replaced by an "anti-terrorism" filter. Thus, the pressure to create a steady, lucrative business perpetually distorts the news items reported, as well as the manner in which they are reported. Also the heavy dependence of mainstream news companies on governmental news sources results in further distortion of the news. Consequently, corporate media tries to minimise the possibilities of lost revenues by reporting news in a way that is more favorable to government and business interests, and shuns unappealing news about them.

Citizen journalism is not constrained by these "filters" and the more people participate in independent news outlets, blogs, and social-networks in cyberspace, the less control the corporate media will have on setting news agendas.

The control over knowledge, ideas and beliefs is a major facet of power as it is structurally connected to the control over production, finance, and security. Therefore the media is part and parcel of the fabric of "structural power"³ in societies around the world. The 'Mediagogy of the oppressed' understands this crucial role played by the media and hence tries to maximise oppressed peoples' access and participation in media channels.

The 'Mediagogy of the oppressed' will undoubtedly be faced with obstacles and determinants. There are several factors that will play a role in limiting or thwarting effective participation from the oppressed in the new electronic media platforms and outlets:

² My usage of the terminology 'Mediagogy of the Oppressed' as a heading for my paper is inspired by the title of the famous book (The Pedagogy of the Oppressed) by the late great Brazilian educator Paulo Freire.

³ For more in depth discussion of the concept of "structural power" see Suzan Strange's book (States and Markets, London: Pinter, 1988).

- Economic and financial factors: people who are economically disadvantaged will have less access to new technologies and there will always be a lag time before technologies get cheaper and thus delay or prevent participation. There are innumerable examples to illustrate this: broadband internet prices, new advanced mobiles, new software, etc. Also ownership of media outlets and platforms is determined by economic and financial power and this affects access patterns on the local, regional, and international levels.
- Infrastructural disparity factors: there is still a big gap in the ICT infrastructure between developed and developing countries, between 'North' and 'South', as well as regional disparities within countries between rural and urban communities or between different areas based on ethnic, religious, or racial considerations. This "digital divide" is a reflection of the economic disparities embedded in the contemporary world capitalist system.
- Knowledge and technical know-how factors: there is still a big gap in knowledge and know-how related to the construction, operation, use, and maintenance of the different ICT equipments and platforms. This necessitates major programs and initiatives for technology transfer and training that requires considerable financial resources.
- Censorship factors: Although anonymity is encouraging more and more people to participate in electronic media 'Big brother' is still watching! Governments in both developed and developing countries are tracking dissident voices through digital fingerprints and cyberspace espionage. In many countries people were jailed for writing articles or opinions published in news websites and blogs or for maintaining mailing lists with 'undesirable content' under the pretext of 'protecting national security' or 'fighting terrorism'. Although cyberspace security is a global concern⁴ it has been abused by oppressive regimes to curtail wider participation from the oppressed and marginalized and to shut off dissident opinions.
- Cultural factors: Linguistic, religious, and some times conservative traditional factors limit oppressed people ability to effectively access the new media outlets and platforms. For example, cyberspace language is dominated by English which necessitates an adequate knowledge of it in order to be able to navigate and effectively utilise the different features and software available on-line.
- Limited exposure and circulation factors: many argue that blogs and alternative/ independent news websites have limited outreach and cannot compete with the global outreach of mainstream media companies and news agencies and thus have limited effects on setting the news agendas. The idea of the limited outreach of blogs was articulated by Stefan Glanzer, one of the founders of blogging system 20six: "If you want to reach millions you book an ad on TV and if you want to reach one person you use e-mail or the telephone. But if you want to reach between 5 and 500 people a blog is the ideal tool to communicate"!

⁴ See International Communications Union (ITU) recommendations on this issue (<http://www.itu.int>).

Nonetheless, the struggle to overcome or even transcend some of these obstacles is continuing unabated. For millions of people around the world it is an integral part of the struggle for social justice, freedom, and democracy; inseparable from the struggles for the attainment of sociopolitical and socioeconomic rights.

In order to be effective in making his/her voice heard, an oppressed or marginalised person, or group, has to become what I call digitally proactive. One has to acquire the right mix of electronic media skills, to be able to juggle in cyberspace to maximize the usage of the different platforms and channels that are available on the internet to disseminate ones ideas, opinions, or news. For example, an activist blogger can maximize exposure and traffic to his/her weblog by creating 'visibility clouds' using registrations in several search engines, blog directories, RSS directories, and advertise links to his/her blog using several mailing lists and through social tagging in web communities' sites like Facebook, MySpace, and YouTube.

'Mediagogy of the oppressed' and the case of Occupied Palestine'

For Palestinians living under the Israeli military occupation the issue of instituting an effective Mediagogy is not a luxurious endeavor but is part and parcel of a popular movement to end injustice in Palestine. Indeed, the conditions of imposed siege and prison-like lifestyle that Palestinians are subjected to force them to think more and more of creative ways in using ICTs and new news media platforms to educate people around the world about their suffering and to highlight the need of international solidarity in the struggle to achieve a just and lasting peace in Palestine. Cyberspace is needed to transcend 'oppressive space'; the internet is needed to transcend the Israeli 'catching net'; satellite is needed to illuminate the misunderstood causes of Palestinian plight!

All throughout the years of the Israeli military occupation of the West Bank and Gaza Israel controlled and regulated all aspects of life by a set of military orders. These orders thwarted the development of viable ICT products and infrastructure. After the signing of the Oslo Agreement in 1993, Palestinians were able to make some considerable advancement in the ICT sector. The Palestinian ICT market began to revitalize aided by favorable regulations from the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) and by increased demand for ICT products and services from the Palestinian private and public sectors, as well as from universities and NGOs. By mid 1990s several Palestinian Internet Service Providing companies (ISPs) were established making internet accessible to an increasing number of subscribers.

In the beginning of 2000, the Palestinian Information Technology Association (PITA) collected the following set of ICT indicators for the West Bank and Gaza:

- 32.8% of households own a computer.
- 50.9% of persons (10 years and above) use the computer.
- 15.9% of households have access to the internet.
- 50.8% of households have fixed phone lines.
- 81% of households own at least one mobile phone.
- 49.9% of the persons (10 years and above) who use the computer know how to use the internet.
- Internet users are 18.1% of persons aged 10 years and above.
- 58.3% of persons aged 10 years and above have e-mail accounts.

Unfortunately a great setback occurred. Israeli intransigence during the interim period of the Oslo Agreement evident in the continued land confiscation and Jewish settlement policies resulted in the collapse of the peace process and the outbreak of the second Palestinian Uprising after the provocative visit of Ariel Sharon to Al-Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem in September 2000.

Israeli repressive measures during the Uprising resulted in the destruction of big portion of the public institutions built by the PNA during the first years of the Oslo process. The large number of Palestinian casualties⁵, the destruction of infrastructure including major ICT installations and the bombing and destruction of TV and Radio stations⁶, the continued land confiscation and settlement activities, and the building of the unprecedented Separation Wall⁷ inside the West Bank, made the revival of the peace process seem to be more distant than ever.

Biased News Media Coverage

There has been great biases in the way international news media, mainly western media, have covered the Palestinian issue. There are many studies that documented the nature and underlying causes of these biases especially in the American media. Several media watch groups and independent news organisations have created websites dedicated to highlighting and exposing the grave biases in reporting events in the Occupied Palestinian Territories (OPT) and in the Middle East in general. For example, American Journalist Alison Weir⁸, formed an organisation called If Americans Knew and conducted extensive research on how the American media is covering the conflict in the OPT highlighting the Israeli-centric nature of reporting. The organisation's website (www.ifamericansknew.org) gives numerous examples of how the different American news agencies and networks covered the tragic events of the current Palestinian Uprising. One of the stark examples given is how the American media covered Palestinian and Israeli deaths. The empirical evidence given proves that Israeli deaths were reported at rates much higher than Palestinian deaths, reaching to a level of 14 times higher in the case of children killed in the conflict. Weir stresses that this kind of coverage is misleading the American public and makes it easier for the US government to continue its economic, military, and political support for Israel without any serious objection.

This highlights the need for Palestinians to adopt a dynamic 'Mediagogy' to counter balance the Israeli-centric reporting in the international media. It is needed to rectify the distortion of the image of Palestinians in the news and to reveal the truth and dispel myths about the Palestinian-Israeli conflict and the Israeli military occupation of Palestine.

⁵ In March 2008, Israeli Information Center for Human Rights in the Occupied Territories (B'Tselem) reported the number of Palestinians killed during the second Palestinian Uprising to be 4,720.

⁶ Palestine TV and Radio Headquarters were bombed and completely destroyed by Israeli helicopter gunships in 2000; Other local TV and Radio stations have been bombed, raided, and had their archives stolen by the Israeli army all throughout the years of the Palestinian Uprising (2000-to present).

⁷ Palestinians call it the Apartheid Wall. For more information on the effects of the Apartheid Wall on Palestinian society see (www.stopthewall.org) and also the website for the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs in the OPT (<http://www.ochaopt.org>).

⁸ Alison Weir was a panel speaker at the Asia Media Summit 2007.

Palestinian Mediagogy

In the past few years Palestinian activists and a growing mass of supporters all over the world have created thousands of alternative news websites, blogs, podcasts, mailing lists, and solidarity groups in web-communities, to educate international publics about the realities of the plight of the Palestinian people and their just struggle to end Apartheid in Palestine. The totality of these efforts aim to break the mal-reporting trends of the main news agencies and to end their monopoly on setting the news agenda for Palestine and the Middle East region as a whole.

Within Palestine the process of news production is changing rapidly. Most local radios and TVs now have news websites and many are also broadcasting live on the internet. Several local TV stations have also created channels on YouTube and are making their news reports available for thousands of viewers around the world. Outside Palestine, Palestinian expatriates created several successful alternative news websites, among them the famous ElectronicIntifada.net that now has bred other sites like ElectronicIraaq.net and ElectronicLebanon.net.

During Israeli military invasions of Palestinian cities, Palestinian residents become reporters within their localities calling local radio and TV stations with eyewitness accounts. Some take digital photos or videos and upload them onto YouTube channels or send them to main Palestinian news sites on the web like:

<http://www.imemc.org> - International Middle East Media Center (en)

<http://www.pnn.ps> - The Palestine News Network (en/ar/he/fr)

<http://english.wafa.ps> - WAFA - Palestine News Agency (en/ar/he/fr)

<http://www.maannews.net> - Ma'an News (en/ar/he)

As an alternative Palestinian news agency Ma'an News⁹ was established in 2004 as an on-line News agency that publishes up-to-the-minute news in Arabic, English, and Hebrew and is composed of a network of nine independent TV stations and production studios located in each major city of the West Bank and Gaza. Ma'an News is a good example of a hybrid between regular and citizens/participatory journalism and it is certainly a reflection of how newsrooms are changing in the new millennium.

The power of participatory/citizens journalism (personal examples)

** My first exposure to the power of citizens' journalism occurred in October 1990. I helped my university friend Mathew Bergman from the USA to go to Palestine to record video interviews with Palestinians from different walks of life in order to document how Palestinian society was coping under the Israeli military occupation during the first Palestinian Uprising. Mathew was not a journalist. He had a degree in anthropology and he was doing this documentary project to educate his fellow Americans about the realities of the situation in the OPT as a form of solidarity with the Palestinian people. He interviewed Palestinian philanthropists, social activists, educators, visual artists and musicians. But while in Jerusalem, Mathew learned from a circulated leaflet that the

⁹ Ma'an means 'together' in Arabic.

radical Jewish group "Temple Mount Faithful" was planning to enter Al-Aqsa Mosque area on Monday, October 8, 1990, and install a "cornerstone" for the "rebuilding of Solomon Temple" which they claim existed in the same location of Al-Aqsa mosque thousands of years ago. So Mathew tried to enter into the walled area of Al-Aqsa Mosque, which called Al-Haram Al-Qudsi Al-Sharif by Muslims, anticipating that this provocative move from the Temple Mount Faithful might cause ethnic friction and violence. His intention was to document any incident that might occur. Israeli police prevented him from entering the mosque's area so he went to the Mount of Olives that overlooked Al-Aqsa mosque area from the east. As he mounted his video camera on a tripod and started to film, Israeli soldiers stormed the Al-Aqsa mosque compound and started to shoot at Palestinian worshipers who gathered to prevent the Temple Mount Faithful group from entering the mosque. In less than 20 minutes Israeli forces massacred 23 Palestinians and injured more than 150. Mathew was the only one to film this massacre from the east. Western journalists all mounted their cameras on the Israeli side and only recorded footage of some stones thrown in the direction of the Western Wall (called Wailing Wall by the Jews). Not a single person from the Temple Mount Faithful was injured but western news media footage gave the misleading impression that the Israelis were the ones who were attacked by stones but failed to film the concurrent massacre inside the Al-Aqsa Mosque compound. Mathew's tape clearly showed how Israeli forces prevented Palestinian ambulances from entering the mosque's compound for more than 18 minutes and thus several people bled to death. The sound on the tape also proved Israeli lies that the Sheikh Al Jamal of Al-Aqsa mosque was calling for the 'killing of the Jews' on the mosque's loudspeakers. In fact, the tape proves that Sheikh Al Jamal pleaded with the Israeli authorities to stop the massacre and allow the ambulances to save the injured. Mathew then hurried to West Jerusalem and told several American news agencies and networks that he had a tape of the massacre but none were interested in airing his tape and some asked him if he had more footage of stone throwing in the direction of the Wailing Wall!! Mathew was extremely shocked, first by the horrifying scenes of the massacre and then by the appalling response from western news media personnel. Eventually Mathew was able to sneak the tape to Jordan and gave the tape to PLO advisor Mr. Bassam Abu Sharif who sent the tape to the United Nations Security Council (UNSC). The tape proved Israeli lies and attempts to alter the facts about what truly happened on that bloody Monday. As a result the UNSC passed Resolution No. 624 (1990):

1. Expresses alarm at the violence which took place on October 8 at the Al-Haram Al-Sharif and other Holy places of Jerusalem resulting in over twenty Palestinian deaths and the injury of more than one hundred fifty people, including Palestinian civilians and innocent worshippers.
2. Condemns especially the acts of violence committed by the Israeli security forces resulting in injuries and loss of human life.
3. Calls upon Israel, the occupying power, to abide scrupulously by its legal obligations and responsibilities under the Fourth Geneva Convention, which is applicable to all the territories occupied by Israel since 1967.
4. Requests that the Secretary-General submit a report to it before the end of October 1990 containing his findings and conclusions.
5. Reaffirms that a just and lasting solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict must be based on its Resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973) through an active negotiating process, which takes into account the right of security for all states in the region, including Israel, as well as the legitimate political rights of the Palestinian people.

Mathew's videotape is a big proof of the importance of participatory journalism in effectively challenging the prejudiced reporting of the main news agencies and networks, which is, to a large extent, facilitating the perpetuation of oppression around the world by either camouflaging or justifying it.

** My friend and colleague Mark Turner came to Palestine in the spring of 2002 as a volunteer with the International Solidarity Movement (ISM). Turner accompanied emergency relief volunteers providing medicine, food, supplies and other services to Palestinian civilians during periods of Israeli military invasions and imposed curfews on Palestinian cities, villages, and refugee camps. Upon returning to the United States, Turner established Research Journalism Initiative (RJI), a non-profit organisation dedicated to educating westerners and other people around the world about Palestinian life under the Israeli military occupation. In December 2007, Turner returned to the West Bank. His goals were to produce a series of educational documentary video and radio newsreels about the situation in the West Bank and to conduct live video conferences between Palestinian university students and American high school students.

In February 2007, RJI volunteers filmed and produced a series of short documentary films concerning the Israeli operation, dubbed "Hot Winter," in the West Bank city of Nablus. During the days-long operation, RJI completed five short films, including an interview with Jihan Tahedush, an eleven-year-old girl used by the Israeli military as a human shield. Volunteers brought the interview to the attention of the Israeli media and human rights organisations B'Tselem and Human Rights Watch, which led to investigations into this illegal practice by the Israeli military. On April 11, 2007, Turner shot another videotape of Israeli soldiers using Palestinian children as human shields. All of these tapes were uploaded on YouTube and resulted in subsequent reporting by some main news agencies in the international media.

Currently, I am cooperating with Mr. Turner to form a multimedia training organisation called the Nablus Open Media Center (NOMC) with the slogan "NO to Media Control". The NOMC shall facilitate workshops in advanced film, radio and photography production and post-production techniques. Palestinian journalism students and civil society activists shall be trained to produce media content that shall be archived and made available online in different formats.

** A remarkable and unfortunately tragic illustration of the importance of participatory /citizen journalism and the necessity to be digitally proactive is provided by an incident that occurred at the beginning of this year on which I was able to report. On January 4, 2008, at around 12 pm, Israeli soldiers opened fire on Palestinian worshippers on their way to Friday prayer at Al Shuhada Mosque in the neighborhood where I live in the city of Nablus. My neighbor Mr. Ahmad Abu Hantash was hit in the back of his head with three rubber-coated metal bullets causing extensive damage to his brain and neck. Mr. Abu Hantash went into a coma and died of his injury two weeks later. The shooting was unprovoked and it is exemplary of the Israeli Army complete disregard of human life and the sanctity of holy places.

Immediately after the shooting I went out from the mosque and went to the crime scene and took digital photos with my mobile phone. I then walked to Nablus specialty hospital located only 100 meters away and where Mr. Abu Hantash was taken immediately after he was shot. I met with my neighbors who were walking with Mr. Abu Hantash to the mosque at the time of the shooting and recorded their eyewitness accounts of the crime. I also interviewed Mr. Abu Hantash's brothers and relatives and then ran to my house and wrote a news report and attached several digital photos to it. I sent the report to my mailing list, which contains 700 e-mails and uploaded the report to my personal blog¹⁰, which is also fed automatically into my Facebook account via RSS. In less than half an hour the story was picked up by the major Palestinian news websites and was later reported in several Israeli news sites as well. The information that I collected, along with other evidence material, is also being used by the Abu Hantash family in their legal action against the Israeli soldiers who committed the crime.

Into the future

The future is already here! And it is engendering more possibilities than ever. Conscious and skilled proaction is what determines one's position in the new media landscape. The oppressed should seize the opportunities made available by the new electronic platforms to generate and share media content in ways that can aid in the development process of their communities as well as break the cycle of marginalisation imposed on them. Digitally active participants must understand the 'viral' nature of media content sharing. News sharing and propagating ideas and beliefs can benefit from three-dimensional domino effects set forth by intelligently utilising the interconnected electronic media platforms and tools (E-mail, blogs, web-based communities like Facebook, MySpace, YouTube, RSS feeds, mobiles and ipods, search engines, etc.).

Undoubtedly, the obstacles and determinants that I have explained are varied and serious, thus the need for a conscious Mediagogy for the oppressed. New regulations should not thwart participatory journalism initiatives using 'Big Brother' pretexts! The struggle for a more just distribution of global media resources is once again part and parcel of the struggle to achieve socioeconomic and sociopolitical justice around the world. The struggle to end Israeli Apartheid in Palestine is one major battle in the global fight to end oppression.

¹⁰<http://abuhijleh1982.blogspot.com>

Saed Jamal Abu-Hijleh, Director, Center for Global Consciousness (CGC) Nablus, Palestine

Session 3

Regulations And New Media Business Models

Technological advancement and adoption trends in computing, broadband and mobile telephony call for new regulatory approaches to support new media business models. There is a need for an effective legislative framework capable of sustaining a level playing field where creativity and innovation can breathe free and income generation is not inhibited. Should we apply some principles from traditional media to the new media? Should we adopt some minimum rules to provide sufficient legal space for new media businesses to find their niche in the market and evolve to fit the needs of consumers? What are the policy implications for User Generated Content with regard to copyright infringement, information accuracy and content quality?

Regulation of New Media

Mogens Schmidt

The theme for this year's Summit, 'New Visions,' is indeed very pertinent. New media hold great potential as a resource for freedom of expression and free flow of information. Being democratic means that everybody who has access – and this is indeed a serious limitation in many countries – can use them as consumer or producer. They may serve as a platform for dialogue across borders and allow for innovative approaches to the acquisition and distribution of knowledge.

Technological advancement and adaptation trends in computing, broadband and mobile telephony call for an effective legislative framework conducive to create a level playing field that does not stifle creativity, innovation, freedom of expression and the free flow of information.

In this presentation, I will focus on one aspect of this broader question, namely "should new media be subjected to any new and specific regulatory regime?" Will we apply the same regulatory principles to new media that we have developed for traditional media?

At the outset it is important to remember the role the media – new and traditional - play for the "3 Ds": development, democracy and dialogue. Free, independent and pluralistic media in all its forms are becoming an increasingly important factor in social and human development and media are, as the Deputy Prime Minister of Malaysia said this morning, critical to harness this dynamics.

UNESCO has, as the only UN agency with a particular mandate to defend freedom of expression and promote the free flow of information, the responsibility in collaboration with Member States to promote regulatory practices that are conducive to this principle. After all, freedom of expression is a very fundamental right.

One could say that without the right to seek knowledge and information freely, you would never be able to know about your rights and freedoms. It is in this sense that Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, whose 60 years anniversary we are commemorating this year, is a right that underpins the other universal human rights. The article reads: "Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive, and impart information and ideas through any media regardless of frontiers."

Let me also mention the Declaration of Sofia, endorsed by the UNESCO General Conference in 1997, which states "The access to and the use of new media should be afforded the same freedom of expression protections as traditional media." This was again reconfirmed in the Declaration of Principles from the Geneva session of the World Summit on the Information Society in December 2003. Also in the Geneva Declaration, adopted by all the UN Member States, we read: "Communication is a fundamental social process, a basic human need and the foundation of all social organization. It is central to the Information Society. Everyone, everywhere should have the opportunity to participate and no one should be excluded from the benefits the Information Society offers."

These are the principles we should keep in mind, when discussing the necessary regulatory framework for new media.

However, we see quite often that as the impact of new media increases, so do regulation techniques that can be used to limit the free flow of information. New media are often subject to restrictions that will not be accepted in traditional media. Violations of freedom of expression are growing, and the need to discuss how to prevent undesired side effects of new regulation has become urgent.

New ICTs and new media have brought enhanced business competition and development, empowerment of individuals and communities to the better of democracy, increased diversity and media pluralism. Everyone - and again this is a substantial limitation in several parts of the world - with a connection can start a web-radio or TV, while every internet user has access to an immense diversity of media, provided there are no filters on the Internet.

This is in fact a huge challenge - for the good – to the situation of media concentration or oligopolies that we see in many societies, a situation which is often resulting from past insufficient or outdated regulatory frameworks. This challenge has an impact for traditional media, which are facing increased competition, a dilution of the advertising market, which again is impacting their sustainability, issues around exploitation and protection of copyright and intellectual property rights.

In order to tackle these challenges, several strategies have been attempted, from print newspapers strengthening their online services, for instance, and thus transforming themselves also into being “new media-outlets” while at the same time they are transforming their print pages into in-depth analysis outlets that readers will digest the day after to complement the news read online the day before.

There are also massive challenges to public service broadcasters. They are responding in different ways. Many are very diligently integrating web-services, for instance, on children, youth, and educational programming, as well as they are encouraging and including user-generated content. Still, they are facing serious obstacles. For example, the European Commission is considering regulatory responses to claims from private broadcasters and new media companies, including from the telecommunication industry that public service broadcast organisations exercise unfair competition and thus distort the market. Broadcasters also meet increasing competition from audio-visual production companies, which are ready to diffuse for free their productions on the web as a promotional tool.

Eventually the most serious challenge will be coming from the telecommunication companies which are now strongly moving into the field of content production, particularly content distribution on all mobile and digital platforms. Recent battles in France between the large telecommunication company Orange and one of the biggest private television companies, Canal +, show that the public service broadcasters are not alone in finding good answers to this new challenge.

But there are also challenges to the new media themselves. The new media market today has very few entry barriers. With little resources everyone can become a publisher or a broadcaster - and the real entry barrier is no longer primarily financial resources, but more so good ideas and the tools and capacity to pursue them. This raises the next issue, namely, that while new business models for increasing pluralism and diversity of voices

are available, they at the same time present new challenges to quality and professionalism. We all know that much user-generated content or citizens journalism does not comply with the professional and ethical standards we want to see in the media, traditional and new. And while this may pose less of a problem to some groups in society it points to the necessity of strengthening the quality of journalism and other relevant education and of proactively engaging in media and information literacy programs in the entire school system.

It is important in any new regulatory framework to accommodate all these diverse interests and not to do it through "discipline", "punishment" or "control". A regulatory framework for new media must respect the good old saying that "one size does not fit all" and it should be dynamic and people oriented as technology is constantly evolving and changing. Instead of trying to cover as many aspects of media and society under one common code or statute, regulation should be multi-tiered and separately developed to accommodate the changes in technology and the different domains of media. The ongoing discussions in the Internet Governance Forum as well as other WSIS follow-up discussions all converge towards this idea of flexibility aimed at avoiding to stifle the eminent democratic, dynamic and open character of the internet as a hitherto unseen powerful means of communication to the better of development and achieving the Millennium Development Goals.

It is the same intention that lies behind the Convention on the Protection and Promotion of Cultural Diversity, which UNESCO adopted in 2005. Overall we should try to ensure that new regulations are built upon policies that are the result of democratic decisions, are transparent with clear and verifiable rules and allow for a free and fair competition when it comes to the allocation of resources. They must also promote and incubate entrepreneurial approaches. Good examples can be seen, for instance, in the Indian policy on community radio stations, or the way that "knowledge parks" have been critical to incubate new media start-ups in large parts of Asia and the Arab World.

Despite these needs we can see that there are growing restrictions on the use of new media, brought about by the increasing volume and sophistication of communications. These restrictions are of particular concern to community and minority groups, but also affect the wider public. Some of the restrictions highlighted by these groups include: access to higher bandwidth systems being limited mostly to urban areas, proprietary systems, which restrict people's ability to use certain digital formats. Furthermore, free and open source systems are not sufficiently available for encoding and decoding of digital data, although some are in development.

There are also serious concerns about small-scale use of networks and media technologies within local communities. A small community group which sets up a network, for example, could be classified as a telecoms provider and as a broadcaster if it decides to stream live programmes over that network. This would very often lead to prohibitively expensive licensing procedures, which could then again prevent such groups from finding an outlet for expression.

A number of proposals have been forwarded to protect the interests of communities in the realm of new media. A minimum charter of rights for users of new media, which includes several proposals, has been introduced in some countries. Let me mention some of them:

- there should be no restrictions on the ability of the public to publish material online;
- the financial conditions for permits or licenses for new media should not be used as a means of preventing small groups or communities from setting up new media services;
- and the development of high bandwidth connections should not be restricted to only downloading through asynchronous mode but also include easy access to high capacity uploading, so that people can develop their own peer-to-peer capacities.

There is another very important element in this overall response to the regulation of new media, which we must not forget to mention here, namely self-regulation. All national, regional and international documents in this context stress that media themselves should take greater responsibility. Efficient media accountability systems based upon self-regulation as well as self-regulatory codes of ethics make it possible to reduce reliance on laws and public regulation. It is also in this context that we must understand the growing interest in co-regulation expressed especially from civil society groups.

Very much influenced by the rapid pace of development in the communications sector we can see a growing shift in governance from classical legislation toward a higher degree of focus on the responsibilities of the citizens. This development provides us with another compelling argument for looking very seriously into media and information literacy: how do we educate our children and each other to understand critically and use critically the media to exploit their immense potential for taking our society to a higher level of human and social prosperity.

UNESCO stands firmly behind the principle of freedom of expression and free flow of information when it comes to the guiding principles for regulatory frameworks for the media. The debate must not be locked into a discussion about “good” or “bad” information. While we all acknowledge that there cannot be absolute freedom of expression without limitations, it is indeed dangerous to establish hard-handed rules for the flow of information and knowledge. Not only does it hinder the free flow of ideas and opinions but it may also force “unwanted” ideas to be expressed exclusively underground, making it impossible to openly counter hate speech and propaganda with informed arguments. Furthermore, there is the risk that ideas and opinions that could enhance the open debate on controversial issues will be silenced.

The real challenge when it comes to regulating new media and ICTs is to fully exploit their vast potential for the three “Ds”, development, democracy and dialogue, while not compromising fundamental and universal civil liberties.

Mogens Schmidt, Deputy Assistant Director-General for Communication and Information, UNESCO

Content-Related Legal and Regulatory Challenges

Venkat Iyer

I am going to talk about content related legal and regulatory challenges. I will be brief and make no more than two or three points. The first of which is contrary to the popular belief that there is no serious problem with substantive law between the old and the new media. For example, if you were to take the principle of copyright and the principle of copyright infringement then you'll notice that they are still the same for on-line publications as they are for off line publications and that applies as well in other areas like defamation, contempt of court, etc- etc.

It's true that some minor changes need to be made, for example, in relation to the terms of copyright, the fixation of copyright and etc., but I would submit that most of those are already provided for in the existing laws. I do also accept that there may be a dispute about which country's substantive law ought to be applied in a given situation, in a given dispute, but by and large substantive law remains the same for both the old and new media.

The second point that I would make is that there is a flaw in the thesis that the internet is or should be a regulation-free zone. Although this appears as a superficial attraction, it is unlikely to be accepted even in the most liberal societies both for principle and practical reasons. In principle, there is no real basis for the internet to be treated very differently from the other media. Most societies accept that while free speech is precious, it cannot be elevated to the status of an absolute right and speech on the internet is no different. The victim of say copyright violation in cyberspace is going to be just as aggrieved as the victim of copyright violation in an off-line environment.

In practical terms as well, it would be extremely difficult to allow two parallel legal regimes, one for the internet and the other for the traditional media, which would operate along side of each other. What would happen if, for example, an alleged defamatory statement was first published in a broadsheet newspaper and then disseminated via a web site? If the dual approach were adopted then the former would be actionable while the later would not, even if the statement emanated from the same source and even if the effect of the statement on the alleged victim is the same.

Now, having said all that, given the potential that the internet offers for mass participation and for cheap universal communication a case can plausibly be made for a greater degree of freedom being accorded to those seeking to communicate their ideas and opinions through this medium. The challenge clearly lies in ensuring that a proper balance is struck between maximizing the potential for on-line speech and protecting the legitimate societal interests that require legal regulation of such speech.

Now coming back to the point that I made at the outset, well generally the real problems posed by the new media environment are in the area of procedural law including in particular the law and practice relating to enforcement. In this area, the main challenges relate to such matters as, firstly: How to apportion and fix liability for unacceptable

content? For example, content that is unlawful, deeply offensive, potentially harmful to children, unacceptably invasive of personal privacy, violates copyright and other intellectual copyright and possibly unethical. Secondly, how to deal with anonymous posting particularly in relation to user generated content, on say, blogs? Thirdly, how to tackle the problems posed by multi jurisdictional litigation and that includes problems such as choice of forum, choice of law, getting the defendant to the chosen forum and enforcement of any order or decree that may ensue at the end of the process?

I submit that a number of approaches have been adopted in relation to each of these matters but there is still a significant divergence of views on this subject. On the question of liability, for example, the law usually tends to recognise a spectrum, which treats different actors in the publications or dissemination process differently. A major area of contention relates, for example, to the role of on-line intermediaries such as ISP (internet service providers) with the United States conferring an almost blanket immunity for content carried by them through the Communications Decency Act, Section 230 and many other countries using a test of whether the ISPs had or could reasonably have had knowledge of such content before being held liable in law. Sometimes this is coupled with whether the ISPs acted fast enough and reasonably enough when their attention was specifically drawn to the problem.

The issue of anonymity is a much harder nut to crack. Free speech activists would ideally like the anonymity of internet posters to be preserved and some guidance may be drawn from statutes that deal with confidentiality of journalist sources in the off-line world. There may, however, be situations where the identity of the poster would need to be established, for example, to investigate serious crimes or where there is a grave threat to national security or public order. Hopefully advances in the forensic capacity of the law enforcement agencies may provide some answers, but the matter still remains a challenge for policy makers, as do some of the other issues that have been identified.

Dr. Venkat Iyer, Barrister and Senior Law Lecturer, University of Ulster, UK, and the Editor of 'The Commonwealth Lawyer', UK

Dealing With The User & Provider

Jacob van Kokswijk

I will tell you a brief introduction about a telecommunication group known as INTUG and the revolution that happened in the media landscape. I will tell you about the deterrents in business and how we can find a single market together. I will tell you what is the most important in finding the best model to deal together with the user and the provider or the media station.

Founded in 1974, the INTUG represents the business user groups and the consumer user groups in a lot of countries. We have direct contact with ITU, APEC TEL, CITEL, the European Committee, OECD and the lot of other official regulatory parties. Secondly, it's an association of associations. We are not only representing ourselves, but also we try to have a mix between the associations in each country. For instance, India, Korea, Australia and New Zealand are members of the INTUG. And for the last part we try to solve a lot of troubles by presenting white papers to use in each county, for a kind of a quick start in developing countries. We aim for competition on every level, transparency in choice and seamless service for better value for money for the user, high quality, tailor-made service and a kind of innovative technology and constructive operation. That means we try to foster good relationship at the international and national levels and sometimes with the global companies.

The telephone was invented for communication. The first business case of the telephone was on Rediffusion. That was a kind of a radio. Here is a quote from an article in Nature on August 24th, 1876, which says, "The telephone was actually seen as a broadcast medium, a dancing party that had no need for a musician." That involves the kind of music reproduction that was presented live to all the listeners. And this re-diffusion by telephone lines was started in the market, and it was regulated and stopped. Thus, that was the first regulation where the telephone and the broadcaster were separated. At that moment, you saw that the telephone companies and the broadcasters were coming together. Whatever they wanted, the telephone was the body of every person. He or she could make calls and shoot videos and show them on television stations.

The evolution that is happening now is swift. One is the convergence of the animal, the human person and the machine. There is an old law, an old ITU about Robert Weiner, who told that machines, the humans and the animals are communicating in the same way. The second one is the ICT that empowers human beings on earth. And the last one is the TCP-IP technology and the open standards. Moreover, marketing has changed from pushing to pulling and there is more transparency in policy. That means if you look at this picture of the ITU, you can understand that ITU is seeing the whole development of radio and telephone together, like a new personalised service and this service can be managed by both human beings, by machines and by animals. For instance, you can think about the idea of a vending machine of Coca-Cola or another machine, which is filled automatically when it's empty or near empty. The other thing is the coffee machine that is supported from a distance. Sick animals can be monitored but also a personalised service can be offered to every human being including the media. So, in the view of ITU, there is only one way to deal with the end user.

The second one is the TCP-IT and the open standards. What's happening there is that thanks to both those developments, everybody can be linked together at this moment. There is no trouble of linking with the TCP-IP base. The other is the open standards. If you have an open standard, you can connect and develop content yourself. What we see worldwide is that open standards are continuously improved by the community and by the peer groups.

The last ten years has seen the influence of information technology, which was dominated by the professionals. For about ten years, the professionals ruled all the ten points that are on this slide. The video stream, telephone was presented only by professionals. The professionals had the license for it, the money and the education for this. And at this moment only the cinema and high definition television are part of the professionals. The other parts, the yellow parts on this display are also used and can be improved by the consumer themselves only by using the internet and a computer. This means that the consumers are empowered. He or she can be like a professional who can do it yourself. The users want a kind of pool contact. They want to communicate freely. They want to collaborate with everybody whom they trust and like and they want to create and compile on a do it yourself way. The users are also searching for transparency in price, terms and conditions, in quality of service and want to know what the hidden codes are in the transmitting part. A lot of hidden codes are at this moment in the transmitting, including broadcasting that can't be followed and can't be seen by the user, unless he or she is a kind of geek or a kind of technology - driven person who likes to find out.

Following the ideas of Lorin Lasswell, who had written a book about cultist laws, you'll have to understand that at this moment a lot of laws or kinds of code are put in the signal between the provider and the user. That means that a lot of digital laws are involved in the transmitting between the user and the provider. And this is not fair when the user doesn't know this. Be open and be transparent about what you're doing with the signal. Again, the users want to have a kind of collaboration with everyone. They also would like to find the next step that is roaming the local and international networks. The transparency should be in pricing and billing, also in quality of service as I have told you.

And the last part is roaming to international networks, company networks, campus networks and to the open standard networks. In the definition of the user, every individual, a group, a company and a joint venture will get the best offer and the conditions whether its normal media or telecom. It doesn't matter, as they will try to partner with the consumer to get the best offers and conditions.

The ME experience is creating yourself-ME by using the Nintendo-V. It gives an individual profit and what's in ME-dia for me is important for both sides.

The user as your business partner. Old is new and new is old, but remember that I-casting is something different from broadcasting. Broadcasting is pushing and I-casting is interactive. It is an individual, independent and inexpensive way of making movies. It's now happening. This year 36,000 movies were represented at the festival and they are seen by the masses through new ways, by new partners like Cinetix, without the box movie link.

Remember also that the microphone is nothing special. If you have a kind of instrument that is connected with the microphone and a network, then it's a radio and if you have a speaker together, then it's a telephone. That is the technology of today. And information communication is both a transmitter and a receiver.

My last point is that children are the ones who understand the media very well. Deal with them because they understand the new medium. They understand how to go to the future.

Prof. Dr. Jacob van Kokswijk, Board Member and Secretary of the International Telecom User Group (INTUG), Netherlands

Challenges of the Internet

Joaquin F. Blaya

Nowadays, when some people are called upon to speak about developments in the media industry, they invariably expound upon the revolutionary changes that have taken place in technology, editing, distribution and marketing.

They speak about a communications revolution that has reached into every part of our lives and shows no sign of slowing down. All this is very true, but today I am going to be a bit different. I want to remind you of the one thing that has not changed -- the worldwide hunger for information that is clear, comprehensive and, above all, reliable.

The notion that "content is king" is a mantra we have all been saying for years. But it has never been truer than today -- and never been faced with more challenges.

Today anyone can post video footage on You Tube or tell any story on a blog. Citizen journalism has opened up new sources of information on the ground as well as new possibilities for mischief makers to provide content that is incomplete, biased, distorted or simply fabricated. People are bombarded with information on all sides and left on their own to separate the wheat from the chafe.

So when people tell me that traditional journalism is dying I don't believe it for a minute. There is more than ever a need for the solid, authoritative reporting and commentary exemplified in my country by media such as the New York Times, the Wall Street Journal -- and of course, Radio Free Asia, Alhurra and Voice of America. These are no garage startups or bedroom bloggers. They are institutions that have spent generations building confidence in their news output through hard work and discipline.

Indeed their creed is the same as yours, I would venture -- that journalism needs to be rigorous and ethical.

Again, all this is not to say that the business is not changing. Certainly our profession is going through a monumental transformation. Radio is no longer exclusively about sound, print about words, and TV about images. Today, all of us record history in multimedia formats. And we all reach out to a worldwide audience.

For most, this transformation was brought about through foresighted business acumen, new income models and—for those of us who depend on government support—new road maps with little margin for error. Media executives have had to learn a great deal in areas they were not accustomed to, such as the technical complexities of the internet. Our ability to reinvent ourselves has allowed us to survive.

More profoundly, the ways in which news is gathered and brought to light have changed entirely. Armed with cell phones and laptops, citizen reporters find out much faster than we do that an earthquake has happened or a train has derailed. They tell the story with immediacy hard to match.

It falls to the trained journalists, however, to sort out the facts, provide context, balance and transparency.

This is why the journalistic profession—with its ability to organise and bring into perspective current events—has become more relevant; its strength is in the reaffirmation of these age-old fundamentals.

The need to protect these fundamentals and this culture, remains as vital as ever. Technological innovations have brought their load of challenges and the question is: do these challenges call for new regulations. If yes—which ones?

Ten years ago, the future of cyberspace seemed to be both boundless and overwhelmingly positive. Conventional wisdom saw values embedded in the openness of the internet. Global economic growth and the advancement of human progress were the most commonly accepted outcome of its development worldwide.

But, in 2008, the internet has become an object of abuse. To take only one example, today, all active terrorist groups have established their presence online. Experts speak about hundreds of web sites serving terrorists and their supporters. This is a very dynamic phenomenon. Web sites suddenly emerge, frequently modify their formats, and then swiftly disappear—or, in many cases, seem to disappear by changing their online address but retaining much the same content.

My own organisation, thanks to the work of one of our entities, Radio Free Europe, has published an extensive report in 2007, documenting how these terrorists web sites proliferate and spread their message of death.

Do we need new legislation to fight this modern plague? Or do we have what we need internationally but simply need to work better at enforcing existing laws and cooperation agreements?

While we consider how to defend our societies against cyber-terrorism and other internet crime, we should be careful not to smother the global dialogue that has already opened new markets, created employment in remote areas and made us collectively smarter.

In the United States, our Congress is considering a “Global Internet Freedom Act” because it is concerned with the way some of our technologies can be used for repressive goals. The European parliament is following our lead on this issue.

On the business side, we should look at the toll inflicted by unrestricted distribution of pirated films, television shows, as well as music, which is hurting every country’s entertainment production and industries.

The distribution of entertainment online is a booming market and one that is very profitable. In order to continue prospering, authorship needs to be protected against piracy. In the United States, we consider the protection of intellectual property a right and we expect global enforcement.

So you can see that, if good journalism has been strengthened by the advent of new technologies, other threats have emerged.

After a long career in media, I believe deeply that all humans are engaged in an unrelenting quest for truth and that they are entitled to find it. The internet supports the creation of wealth, the growth of our industries and trade, but above all it helps us find the truth.

So whether we are communicating by short wave or podcast, ink or instant messaging, we must never take our eye off the essence of our mission -- to inform and enlighten.

Quality content. Nurture it, protect it. But make sure you produce it.

Joaquin F. Blaya, Chairman, Blaya Media Inc., and Governor of Radio Free Asia, USA

Session 4

User-generated Content: Impact On Business & Society

The increasing popularity of User-Generated Content (USG), such as bulletin boards, chat forums, internet relay chat, virtual environments, mailing lists, weblogs and newsgroups, is changing the online world and creating marketing opportunities. All over the world today, large numbers of people use, access or have at least heard of leading USG phenomena like YouTube, MySpace and Facebook. The forecast is that, on a global basis, user-generated content ad revenues will leap from \$1.6 billion in 2007 to \$8.2 billion in 2011. What best practices should govern this spontaneous new media? What impact does this new wave of consumer engagement have on society? Will increasing avenues for a less narrow world vision lead to a growing social and cultural fragmentation?

What Old & New Media Can Do

Maria A. Ressa

For journalists managing newsrooms today, the challenges are incredible; the potential limitless; and the pressure is coming from everywhere. Technology has changed the way we receive information, the way we're entertained, the way we communicate. We've moved from what critics call the Age of Information to the Age of Empowerment, and no one quite seems to know what will happen when old and new media collide – or converge. Will they destroy each other or will they complement each other? We have to define it for ourselves as journalists, understand the technology, its effects on what we do – and how all that affect the societies we live in.

I've been in a unique situation for most of my career because I am both a local and a foreign journalist in the Philippines. In the late 80's, I worked for all five Philippine networks before starting an independent production company which produced news & current affairs programs. Then I worked for nearly two decades for CNN – starting as a freelancer, becoming a reporter, then starting and running two bureaus in Southeast Asia. I tell you this to emphasize that what you'll hear will be a strange hybrid of an Asian's view of our global western-media dominated world. I will argue that you cannot put up barriers because the world is now connected – so all our cultures are affected by what happens everywhere else.

Today, I head the news team of ABS-CBN, the Philippines' largest television network. Our main base is in the capital, Manila. From there, we run 19 provincial stations and six overseas bureaus – two in North America, one in the Middle East, one in Europe, Australia and Japan. I manage about a 1,000 people in our newsgathering arm – which pushes content to our different platforms: nationwide radio, 2 free-to-air channels in our native language, Pilipino, cable, the internet and what we call ABS-CBN Global – which broadcasts our programs globally on TFC, the Filipino Channel. I also manage the Philippines' only 24-hour local English cable news network – ANC, the ABS-CBN News Channel. Our goal is to give you the news you want whenever and wherever you want it. I want to tell you about a multi-awarded, multi-media campaign we ran for the Philippines' 2007 mid-term elections because it shows the impact of merging the mass base of traditional media with the grassroots, participatory nature of new media. I'll show you how user-generated content affected the political realities and outcomes of those elections.

But before we go into that, I want to first define the relationship between three concepts: convergence, participatory culture and collective intelligence. By convergence, I mean the flow of content across multiple media platforms – in our case – as in the case of CNN, a group of reporters supply content to different platforms: radio, TV, cable, internet, mobile. That's on our end – the content creators, but convergence is also the migratory behavior of media audiences who will go almost anywhere in search of the content and experiences they want.

Most people use convergence to refer only to the technological process, which brings together – and makes possible – these multiple media platforms. But convergence also represents a cultural shift as consumers are encouraged to seek out new information and – more importantly – to make connections. We are changing the way we think and interact.

That's where participatory culture comes in – a stark contrast to the passive way most of us learned to consume media – watching the TV or listening to radio, with no way of talking back. Now rather than saying media producers and consumers occupy separate roles, we are starting to see them as participants who interact with each other according to a new set of rules we are all just defining.

Convergence occurs within the brains of individual consumers and through their social interactions with others. Each of us finds our meaning and creates our interpretations and personal myths from the information we consume. But none of us can know everything about any given topic, so there is added incentive for us to talk about the media we consume. Yes, we may fragment and there will be niche markets, but that is why talking to others becomes more important. This conversation creates buzz that is increasingly valued by the media industry.

That is our collective intelligence. None of us can know everything; each of us knows something; and we can put the pieces together if we pool our resources and combine our skills. A great example is Wikipedia – which is really the product of collective intelligence on the web. Or the *Survivors* spoilers...

So how can this – convergence, participatory culture and collective intelligence - change politics? Well, in the Philippines, as early as 2004, surveys showed that 90% of Filipinos get their information from television. That was part of the reason I wanted to come home: given our political situation and the unfulfilled promise of our democracy, I thought television journalists could take an active role in nation building using the power inherent in our medium.

Add to this the internet, which is changing politics all around the world. In the 2004 elections in the US, a presidential candidate Howard Dean used the internet to raise campaign funds, to call for support, to trigger rallies, to create a more intimate relationship with his supporters through blogging. For the 2007 elections, look at the difference in the way Hillary Clinton and Barack Obama are running their internet campaigns. Obama's website has become a cult hit, and the results are financially tangible for him. In February, he raised \$55 million - \$45 million came from the internet. Here in Malaysia, the internet played a crucial role in the past elections – forcing mainstream media groups to go through major soul-searching.

Traditional broadcast – or old media send out a mass message, but new media now give viewers the chance to answer back. That is user-generated content ... also known as citizen journalism. Gone are the days of traditional gatekeepers, partly because of a clamor to provide non-mainstream views free of corporate and political vested interests.

It started in the US after the 1988 US presidential elections – a reaction to the loss of trust in the news media and the political process. A decade later, activists in Seattle – disgusted with the broadcast news coverage of the WTO – created the first Independent Media Center. These alone wouldn't have changed the landscape.

The first major breakthrough happened in Asia. In 2000, South Korean investigative journalist Oh Yeon-ho started OhmyNews.com with the motto “Every Citizen is a Reporter.” That website is largely credited with changing South Korea’s conservative political landscape. At OhmyNews, about 50 professional reporters and editors screen and edit news articles written by more than 400,000 amateurs – from elementary students to professors. These volunteers submit between 150 and 200 articles a day, which make up more than two-thirds of OhmyNews’s content.

Then citizen journalism invaded television. In August 2005, Al Gore launched a new cable news network, Current, to empower the younger generation of news viewers – those who grew up with user-generated content, YouTube, blogs.

In the Philippines, ABS-CBN pioneered Citizen Patrol in 2004 – using the power of prime-time news (as mainstream as you get) to empower ordinary people to demand their problems are heard and addressed. These are reports done by citizens with immediate problems. Our daily ratings showed Citizen Patrol was highly popular.

Taking the lessons we learned from that, we went one step further in 2007 – to put the idea of citizen journalism together with the vast reach and power of ABS-CBN and the ubiquitous cellphone. You know for many years the Philippines was called the text capital of the world: our people sent nearly 2 million sms or text messages daily.

In this campaign we called Boto Mo, Ipatrol Mo – which roughly translates to Patrol Your Vote, we took the traditional power of broadcast media, cable, and combined it with new media the Internet and mobile phone technology to create the first instance globally where a news media organisation called on citizen journalists to rise for a very active, political purpose – to patrol their votes and push for clean elections.

We moved one step ahead of western media organisations because of our unique political situation: a country of 88 million people in a democracy which still used manual voting and counting ... where charges of fraud, cheating and violence in elections are constant and consistent. No candidate ever admits losing in Philippine elections. They just say they were cheated! And as far as violence – well, last year, the Philippine Police said it was one of our most peaceful elections ever – with nearly 130 people killed in 217 poll-related violence!

The idea for Boto Mo, Ipatrol Mo was simple: get the people to care and to take action. If you see something wrong or something good, tell us about it. If you see someone trying to buy the votes, snap a picture on your cellphone and send it to us. If you see a town mayor using public vehicles for his campaign, shoot a video with your cellphone and send it to us. If you see violence, tell us about it, and after a verification process, we will put it to air. Two months into the four-month campaign, we received reports from the provinces that Boto Mo, Ipatrol Mo helped level the playing field where incumbents were running after we ran a story with the cellphone picture of city resources used for campaigns. So cellphones early on had become effective weapons!

It is an ultimate message of empowerment: we wanted to send the message that vigilance was important, that you should not become part of the problem but provide the solution – and that if you want a better future, you are not alone. We wanted to counter the growing apathy we were seeing, and show why these midterm elections were important to our future.

The response we received was overwhelming because we engaged our people through new and old media: we told them about our idea through mass media – radio, print, TV, cable then asked them to respond in every way possible: text or sms, 3G, call center, Internet, mobile text center, even a walk-in center. I'm certain this participatory culture – and the collective intelligence it creates - will grow in the coming years, considering that our internet penetration in the capital is only 15%, while nationwide is a little over 5%. But it's growing at a fast clip of 200-300% annually.

The sheer volume of messages we received – about 500 a day leading up to elections and one a minute on election day – showed us not only the public's distrust for our institutions and the electoral process, but also more importantly, it highlighted their hunger for change and their own battles for integrity. Their fears – because it is dangerous to fight the powers that be - were balanced by their own clamor to make things work. And when we gave them venues to do something about it, they did. Old and new media gave them hope.

An early message warning about vote buying ended with this appeal: "I'm hoping that with your help, our town, Taysan, can have a better future." With that email, we were able to expose the vote buying and the kind of intimidation and violence these goons were using in that town.

On the business end, we made more money than past elections – nearly a 400% increase in gross profit rate from the presidential elections in 2004. In terms of brand and equity value, it was priceless, and the campaign garnered numerous awards both in the Philippines and around the world. The most recent is an award we'll receive in June in New York: the Gold Quill Award of Excellence from US-based IABC, the International Association of Business Communications.

IABC called Boto Mo, Ipatrol Mo an "effective campaign with a modest budget, well executed ... with thoughtful use of strategic partners – all based on a bold, honorable mission."

This is what old and new media can do when they converge, empowering people and affecting our societies in ways we could never have dreamed of.

Maria A. Ressa, Senior Vice-President, ABS-CBN News & Current Affairs, Philippines

Radio - Evolving into a Multimedia Enterprise

Jean Larin

I won't be addressing the topic directly because I don't think that I have the competence nor the foresight to deal with the impact of user generated content on the society as a whole or on business in seven minutes. But I will tell you about an experiment that involved the user generated content that had a very important impact on the business that I have the honor of heading and I think modestly also on the society in Canada.

The story started in 2006. Radio Canada International has been a broadcaster in radio for over 64 years. It is one of the 28 components of the CBC and its French counterpart Radio Canada. The CBC board of directors had asked us to reach out to a target audience located in Canada. As you may know, Canada has a large population of immigrants in the cities of Vancouver, Toronto or Montreal. In Vancouver for instance, more than 40% of its citizens have been born abroad and more than 50% of citizens living in Toronto have been born abroad and around 40% of citizens living in Montreal have been born abroad. So, Canada is a land of immigrants. Since we are broadcasting in many languages, the board of directors asked Radio Canada International to produce content aimed at the new immigrants in Canada to facilitate their integration.

So in 2006 we launched a new website that we called RCI-Viva and by doing so we of course found out that our radio programme encourage interactivity and this started to increase. It allowed downloading of programming on mobile devices, such as PCs, cell phones and I-pods. Having this new website, we decided to push the experiment a little further and we explored the possibility of producing video. And for a radio organisation, this move was brand new. So we tried to imagine a product that was first of all compatible with RCI's value as a public broadcaster, with our niche, which is migration and cultural diversity, and a product that would give us eye-visibility potential and finally which is important for a small enterprise. We also examined its financial feasibility because we wanted a product that could be produced with a reasonable cost.

We then came out with a contest called 'Digital Diversity,' a bilingual competition of short films about immigration. The contest was geared towards young creators and to attract immediately a large number of entries. As a matter of fact, in only one month over 400 young creators from all over Canada submitted their works and we had a jury selecting one hundred of these short films, 50 in French and 50 in English for a competition. The competition started in September and the public voted.

Here is how it worked. Each week the public was asked to vote and the winners would get to the second round and so forth. If you wanted to see one of the short films, you would click on one of those pictures. The films included documentaries, biographies, fictional stories and imitated shots that provided insightful accounts of Canada's multicultural society. At the end of the competition, the selection of works was compiled in a catalog as RCI's product and producers agreed to be represented by RCI and we shared eventually the potential profits. These short films were broadcasted in different cultural events in Canada and around the world. We are still showing these films in different cultural events. We

continue to show these pictures in TV5.org, which covers no less than 40 different countries.

This experiment had some impact on the Canadian society. It sensitized society to issues concerning co-existence in a multi cultural environment. We identified new talents within the newcomer community. This undertaking encourages young filmmakers by providing support and visibility for their work in Canada and around the world. The impact on RCI was huge. It increased the traffic on our website by 62% during the first two months of the on-line competition and by 17% since then. It increased public awareness of RCI's product, RCI's brand recognition, sponsorship potential, partnership potential and the likelihood that advertisers will view the RCI's website as a viable advertising platform. But most of all, it broadened RCI's core business and turned it into a multimedia enterprise.

In the last year, we have invested close to a million dollars in new video products. For instance, "Embracing Canada" is a story of a family coming from India. We started filming them in India and every week there was an episode of their adventure and their integration into Canada. They are made into eight-minute long episode and of course people are blogging and giving their comments. We have done the same thing with a family from Brazil and another family from Morocco. We are currently producing six short films featuring the anchor of CCTV, who was born in Canada. She became a sportscaster and later decided to go back to China. Her brother, one of the producers that participated in the Digital Diversity contest, is producing the film.

We are also launching another contest, which would this time be international. Called 'Migrations, ' this competition has already attracted the participation of people from 30 countries. So, RCI, which was two years ago, an enterprise producing solely radio programme is now an enterprise that has transformed itself into a multimedia enterprise and all this because of an experiment that at first involved user generated content.

Jean Larin, Executive Director, Radio Canada International (RCI), Canada

User Generated Content Employment: Ria Novosti Expertise

Alexander Babinskiy

Mass Media – Audience interaction: from monologue to conversation

Technology connects millions of people around the globe through computers creating a truly global community. The internet allows and encourages "many-2-many" user communication rather than the "one-2-many" option such as books, newspapers, radio and TV that prevailed for the past century and a half.

Convergence of multi-media technology with traditional mass media has changed usual media-audience interaction. Today an information content user is not only more active because of the products offered by mass media – now he wants to be a part of the creation, editing and distribution process. At this stage of multimedia development a user, reader, listener or viewer enjoys virtually unlimited access to interactive tools allowing him to interact with mass media and even influence it, which means that interaction is being complemented by the possibility of co-authorship.

Consumer Generated Media (CGM) in the global media system

Non-professional media joining the global media sphere and their ability to compete with mass media became apparent during the terrorist attacks in London in summer of 2005, when the BBC distributed content received from private cell phone users. While mass media could only provide news coverage of the events, eyewitnesses offered 'real' material such as photos and videos, even if the quality was low. There are cases when some bloggers in the U.S. have been accredited to attend the Democratic Party sessions as mass media representatives. Amateur media are becoming so popular and influential that many perceive them as a mighty social force.

The news agenda is no longer something involuntary, forced upon us: any user can create a customised (very individual) microenvironment. Self-actualisation is important, especially from the psychological point of view since it allows a rather harmless release of negative emotions, but at the same time, the influence it might have on the society can be negative: information space is flooded with numerous minor messages, spam, unethical and unprintable statements and ideas that insult the religious and moral feelings of different groups of people. Such messages do not contribute to implementation and realization of people's rights to communication, but lead to their alienation on various grounds. So, new electronic media should be treated as an alternative, an additional source of information rather than an exclusive one that is capable of forcing the professional mass media out of the media sphere.

Integrating User Generated Content (UGC): how we do it on www.rian.ru

RIA Novosti's website www.rian.ru features several blogs by the Agency's journalists and commentators. Blogs bring up hot topics and always produce ardent discussions. By communicating with blog readers, the author gets an idea of what the readers think about a particular question, and gets interesting points of view. Such discussions often serve as the basis for new articles, and quite often communicating with users provides the author with totally new topics to work on.

The website also features a "Mobile reporter" section – the name is self-explanatory, only adding "democratic" would make the picture clearer. This contains all the content we get from our users and put on our web site. This can be either a text message, a photo or a video.

It would be wise to touch upon the quality of the content, primarily, the quality of photos and videos. Early in combined product development it is possible to turn a blind eye on the quality of multimedia content. For example, in the summer of 2007, we welcomed virtually any video sent by users or our journalists to be put on www.rian.ru. It was sort of a step forward, a way to motivate people. But with time competition becomes the driving force - mass media seek better image quality, journalists strive to see their particular video on the website, and users want their particular material chosen by the editorial board. It can be safely said that once a combined product has been adequately developed, the UGC quality requirements will be higher. A user is no longer happy with just a picture – he wants a quality product. The one who can provide it wins.

RIA NOVOSTI TODAY

Ria Novosti At A Glance

The Russian News & Information Agency RIA Novosti is one of the most reputable and professional sources of prompt information in Russia and the world. The Agency maintains an extensive network of correspondent offices in the Russian Federation, the CIS states and in over 40 other countries. RIA Novosti distributes information about social life and politics, the economy, science, and finance in Russian, Arabic and the most widely spread European languages on a daily basis. The information is distributed through its websites, e-mail and mobile networks. The multimedia news portal is maintained in 13 languages, and it is available at www.rian.ru. It is one of the most frequently visited and cited news resources in Russia.

RIA Novosti today is an open information site (press-club) for holding press-events and meetings with journalists. Over 90 highly qualified translators work in 13 languages for the Agency's translation service. RIA Novosti has Russia's largest photo service and one of the most extensive photo archives featuring over 600,000 photographs.

The Agency can organise press-tours for foreign journalists of Russia, hold presentations on specific subjects, press-events abroad, conduct the monitoring of publications by foreign media and analyze them. RIA Novosti organises TV linkups through ISDN communication channels, broadcasts press-conferences on the Internet and holds thematic round tables in the off the record format.

Multimedia RIA Novosti

RIA Novosti, a traditional information agency, has been transformed into an integrated

media market player capable of employing various delivery channels for news, primarily multimedia services.

What does today's reader need? First of all, he wants to escape "flat" news: one news type, one format, and one viewpoint. Today the audience is willing to play with an informational Rubik's cube: each of its faces offers a special type of information. One face offers text news, another offers a picture, the third has videos, the fourth is ready to present infographics, the fifth provides an interactive poll, and so on, and so forth. RIA Novosti's multimedia newswire is capable of covering news not as a number of successive operations, but rather it offers several continuous products that convert the classical news delivery system into a three dimensional facility.

The multimedia newswire offers the option of several news formats, as each news item has a photo, a video or infographics attached to it. Subscribers obtain an information product ready to be published on websites, including websites maintained by electronic and traditional media. The multimedia newswire can also be used by corporate entities wanting to expand their internet presence and to have high quality pictorial content originating from a reliable source published on their websites.

Integrated Newsplex

RIA Novosti follows the latest trends in the world media market, and to this end the Agency has generated an integrated newsplex, which is superior to any facility of its kind in Russia in terms of its advanced equipment and technology. This newsplex is a two-story room that accommodates all news-related departments in our Agency: correspondents, websites both in Russian and other languages, photo and video services, a television studio, a reference service, an infographics group, etc.

Getting 300 multi-language correspondents and editors together in one room is one of the most important milestones of our ambitious project, and its ultimate objective is to implement a convergent multimedia information processing and delivery system in our Agency.

Our 1,100-square-meter newsroom houses the Integrated News Department involved in news coverage in various formats, including traditional text news, photo essays and videos, infographics, expert opinions, user-provided content, news and entertainment information. Journalists, photographers and cameramen employed by RIA Novosti now work in close cooperation to ensure that the maximal number of texts is provided with photos or videos.

Implementation of an integrated newsplex allowed the following tasks to be solved:

- Introducing effective and efficient cooperation among various subdivisions of the Agency engaged in news production and its distribution on various platforms (newswire, websites, mobile content, information channels)
- Streamlining information activity planning system
- Expanding the range of newswire products
- Quicker reactions to the Agency's targeted audience demands and requirements
- Using RIA Novosti's resources more efficiently while maintaining the high quality of information operations

Currently, the idea of consolidating diverse information-related departments within one production sequence dominates the media market worldwide. RIA Novosti could not ignore this trend since this type of optimisation improves responsiveness and the quality of news.

Web Site

The Agency was one of the first professional information providers on the Russian market to start working on the Internet. The Agency's site, www.rian.ru, is one of the most frequently visited news resources in Russia since it provides prompt news coming from Russia and other countries, exclusive photos and videos, analysis and opinion on hot topics, graphic news, including infographics, cartoons and videos, interactive on-line conferences, readers' comments, quizzes and polls as well as mobile content.

The multimedia website www.rian.ru ranks among the top five online news resources in Russia with over two million readers a month. The English version of RIA's website (over 500,000 unique visitors a month) is regularly ranked by GoogleNews among the top 100 and several times a year it makes it to the top 50 international news websites in English, beating such global media giants as CNN and the Financial Times.

RIA Novosti also introduced a unique Chinese-language web resource «Exinwang» that offers materials about Russia. It was launched in 2006 by former Russian President Vladimir Putin during an official visit to China. The website operates successfully and has an increasing number of visits.

Mobile Experience

The Russian Mobile Broadcasting Center and RIA Novosti have launched new channels for mobile content. RIA Novosti's channels provide unique photo and video stories as well as the latest domestic and international news and authors' works. This mobile content makes it possible for its subscribers to be the first ones to obtain information since RIA Novosti delivers this information to cellular phone users as quickly as possible.

New channels for mobile content represent the most advanced and efficient method of news delivery. This new multimedia format, together with exclusive video clips and photos of celebrities, politicians and businessmen makes RIA Novosti's products attractive not only to professional market players, but to any person who regularly uses a cellular phone. The Agency is also planning to enter foreign mobile content markets. Today everything is in place for us to have this project implemented: we have our multimedia content in eight foreign languages as well as creative partners working for us.

Now our mobile content includes exclusive reports coming from all over the world, videos of the main daily news, the funniest, most unusual and unexpected entertainment news items, sports achievements and amusing incidents, and files on celebrities. We are also planning to launch a number of authors' channels: any eyewitness of an accident or a funny incident can join the team of mobile content co-developers.

Press Center

RIA Novosti's Press Center has everything in place to organise press events both in Russia

and worldwide. Our conference rooms equipped with the most advanced facilities support news conferences, video conferences, round table discussions and presentations

RIA Novosti's Russian information centers in Asia

Opening Russian information centers (RIC) in Beijing and New Delhi was one of RIA Novosti's major projects undertaken in Asia.

Beijing RIC was officially opened in March 2006 by former Russian President Vladimir Putin during an official visit to the People's Republic of China, and became the main venue providing media and information support for the Year of Russia in China. The RIC in New Delhi was opened in February 2008 by former Russian Prime Minister Viktor Zubkov marking the start of the Year of Russia in India.

Russian information centers' daily operations include:

- Hosting news conferences, briefings, round tables, video conferences, presentations, photo exhibitions and seminars
- Liaising with local and accredited foreign journalists
- Organising journalist exchanges and media tours for foreign journalists in Russia
- Producing and distribution printed matter about Russia

As proof of these projects' success, in 2007 Russia's RICs served as a model for creating the Chinese information center in Moscow, which provided media support for the Year of China in Russia.

The present & the future

In today's world, people want access to information 24 hours a day, are willing to use any means of obtaining it, and want it as quickly as possible; they are also open to feedback from various types of media and interacting with other people. These media market trends have triggered transformations at the Russian News & Information Agency RIA Novosti.

The Agency combines multimedia power with multilingual services, wide regional and international networks, growing readership, and partner and client base. In the middle term, RIA Novosti will strive to become the leading multimedia company in Russia.

Alexander Babinskiy, Deputy Editor-In-Chief, Russian News & Information Agency RIA Novosti, Russia

Citizen Generated Response

Danny Schechter

We have heard reference before to the TV show, the Survivor, and it looks as if we have some survivors in the room. Survivors from back to back panels, which in any condition is a test not only of our intelligence but also of our patience. So many interesting things have been said. How will we retain them all? I have already taken the privilege of texting my comments to each of your mobile phones. So, you can read them at your leisure in another life, but right now I'd like to share some thoughts with you and I do so with a bit of humility because I realize that I am not here as a representative of any large media organization nor do I have any bosses who are going to be watching what I say and greeting me on what I left out. I am here really as a concerned network refugee. A former producer with CNN and ABC and for a brief time with CNBC and my book on this subject wrapped up my experience with the title, "The more you watch, the less you know."

I have come to a point in my life where I am beginning to wonder whether or not our media system is a guardian of democracy as one would have it in the classical sense, a protector of ordinary people on their right to know or has it become somehow in its giant size and its commercial ambitions in its global reach, has it become a threat to democracy.

Mr. Obama, do you believe that your pastor Reverend Wright loves America as much as you do? That was an actual question in a political debate just two months ago in my country, where increasingly young people get most of their news and most of the news that they believe from the comedy channel and not from a news channel. We are increasingly, thanks to advance technology, the latest is considered the best. The latest in breaking news is considered the most important. The latest in technology is considered the coolest. The You Tube video, where somebody sprays whip cream on himself or herself is considered the funniest and as a consequence, 60% of our young people can't find Iraq on the map, five years after a war began.

Is the media serving democracy or is it undermining democracy? Have we seen not only giant mergers and media concentration that is frightening in itself but a merger of newsbiz and showbiz to the extent that what's zappy, what's clever, what's graphically fantastic becomes more important than substance, more important than ideas and more important than values.

We are here, it seems to me and I am glad to be among you as a community of the concerned. I am not sure if we are at the funeral of the media or we are celebrating its great potential but we are here because we share on our own languages and in our own ways certain values. We believe that the people should be informed. We believe that there is a right to know. We believe that the media should aspire to be truthful. We believe that there are values that are more important than the next commercial. We are here with something to tell and not just something to sell. And unfortunately the values of many of our institutions have been driven in a sense by the market place to reflect market values, so that the bottom line becomes the only line and citizens are uncritically accepting information which later turns out not to be true, often to their own detriment.

I speak now really of the war in Iraq that is now in its fifth year, the war in Afghanistan, the so called "Good War", that is now in its fifth year, only to find that we went from all the footage and all the coverage and all the time to almost no coverage, to almost no analysis, to almost no critical questioning. You know, when people hear the word Sunni' or they hear the word Shi'ah, they think sushi because that's a word that they have heard and I can put it altogether for them. There is no explanation, no investigative reporting except occasionally here and there when it's the awards time.

And so, what we need today is not just user generated content but citizen generated response. We need to hold our institutions accountable. We need more transparency in what we do and in what our priorities are. We need to question our very important stories and in the way in which media, our own media has often served the cause of deception.

And I speak now of the war in Iraq. I wrote a book called, "When news lies" and made a film called, "Weapons of Mass Deception. " It was shown in 40 countries and I had to struggle to get it seen in the United States. I have done a new film called, "In-Debt we Trust", it's about the debt crisis, warning about the dangers of the debt burden in the United States and what it could mean in terms of the sub-prime lending, which at that time was not acknowledged.

Of course, six months after my film came out, the market melted down and now we are facing one of the most serious financial crisis in history and it's buried in the news section, and in the business pages and on the back pages. It's written with so much of dense language that most people can't even understand what it is about and yet it is effecting each one of us as a food crisis and an oil crisis and every other crisis that comes in its wake, making it harder and harder for many people on our planet to survive. And I am going to have to ask you, are our institutions doing enough to respond to this?

I happen to be present, covering the invasion of an institution called Bear Sterns. That's the Wall Street firm that was taken over with 30 billion dollars provided by the Federal Reserve Bank when it was about to go bankrupt. And in an engineered Federal government intervention, which the economist in England said was going to save our entire economy, that it had to be done. And I went to this institution with 300 homeowners that were facing foreclosure. That's part of the 3.5 million American families who were due to lose their homes because of financial manipulations and what I call "The Sub-Prime Scandal". In other words, not simply a financial scandal but a fraudulent set of transaction that had ensnared people into taking on obligations in which they could not possibly pay and now losing their homes. 50 thousand a month in the United States right now.

And I was there as the news industry converged on this particular protest, in which these activists, the homeowners actually invaded the lobby at Bear Sterns. One writer said, "They went without an invitation". Can you believe it? And inside there were the bankers and the homeowners and outside there was the news media. And I was standing there watching them trying to interview some homeowners, none of whom who wanted to speak to them. And I said, "Oh my God! This is their chance for media visibility and they all walked away". And since I was there wearing a suit, I guess they assumed that I was with Bear Sterns. A reporter was there and made the mistake of putting the microphone in my mouth.

That was just a little moment that happened to be somebody shooting them, shooting me and it went up on You Tube and somebody from NBC actually sent it to CNBC and they actually ran a little bit of the video, but when I offered to come up and describe it and discuss it, they said, no thank you. At any rate, I believe that we have to begin to try to educate our young people to become more critical about the media and try to understand the media better. Not simply to move in the direction of more trivia but to move to the direction of more democracy, more development and more social change. That's my input today.

Danny Schechter, Editor and Blogger-in-Chief, Mediachannel.org, USA

Session 5

Media Agenda Setting: Perspectives & Challenges

We are today exposed to an ever growing number of media news channels with worldwide reach, each prioritising stories it believes are important and providing the varied perspectives so necessary to decision-making and governance. The ability of the media to influence the visibility of events in the public mind, often called the media agenda setting role in society, has raised concerns such as: Who is setting the media agenda? To what extent is media playing an independent role in the formation of the political agenda? Where to seek for a leadership that will set our agendas towards the public interest?

Build on the Momentum, Follow the Trend and Meet the Challenges: Agenda Setting in an Age of Diversification and Globalisation

Lu Weichang

Bernard C. Cohen, an American political scientist, once made the following comment on the role of newspaper in 1963, "The press may not be successful much of the time in telling people what to think, but it is stunningly successful in telling its readers what to think about." This concise comment is a perfect summary of the agenda-setting theory. The agenda-setting theory was introduced in 1972 by two American media experts, Maxwell McCombs and Donald Shaw, in an article entitled "The Agenda-Setting Function of Mass Media" in the *Public Opinion Quarterly*. Today, the agenda-setting theory is widely accepted and applied by all forms of media, traditional and new alike.

The world we live in, including the external environment for media, is undergoing enormous changes on a daily basis. The birth of new elements and the emergence of new things have provided new source of information and inexhaustible power for news reports. However, at the same time, these new developments have also brought transformations and challenges. Against the backdrop of globalize reporting activities and diversified source of information, newspaper, TV and other traditional media need to think about how to build on the momentum, follow the trend and meet the challenges so as to set the right media agenda and continue to play an important role. Today, I wish to share with you some of my observations and views on this topic. Comments and criticisms are most welcome.

The second information revolution marked by the building of the "information superhighway" unfolded a new era of information globalisation. The concept of "global village" is already deeply imbedded in our minds.

In recent years, internet-based media have maintained skyrocketing development. The statistics of China Internet Network Information Center (CNNIC) released in early 2008 show that by 31 December 2007, China already had 210 million netizens, ranking second place in the world right next to the United States. The total number of registered domain names reached 11.93 million, recording an annual growth rate of 190.4%. At the same time, IPTV, P2P and other internet-based integrated media are also moving onto the stage and building up presence. Online web logs, communities, forums and other personalised information publication channels are playing an ever more important part in the daily life of netizens. These changes have made information transmission more prompt, simultaneous and "fragmented" and expedited the transformation of the managing concepts and functioning methods of traditional media.

Information globalisation and media diversification have made more information available, accelerated information communication and expanded the scope of communication. They make human society evolve from seclusion to openness and from isolation to integration. Any attempt to block these changes is retrogression of history.

However, information globalisation has also given rise to information hegemony and discourse hegemony and undermined the national interests of countries whose media soft power is weak in information communication. Moreover, when a major crisis breaks out in a certain part or a specific corner of the world, information globalisation will make public opinion setting in news reporting even more important, complex and difficult; while making media manifestations and communication channels more diversified than ever before and putting an end to “channel hegemony”, the rise of new media represented by internet-based media has made information publication and dissemination more personalized and “decentralized”. All these developments have presented huge challenges to the agenda-setting efforts of media, especially traditional media.

Therefore, in the face of this irresistible trend of information globalisation and media diversification, which is driven by the borderless flow of information, it is important for countries, developing countries in particular, to embrace it with an open and positive attitude and take positive and effective measures to improve their own capacity in setting and controlling agendas so as to find their right place and make their voice heard in international communication and ensure that their information sovereignty is not bullied by others.

In order to overcome the dominance of western media, we need to be quick to make our own voice in the wake of major world incidents. By competing for discourse right, our ultimate purpose is not to refute or overwhelm the western media but rather to direct more public attention to us and gain more trust with prompt and accurate reporting.

1. Broaden information channels and enhance our own agenda-setting and value-judging capability

Media is part and parcel of a country’s soft power. The overall strength and soft power of a country are, to a large extent, the determining factor for the international communication capability of a country and its position in the international media industry. They are also where the discourse hegemony stems from. News media take control over voice through agenda-setting, and the interest groups represented by the investors behind the media realize their discourse hegemony through the ownership or manipulation of the media.

In today’s society, discourse hegemony very often stems from the hegemony over the source of information. When a major news event breaks out, Asian media, in most cases, will choose to hire English speakers to translate and edit the English news resources available on the internet. As a translator or editor, he may not know what the social, cultural, economic and political implications of the news are or how the interest group has influenced and manipulated the production of the news. Therefore, he may not understand the context of the news and its hidden agenda.

If you do not have your own field correspondents at the news scene, you can only rely on the information provided by the journalists from the United States, the United Kingdom, France and other western countries with strong media industries. However, they make reports in their own national interests and the interests of the international groups they are affiliated with. Their raw information is mostly provided by the government departments of the involved countries. Undoubtedly, the information made public is carefully chosen and framed to serve the interests of the government.

The government uses the information to influence the media, and the information published by the international media is then relayed by national media organisations across the world to shape international public opinions. Therefore, to some extent, the agenda set by the media in the source of the information is dominating other media that use its information.

In order not to fall into the agenda of and be manipulated by international media organisations when covering major international news events, media organisations of developing countries, mainstream media in particular, should actively explore their own sources of information, set up correspondent stations in major countries and regions in the world, dispatch more correspondents, establish and expand their own global news reporting and editing network, and add more first-hand information into their baskets. At the same time, they should try to locate new sources of courtesy information, improve the quality of international news reports, produce balanced, equitable, comprehensive and genuine reports and enhance the agenda-setting and value-judging capacity in international communication activities.

In recent years, China's mainstream media organisations have made earnest efforts to strengthen the gathering of first-hand information and expand their own information network. The opening of regional correspondent stations in Europe and America by CCTV in 2008 has taken more correspondents overseas and enhanced its capacity to collect world news information independently. By March 2008, CCTV had opened 18 permanent correspondent stations in 17 countries and regions across the world, with a total of 43 stationed journalists. A global news network covering Asia, Africa, Europe, America and Oceania is taking shape.

2. Uphold public interests and serve as a “bridge” between the government and the general public

Studies show that there is a causal link between the media agenda and the public agenda, which means that the priority agenda of the media will also become the priority agenda of the public after some time. Putting aside the influence of the word-of-mouth, public opinions and knowledge of the external world are basically dominated by the agenda of the mass media. The causal link between the media agenda and the public agenda has provided the precondition and basis for the media to publicize and interpret the latest state policies concerning public interests and effectively guide public opinions.

At the same time, the proliferation of the internet has made it an increasingly important channel for the public to share information, express opinions, make comments on political affairs, and outpour emotions. Many hot topics closely associated with the fundamental interests of the general public such as public policies, public health, public security, ecological environment, education, employment and price triggered debates in online portal websites, communities and forums first, before capturing the attention of relevant government departments and becoming policy agendas or political agendas. It is fair to say that the public opinions expressed by netizens are affecting public agenda and political agenda setting more than ever before.

Under these circumstances, media organisations, especially traditional mainstream media, should try to serve as a “bridge” between the government and the general public. They should find ways to tap into the causal link between policy agenda, media agenda

and public agenda, make full use of the convenience of information dissemination provided by information globalisation, develop wise programs on major incidents or policies crucial to public interests, bring into full play the technological edge and unique effect of Internet, mobile phone and other new media forms, cooperate with these new media, seize the right timing for reporting, develop new communication tactics and methods, work to improve the quality of reporting and endeavor to harmonize state policy agenda, media agenda and public agenda so as to make publicity most effective.

For example, China issued a number of policies and decrees last year to improve people's awareness of energy conservation, pollutant emission and environmental protection. In order to serve this policy agenda, CCTV-News launched an around-the-clock coverage featuring the combination of "Live Broadcasting, Regular News and Special Programmes". It used many live cases and interviewed experts and ordinary citizens. This one-week long non-stop coverage and the online solicitation of public opinions played an extremely important role in raising the public knowledge of the purpose of such policies and helping the government learn about the public's reaction to the policies. The whole programme was thus very well received by the public.

3. Agenda-setting capability in contingent incidents is getting ever more important

In recent years, there has been a frequent occurrence of major social crises in the world. A few years ago, we had the SARS epidemic in China and the tsunami in Southeast Asia. Recently, Myanmar was hit by a tropical cyclone and China's Wenchuan County was devastated by a super earthquake. These disasters have seriously undermined and damaged social stability and the life and property of ordinary citizens.

Major contingent incidents are usually unexpected, highly-dangerous and trans-regional, yet the local communities of the crisis-affected areas are more "eager" to learn about the development of the situation, the response of the government, the rescue efforts and other related information. Therefore, given the extensive use of internet, mobile phone and other new media, if the media fail to set the right agenda in a prompt and open manner, rumors will be produced and spread quickly, thus making the crisis even more devastating.

Therefore, in the current media environment, the agenda-setting role of the mass media in major social crises is even more important. The performance of mass media in crises will affect, to a large extent, the development and settlement of the incident.

Media organisations need to take the following initiatives. First, when the crisis has not fully exposed itself, media organisations need to make full use of their advanced information network to trace the clues of crisis as early as possible and pass on the information to the government so that relevant departments will give enough attention to the problem and take prompt actions.

Second, during the outbreak of the crisis, the public will have an even more urgent need for information. Media organisations need to complement the government's efforts and publish and interpret information in a timely, correct and comprehensive manner so as to fully satisfy the public needs for information.

Third, efforts need to be made to guide public sentiment. The correct coverage of the media can help allay public fears, rally social resources, and effectively tackle crises. While providing information through the main channels, media organisations should particularly pay attention to the spread of rumors and “hearsays”, put the scope and channels of rumor spread under control and undo the damages they have inflicted.

Fourth, the media needs to make utmost efforts to affect the decision making of the government and the implementation of such decisions. Media organisations need to provide timely reports to the government on the development of the crisis and the psychological state of the public and help the government make scientific decisions. Once the decisions are published, media organisations also have the obligation to publicize such decisions for the government so as to set the stage for the following implementation of the decisions.

Last but not least, the media also needs to help the government form a positive image. The timely media coverage of the steps taken by the government to handle crisis and the effects of such measures plays a crucial role in shaping the image of the government.

In early 2008, many provinces and cities in southern China were devastated by a serious snow storm; on 12 May, a strong earthquake measuring 8.0 Richter scale struck China's Wenchuan County and the post-disaster rescue and reconstruction are still underway. In the wake of the two crises, China's mainstream media represented by CCTV immediately passed on the latest development of the disaster to the public in an accurate, timely, comprehensive and transparent manner and provided prompt coverage on the government's disaster relief efforts. In the aftermath of the earthquake, the live coverage of CCTV became the primary source of information for the general public, the government and domestic and foreign media organisations. For example, most of the viewers received the latest developments of the disaster from the live footage of CCTV; CCTV live news programmes were aired in the disaster relief headquarters in the affected areas; CNN, ABC, BBC, NHK and many other world-renowned media organisations also relayed CCTV's reports. Many famous overseas media organisations even placed CCTV's prompt, accurate and transparent coverage of the earthquake on a par with the disaster relief efforts of the Chinese Government.

It fully shows that in the wake of crisis, as long as we can fully activate the “environment monitoring” function of the media, reach the crisis scene immediately, gather information from all sources and set an effective media agenda, we will be able to put media agenda, government agenda and public agenda under the same umbrella. It also demonstrates that in contingent incidents, only by acting in the public interests in our reporting can we achieve the optimal results we wish to deliver through our media agenda.

Globalisation is now gathering momentum economically, culturally and in many other fields as well. However, the globalisation of information dissemination is the driving force behind all these changes.

As media organisations, it is our responsibility to help developing countries and people living in poverty gain better access to the valuable information about how the world is changing and share the benefits of information globalisation, through our reporting and agenda setting.

Let us work together to make it happen.

Lu Weichang, Director of International News Department, China Central Television (CCTV), People's Republic of China

International Broadcasting for Global and Open Society

Toshiyuki Sato

Broadcasting used to be a business focused and directed on your own people; people meaning a nation inside your border. Broadcasting was a very domestic business except the short wave radio.

But now, there are more than 1,000 TV channels operating through satellite transponders. Many viewers in the world have accesses to international TV channels through the cable and DTH satellite stations easily.

History of the international TV broadcasting

The change started in late 1980s when CNN initiated the international service. In 1991, at the height of the gulf war, the Iraqi President Saddam Hussein invited a CNN crew for the interview, not NBC, CBS or ABC. NHK could interview President Saddam at that time, but it was an alarming incident to us international correspondents as the value of TV stations in the international arena was measured by international exposure and not by reputation in their countries.

In the early 90s, most of the major European countries were getting involved in the international TV services. They used mainly their own languages for their international services, France in French, Germany in German. NHK's international TV channel commenced in 1995 in Japanese. After some time it became obvious that the winners of this first wave of the international TV broadcasting were BBC and CNN. They both operated in English. The other languages services were accepted only in the regions where the languages were dominant, i.e. former colonies and not world wide.

Now it seems, the second wave of international TV broadcasting has become visible. The English channels from non-English speaking countries. CCTV-9, Al-Jazeera-English, France24 are the major examples. As no international news channels make profit, the members of the second wave have governmental or public funding.

Japanese case

In Japan, there has been a cry for strengthening the international TV broadcasting along this line. Some of them derive from ultra-nationalism and jingoism. Their major concern seems to be that Japanese visibility in the international society has been lowering. This kind of criticism is addressed to NHK as we are entitled to broadcast internationally by the Japanese Broadcast Law.

NHK has been increasing English news and programmes and putting English subtitles on most of the programs but they say that is not enough. We understand some of the sound criticism, and accelerated the renovation of our international TV channel.

NHK is planning to kick off the new International English TV channel early next year. After the discussions in some of the government council meetings, our Broadcast Law was renewed: In the international broadcasting, the Law now stipulates NHK to set up a new Company to strengthen the overseas TV broadcasting for non Japanese speaking viewers. We established a small company and are in the process of accommodating commercial sectors to cooperate for enriching the content. They are requested to produce some portion of the program line-ups; this part is covered with advertisement and underwriters not with NHK's license fee.

NHK has almost doubled the budget for the international TV broadcasting in English this year and this will continue until it will be close to the size of BBC's World News and France 24 in a few years. NHK will hold probably more than 80 % of the budget for the international broadcasting and the aid from the government will be kept less than 20% to keep our independence. The new Law also recognizes the editorial independence for NHK's international broadcasting.

What to offer

As I mentioned there are more than 1,000, probably close to 2,000 international TV channels up in the sky, it is very difficult for us to be recognised in the international competition. As there are hundreds of channels to choose, the audiences are fragmented and they have a habit of zapping. We have been discussing intensively how our channel should look like to attract the international audiences in our Department. We are open to listening to criticism but we are determined to decide our strategy by ourselves.

So far, the new channel is a combination of half news and half programmes. On every hour, we air 30 minutes news with emphasis on business and Asian news. NHK will send more correspondents and will hire more local journalists and will have more live hook ups in major Asian cities. For the programmes, we will have a line up from hard line documentaries to light programs such as Japanese youngsters' subculture; topics on pop music, comics and animations will be included. As our domestic programs are in HD format, we will feed our international signal in HD upon requests.

Agenda setting

Who controls the editorials or who decides the contents of the programmes is the most fundamental question for the media. The international audience will not accept propaganda or announcements of mere national interest of the broadcaster's country.

NHK puts emphasis on the professionalism and impartiality acquired and accumulated through many years of news and program productions as a public broadcaster in Japan. Credibility is most essential even in the international broadcasting. The international viewers are envisaged as more global minded and are citizens of open society.

NHK's new international TV service together with the Internet will aim to give the viewers a fresh perspective and largely Asian news.

***Toshiyuki Sato, Director-General for International Planning & Broadcasting
NHK (Japan Broadcasting Corporation), Japan***

Setting the Agenda in the Public Interest

Emmanuel Wongibe

To compliment rather than repeat or emphasize what the distinguished members of this panel have already said, I will crave your indulgence to allow me to focus my presentation on attempting some answers to one of the questions on the panel brief, namely, where to seek leadership that will set our agendas towards the public interest.

In a world of globalisation, with a multiplicity of national and regional interests and projects competing for attention and space on the global stage it is increasingly difficult to say whose agenda it is that one is pursuing. So intense is the juggling for space by different and, indeed, seemingly different concerns, ideas, projects and concepts that the phrase 'the battle for the hearts and minds' would seem to have been coined simply in anticipation of this hectic beginning of the 21st century.

The concept of 'public interest' others call it 'common good' has such a charm that everyone is eager to use it to explain his/her motivation for doing something. But the reality is all too different. Many make the claim rather than answer the call to promote, protect and defend 'public interest'. As some of the speakers said during yesterday's sessions, if there is one group for which safeguard of 'public interest' should be second nature, it is none other than the media. It is on the basis of this assumption that the media has earned the title -'the watchdog.'

The media is, therefore, the principal driver for that particular kind of agenda setting, which is guided by public interest. There are two principal sources of leadership – the media and the rest. I use the words - the rest - mindful of the fact that it may sound derogatory or pejorative but that is not intended. It is simply a manifestation of a strong desire to drive home the fact that the agenda setting role in the public interest is first and foremost the preserve of the media.

I. THE MEDIA AND PUBLIC INTEREST

There are at least three compelling reasons why the media must put and ensure that others also do put 'public interest', above anything else.

- **Mission** : that is all what the media is about. It is either pursuing that core mission– 'public interest' or it is doing something else. That something else could be propaganda, for example.
- **Relevance** : Without a commitment to 'public interest' media steadily loses its relevance. It's connect with the audience takes a knock and ultimately peters out because it is no longer useful.
- **Survival** : The continued existence of any media enterprise depends on its commitment to public interest. So even those media organisations which are not convinced about the merits of 'public interest' in its own right, would be obliged to do everything to be seen at the very least as promoting and defending 'public interest' merely as part of a survival strategy.

II. THE REST

The second set of drivers for agenda setting, which is guided by public interest, as mentioned earlier, is the rest. This is a broad category, which embraces governments, the citizenry, civil society and professional associations. While the contribution of the other drivers – government, the citizenry and civil society is well understood, permit me to dwell a bit on the role professional media groupings can and do play, in promoting agenda setting that is guided by public interest using the case of the African Union of Broadcasting (the AUB), which I here represent.

The African Union of Broadcasting was created in Abuja, Nigeria in November of 2006. It has adopted a vision which speaks loud about its commitment to an African agenda, which is public interest driven.

The vision

“To be the first class broadcasting union contributing to the enrichment of the quality of life and projecting the true African perspective”

Guided by that vision the AUB is building a series of partnerships with like-minded organisations around concrete media projects, which impact the lives of ordinary Africans in significant ways. One such project is the AUB African Broadcasters Media Partnership against HIV/AIDS, which has made it possible for continent-wide public service messages to be broadcast simultaneously. For a continent which is home to the largest number of people living with HIV and dying from AIDS, the AUB has singled out the fight against the pandemic, as a health agenda item, of general public interest.

Another example of how the AUB is leading the continental endeavour in setting a public interest driven agenda, is its preparatory programme for the 2010 FIFA World Cup, which will be taking place on African soil for the first time. The host country is the Republic of South Africa. Together with one of its founding member organisations, the South African Broadcasting Corporation (the SABC) the Union has brought together all its 43 members around a project which consists of ensuring that when the 2010 FIFA World Cup has come and gone, Africa should have used it to showcase a positive image of the continent as well as leave behind concrete legacy projects that will benefit its people. The Big Five as they are called include;

- Broadcasting resources development
- Sports infrastructure and facilities
- Fighting HIV/AIDS
- Silencing the guns in the area of conflict resolution and
- Greening Africa as part of the environmental agenda

Finally, as a true watchdog the African Union of Broadcasting has been alerting governments, regional groupings and the African Union about the rapid transformation of the continent into a battle ground for frequencies by international broadcasters - the BBC, RFI, Deutsche Welle, Voice of American and the latest kid on the bloc - Radio China International. In a communiqué marking the end of its first General Assembly meeting in Nairobi, Kenya in September 2007, the AUB appealed to the African Union to adopt a continental position on the attribution of frequencies describing it as aimed at the colonisation of the mind of the African. The AUB insists that reciprocity should be the guiding principle.

Distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen.

Lest I be misunderstood, the second part of my presentation is intended not at portraying the AUB as a continental Union that has got it all right but one which is struggling to hold its own.

To conclude, without an agenda in this confused and confusing global arena of the 21st century, some one will happily borrow your, his/her agenda and why not impose it on you. Without the readiness to articulate your own problems and issues as you see and feel them, other people will speak for you and you can be rest assured, no one can tell your story better than you, no matter how well intentioned.

Emmanuel Wongibe, Director of Cooperation, Cameroon Radio Television, and member of the African Union Broadcasting (AUB), Cameroon

In Search of Balance

Jan C. Hoek

Let me start by saying that, certainly in many European countries, public media is playing a very important role in helping people to understand our complex political systems. It helps citizens decide who should represent them in parliament. That's because they have combined reporting about politics with a variety of discussion programmes on topical, and often-controversial issues. The challenge for all broadcasters is to find new and interesting ways to involve the public in a conversation.

I live and work in the Netherlands, a country that can trace its roots in public service broadcasting as far back as 1918 and started transmitting internationally, in this case to what is now Indonesia, nine years later in 1927. Those were the days when there was a scarcity of information controlled by a relatively small number of people. Today, in our part of Europe, there are around 50 TV channels targeting the Dutch population of just over 16 million, either through the cable or through the airwaves. If you put up a satellite dish, you can monitor several thousand TV networks, and just as many radio stations, all targeting communities who speak one of the 200 languages that we use in Europe. For the Dutch population, at least, there is open and free access to information of all kinds.

Some of that information is produced for consumers by publishing houses and broadcasters interested in running a business. But we also have a vibrant public broadcasting sector, which is financed by the citizen, but whose editorial independence from the government is guaranteed by law. I think that's a good position to be in. I believe that the duopoly between commercial and public service broadcasting is a model that works for my country. There is a finely balanced triangle of trust between politicians, journalists and the public.

Naturally, as audience behaviour is changing, there is a constant discussion in both political and broadcasting circles about how much money should be put into public service production or the possible dangers of monopolies forming in the commercial sector. Such discussion is healthy. It prevents broadcasters becoming complacent and ignoring audience needs. It ensures there is plurality of opinion in Dutch society. Competition keeps both the private and public sector on their toes. When that balance is upset in either direction, I believe the public is the first to suffer, by losing access to a plurality of ideas.

But how are other countries approaching these vast changes in media development?

Last year, Radio Netherlands Worldwide celebrated 60 years on the air. Part of our activities included a series of debates about public trust in the media, held in various countries around the world. We listened to the concerned voices by the public, politicians and journalists and, together with our partner broadcasters, drew a number of conclusions. Let me share just a few of the conclusions with you.

1. Radio and TV Networks, especially public networks, need to get closer to their audiences. In many parts of Latin America, whilst we saw private and state media operating side-by-side, neither were really involving the public in structured debate. Journalists ask some questions on the street, but these are not scientifically representative of public opinion. Most news networks are not known for organising debates or commissioning independent public opinion polls. There is plenty of reporting, but not enough discussion of what events mean.

2. In some countries there is no incentive to be curious. Part of the problem is the lack of money available for investigative reporting, especially into social issues that might involve corruption. There are some networks, especially those operating in deprived areas on the edges of cities. They are doing good work within their own community. But the plight of the homeless, unemployed and the handicapped does not find its way onto many popular networks. Sometimes the problem is the lack of journalistic training. More often the problem is that controversial journalism is not often associated with job security. Why should someone risk his/her career, or even his/her life, by doing thorough independent research, when re-writing a press release pays so much more?

3. We think that public trust in the media is linked to language and community. In Africa, our discussions in Ghana and Benin looked at this issue. In Africa, with over 2,090 known languages in 53 countries, the most successful health and information campaigns are being conducted in local languages through an expanding community media sector. Our debate in Benin revealed that this part of West Africa has found a method to grant licenses to independent stations, but at the same time reduce the danger of the re-emergence of hate media. They have taken the Windhoek African Broadcasting Charter and made their own national code of ethics. All stations are required to hang a copy in the studios – and abide by the code that allows for discussion of important and controversial topics, but ensures that other parties have a right of reply.

The main lesson from West Africa was the need for an independent complaints commission, which can deal with complaints from the public or draw conclusions from its own active monitoring. This independent body, made up of journalists and station owners, has the power to suspend the license of stations that break the ethics' code. This seems to me to be an excellent way to proceed.

Finally, we need to accept that radio, TV, the web and mobile are all developing at very different rates, especially in Africa and Asia. Although it is tempting to just copy media models from one country to the next, that template approach usually doesn't work. Ideas need to be adapted to fit the local circumstances.

Emerging digital media will create new stars and new branches of the media business. But we are not worried that these new platforms will make journalism obsolete. As broadcasters and policy makers, it is our job to continually search for the right balance between commercial and public broadcasting and ensure that both actively engage in conversation with the audience.

Jan C Hoek, Director General, Radio Netherlands Worldwide (RNW), Netherlands

Session 6

CONNECT ASIA, AFRICA AND THE WORLD: BRIDGING THE DIGITAL DIVIDE

In the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) held in Tunis on 16-18 November 2005, leaders from rich, developing and poor countries agreed to put into motion a Plan of Action to bridge the digital divide. Among others, the Plan covered activities such as internet governance, financing mechanisms, ICT capacity-building programmes, communications access and connectivity for ICT services and applications in remote rural areas, ICT applications and content aimed at the integration of ICTs into the implementation of poverty eradication strategies. Has the digital divide narrowed since then? What strategies remain effective in delivering results? Is the world better connected, more able to meet the Millennium Development Goals? What remains to be done?

Horizontal Communication and Digital Gates

Kiran Karnik

I am going to start straight off on this theme and make just a few brief points. First, I think that the digital divide is a misnomer. It exists. The digital technologists themselves are basically those who can help create digital bridges. They can bridge across the various chasm in our societies in ways that few if any technologist can.

Here are a couple of examples. If you were to look at divides like distance, which in the past had been serious, you had centres of development, which became the accumulation of wealth, which became cities. And you had rural areas which tended to go back in the hinterlands in the concept of far. As Sir Churchill had said once, "Far from where?" and yet we know that distance makes a difference. And here is a set of technologies that can assimilate completely and annihilate distance. As they say, geography is now history. Distance doesn't matter, thanks to information technology.

Take another example, literacy. It's a very serious problem in many of our countries. In my country, we have had what is probably or most certainly the world's largest number of illiterates. And yet here is a technology that, while we work on literacy helps you to overcome that gap. It is a technology or again a group of technologies as I would say, that not only transforms words into pictures as in television or transforms written words into oral, as in radio but that can take text. If you want to search on the internet and using the text to speech system, convert that text into something that you can hear and therefore understand. Again it's a way of bridging the divide between those who are literate and those who are illiterate, between those who have access to lots of information from lots of sources to those who didn't but now can.

The last example I want to give on this bridging of divide, which is so crucial in many of our countries, is the gender gap. The gap between men and women, men who go out and know the world, pick up information, get knowledge, have experiences, see things and women who are very often constrained, constrained to their village, sometimes by and large their house and their local community. And yet through these technologies, you can bring the world to them. You can take the world into someone's house, so that those who for any reason can't move out or are constrained in terms of where they can go yet have exposure to a world which is large and big.

And I, therefore, think that these are technologies that can potentially bridge the gap. In my own country we have had the experience of having done this for many-many years. We started a long time ago. Many decades ago we were trying to bridge the distance gap and the information gap by taking a strong audio-visual medium, then new in India, out to the remote rural areas using the most sophisticated technology of satellites, what today you would call DTH. Taking this out to places, into rural areas, into villages that did not even have electric power and we ran the television sets on automobiles batteries with the very concept of bridging simultaneously the distance in information gaps, between knowledgeable parts of the country and rural remote areas. But that's not all. Very soon we realized that the gap was not one way. As we all know today, the gap is two ways. It's also those who are in power, those who make decisions and not knowing anything about what happens in country. And, therefore, you need a reverse feedback chain that takes and

reduces the gap in the reverse direction. And that's again something that new technologies do so well.

If you were to look today at the technology which has moved beyond the broadcasting technologies, which tended to be one way: from knowledge, from source, from us, from those who know to those who don't know, this is a complete misnomer. Today you have technologies that are interactive in two ways and today a broadcaster is no longer a collective noun, it can be singular. It's one person who can sit and create a programme, content and send it out to everybody else. And this transforms the way we look at the world. This also transforms the possibilities, not just of conveying information but of dialogue, of conversation and, therefore, useful in bridging the huge gaps between decision makers and policy makers on the one hand and people that they want to serve or for whom the decisions are made. I think this is something else that we see new technologies doing even more powerfully than conventional technologies that were able to bridge some of these gaps. And, therefore, I think that this is something of tremendous importance if we can put it into use in a big way.

In a different sort of way, I want to look at another gap that sometimes needs communication that we often ignore. It's what you might call the concern for horizontal communication. Not vertical communication from decision makers, those who are far away to those on the rural areas but within the community. And here the new concept of community radio, which is not so new but which hasn't seen its full fruition are now beginning to take place in a big way. I think there is a possibility of going back to a medium that many of us consider conventional and, therefore, an old technology and use it to create a new form of community, a new form of sharing, a new form of bridging gaps and divides that very often exist at the local level and very visibly in many-many countries.

In my country, if you take any community, the divides are huge between the rich and poor, between men and women and sometimes between castes. And here is a way of bringing the community together, by sharing and doing things, which they all can look at on common issues and on common problems. If these are the possibilities, then what inhibits it? I think it's not technology. It's not knowledge of technology. It is somewhere in our minds. The concept of taking these together and creating a system where we can do this and I think that there are experiences around the world now that demonstrates that this can be done. We have seen it being done. And I do see the possibilities if we can apply ourselves to it, learn from each other and that's part of what I see that's important in a platform like this. If we can learn from the experiences that each country and each place has had and accumulate that, as somebody quoted the famous book "The Knowledge of Crowds, the Wisdom of Crowds", if we can get together and pool together what we have, I think that we can put these technologies to use and to bridge these gaps.

I do want to end though on a point of concern or a question mark, and this is the emerging thing as all these technologies make their way forward and are successful, the concern about the new digital gates. And I don't mean the Gates who is famous in the digital world. I am not talking about Bill Gates. I am talking about gates in reference to the gatekeeper because as you get more and more information, you'll begin to find people who have accumulated and then distributed it. And the possibilities of these persons becoming the new gatekeepers, the aggregators of information, who decide what is aggregated and, therefore, what is seen is something that we've got to watch for.

The concept of an individual sending things out to every other individual is great but when you have too many of them then you get selection; you get aggregation; you get gate keepers and I think that's something that as we begin to formulate these policies, we need to look at, to make sure that the bridges that we want to build are bridges that anyone could build to anywhere without restrictions and without hold. The technology makes that possible, we have seen examples of it, we have got to put ourselves together, share those experiences, share those technologies so that we can build bridges which really transform that so called digital divide into one that we can all work together.

Kiran Karnik, Former President, National Association of Software and Service Companies (NASSCOM), India

World Initiatives to Address the Digital Divide

Phil Molefe

I would like to deal with this issue from the perspective of Africa and by way of an introduction, share with you an anecdote of how the question of digital divide is so important for us on the continent. Now for Mumbi, a Tanzanian student of cultural heritage in rural Bayeh district, accessing scholarly resources for an academic project always presents an anxious moment. To conduct a research, she must travel far to locate an internet café. Even when she locates one, the place is either crowded, lacks adequate facilities and the internet connection is very slow, costing her the little money that she has for her journey home. It is a frustrating exercise that slows learning, compromises performance and even forces her to regret having chosen to study the subject. And Mumbi is not alone in this experience.

According to a recent United Nations Human Development Report, industrialised countries with only 15% of the world population are home to 88% of all internet users. Less than 2% of people in South Asia are online even though it is home to one-fifth of the world's population. The situation is even worse in Africa. With more than 850 million people, there are only 14 million phone lines. In Benin, West Africa, for example, more than 60% of the population is illiterate. Four-fifth of the websites are in English, a language understood by only one in ten people in the country. Now, these graphs illustrate the point that I am making. You have a situation where about 78 or 79% of the population and 21% compared to developed countries but when you look at the situation in terms of fixed lines, mobile phones, PC access and internet usage, the picture is the other way around. With a population of 79% you have fixed lines available only to 21% of the people and it's 79% in the developed world. Mobile phones: 79% of that population and you only have 12% with access to mobile phones. PC access: only about 10% have access to PCs and internet usage: you only have a tiny-tiny fraction that has access and that explains the story of Mumbi.

Why the digital gap? The phrase digital divide is almost an unhelpful term. The divide in this area simply reflects the social and economic divides that already exist throughout societies especially in Africa. The new technologies have the capacities to transform economic and social processes. But are the African governments really committing to improving infrastructure and technology? Propelled by economic reasons, operators and providers are naturally inclined to first serve the most populated areas. That is in dense, rich cities and the suburbs where most of the potential customers are located instead of the less populated areas such as the remote or rural areas.

Why the digital gap? While developed countries already have existing telecommunications infrastructure, ready to evolve and the financial resources to invest and pay for these new services, developing countries still suffer from the lack of basic infrastructures, not only telecommunications infrastructures but also electricity supply and roads. In rural and suburban areas the consequences of the long distances from the core network access point and the scattered location of villages found in the countryside makes any deployment costly.

Now, how do we bridge the gap? World leaders had pledged, as you know, at the World Summit on Information Society (WSIS) in Tunis in 2005 to activate a plan that would bridge the digital divide between countries in Africa and Asia versus the rest of the developed world. While many countries have undeniably begun to make progress on their own towards closing the digital divide, few developing countries are in a position to do so.

Connect Africa Initiative, officially launched in Rwanda in 2007, brings together international bodies and the African Unions to help implement a number of the UN's International Communication Technology projects that aimed to impact on the development technology infrastructure in Africa. In doing so, partners build on the progress of countries which have established an ICT policy and regulatory environment to accommodate the private sector investment required for sustainable network build-out. These projects will in turn trigger a cycle of further investment and development.

The World Bank sponsored a programme at the African Virtual University that has broadcasted over two thousand hours of instructions to over nine thousand students in all regions of the sub-Sahara in Africa. The initiative has allowed the students to take courses given by professors from world-renowned educational institutions in Africa, North America and Europe.

In June 2005, the UN's International Telecommunications Union launched a project which favoured the whole globalisation initiative. The initiative called, Connect the World, is a global multi-stakeholder effort established within the context of the WSIS to encourage partnerships to bridge the digital divide. The objective is to bring access and international telecommunications technology to people worldwide for whom making a simple telephone call remains out of reach. Keeping in mind that at present, ITU estimates that around eight hundred thousand villages or 30% of all villages worldwide are still without any kind of connection.

In conclusion, WSIS in 2002 was touted as a "unique opportunity" to bridge the digital divide between the developed and the developing countries. Six years on, what and how much has changed? That question lingers on. Through long and heated negotiations and thanks to the diplomatic activism of developing countries (mainly Ghana, South Africa, Botswana, Bangladesh, India and Senegal), stressing the need to combine private and public financing to bridge the digital divide, there appears to be a slight move towards efforts to improve the level of digital technology in developing countries.

Experts say African countries need an additional infrastructure investment, exceeding 100 billion US in the next five years alone to close the gap. Another key point emphasizes the importance of public policies, pointing to the need to integrate the development the development dimension in all national strategies addressing the information society. For the first time in history, the link between information and communication technology and poverty reduction is made by developing countries at a political level.

Phil Molefe, General Manager, International Affairs, South African Broadcasting Corporation Limited (SABC), South Africa

Reaching the Rural Areas through MENOS

Abdelrahim Suleiman

I am going to speak about the new projects in the Arab State Broadcasting Union (ASBU); it's called the Multimedia Exchange Network Operating Satellite (MENOS) and its use of ICT and satellite IP technology.

Why are we going to use MENOS? Now in ASBU and I presume in other broadcasting unions we are using the traditional uplinks and the satellite capacity lines which are very expensive. So, the new system is going to provide good service, extend capacity and service offering as well as provide mobility. We are going to use this system by using the Open Standards as the prices of these equipments are going to get down.

The next generation network of ASBU is the single IP ways network. It is uniform using proven technology. It has multipurpose features and it's cost effective. One of the main advantages of this system is the operational cost, which is going to be low. It also provides value added services beside the traditional radio and TV services. This is a general overview of the system.

Here are the MENOS' key features. In this system, we will use very small, cost effective terminals, which are easy to operate. We are also going to apply the automated satellite system reservation. This is very important, as this will get rid of all the systems using the emails and faxes that we have been available to us. All the systems are going to be automated (automated configuration of hub and remote equipment). They will also provide the real time television and radio content exchange as well as store and forward content exchange. It's going to provide central archiving for both radio and TV, which will bring down the cost and the time spent by our members. The system will also provide Voice Operated IP (VoIP) coordination channels, which are very essential for the exchange, especially in the rural areas. These terminals as I have said are going to be very light, easy to install and very cheap. Compared to the existing radio and TV terminals, the cost is only 10 to 20% of the present cost of these systems.

The system is very flexible and can accommodate additional new services. You can start off with a very minimalist system and as you go along you can build the system according to your requirements. At ASBU and among its members we believe that the system will offer high quality services that will address the needs and the requirement of the users.

Presently we are using grid-operated channels with certain values, but with this system you can configure your system according to your requirements. If you like to have it for news, then you can use low gig rates. If you want to use it for sports then you go for the higher gig rates. The MENOS services are extensive. Besides offering high quality video and audio contribution services, it allows for fast news gathering techniques, which are important, store and forward techniques, flexible automated reservation, and short and medium-term archiving of audio and video content.

One of the important services offered by the MENOS is the highly secure VPN services, which is a sub network. This means having one system that our members can build their own VPN system within the network that will allow them to provide the whole services. We believe this is going to help our members and to help their countries because now we are servicing only their capital cities. With the new system we can reach the rural areas and provide not only radio and TV services and the coverage of news from these areas, but also internet and telephoning services to those areas.

There are four terminals in the system and we can configure more terminals according to the requirements of the users. The terminals are the SIT-IP, SIT-Radio, SIT-TV and SIT-DSNG/FlyAway. All those systems will provide the services or limited services and you can build your own network according to your requirements. This is the chart that shows the best terminals to use in each application and accordingly the user can decide what terminal suits him very well.

We also have cooperation with ARABSAT. It's a joint venture where we provide the network planning and network cooperation as well as the maintenance, support and the equipment for the system. ARABSAT is providing the satellite capacity required for the system. ASBU will provide the role of the access network provider, assuming the necessary network management responsibilities. Now, the capacity of MENOS as we have designed it will support 250 sub networks, which we believe is sufficient. In its first phase, the MENOS-ASBU venture can support one thousand terminals and it's expandable to five thousand terminals if required in the future. This system has been tested and the main hub built, enabling us to shift the equipment terminals to our members. We are going to do regional training workshops for members and we expect the system to be operational by mid July 2008.

Abdelrahim Suleiman, Head of Engineering, Arab States Broadcasting Union (ASBU), Tunisia

Environment and the Digital Divide

Janet Boston

Do you know that nearly a third of all amphibians and a quarter of all mammals are now facing extinction? Do you know that a third of the world coral is already gone along with 80% of its forest cover, a third of its mangroves and a third of its fish stocks? Did you know that nature's living store hand is being raided at a rate of one fifth faster than it can be replaced? And if this trend continues, the impact on people's health and wallets will be catastrophic.

So, what relevance does this environmental statistics have to do with bridging the digital divide? In my view, they are inexorably linked. Take the recent disaster in Myanmar. Who knows if the damage caused by the typhoon is linked to the environment? But we do know that de-forestation can turn what could be a natural hazard into a disaster. And thanks to the footage from the effected region, people from around the world went to support their fellow citizens. We also know that a quarter of the wealth of the so-called developing nations comes directly from the environment. And if the environment continues to be degraded, plans to halve the poverty and meet the MDGs will fail. The impact of climate change will deepen the crisis.

UNICEF predicts that climate change could cause an additional 40 to 160 thousand child deaths per year in South Asia and the sub-Saharan Africa. If the temperature raises by 2° an additional 30 to 200 million people will be placed at risk of hunger globally, rising to as much as 550 million with 3 degrees of warming thus cancelling MDG 1 and 4. With lives affected, it is more likely that parents would remove children from school and in most cultures, this would mean removing the girls first. Childhood diseases are likely to increase with malaria spreading. It already kills 800 thousand children per year but is now in areas outside the range of the malaria mosquitoes, such as the Kenyan Highlands and Jamaica. Diarrhoea will also increase, probably by two to five percent by 2020 and Dengue could double from 1.5 billion to 3.5 billion.

Like it or not it's an inconvenient truth but protecting the environment is probably the biggest issue of our time. For even if we in the so-called developed world have caused the problem and should bear the brunt of the impact, it is those living on the margins who will be most effected. Although all of us understand the impact of the energy and the food crisis and we working in the media need to find ways to connect, to tackle an issue, which goes beyond borders.

So, when looking at connecting Asia, Africa and the world it would seem that developing capacity on how to cover sustainable development, and how to use the latest technologies to spread empowering information to communities that are most at the risk from environmental degradation should be achieved.

How can we create content? Yes, content is king, which could lead to positive outcomes. Alone or in tandem, we should look at the latest most accessible technology. For example, how the mobile phone can deliver it.

We have been working on a project with an international NGO, called “Children on the Front Line”, which shows what children are doing to combat environmental degradation and protect their communities in the face of disaster. And these are the kinds of stories that I think can really help to bridge the digital divide, if they can get out there. In addition to the film “Children on the Front Line,” the project includes media training workshops, which are critical as it’s the media that is often responsible for perpetuating negative images, particularly in relations to children and disaster.

But the Thomson Foundation is not alone in this work and there are a lot of other initiatives. For example, there is the great work that the CBA is doing linked to climate changes in the Caribbean as well as a new project called Nature Inc, which looks at where and how you can put economic value on natural resources. Beyond broadcast content, it is essential that the media has a grasp on these issues because knowledge is power. And for this reason, I am pleased to tell you about a project that we have been doing with UNESCO, which is called ‘A Basic Media Guide to Sustainable Development.’

Finally, in case that its not obvious, I am really anxious to underline that in considering the environment as a global issue and looking for connections, links and solutions to help unite rather than divide us, it is essential that equal emphasis is placed on what is being done in the “North.”

Janet Boston, Chief Executive Officer, Thomson Foundation, UK

Catching Up with the Developed World

Mano Wikramanayake

Knowledge is power they say and in today's world, I think that's it's true to say that access to knowledge and information empowers the less advantage people of the developing world. And the connectivity necessary for this has been provided by the rapid development of digital technologies in broadcasting, communication, and microprocessors and of course the phenomenon of the internet, made possible by these developments.

According to Wikipedia the term 'digital divide' refers to the gap between those people with effective access to digital and information technology and those without access to it. It includes the imbalances in physical access to technology as well as the imbalances to resources and skills needed to actively participate as a digital citizen. In other words, it's unequal access by some members of the society to information and communication technology and the unequal acquisition of related skills. To enable people in lesser-developed world to use and benefit from these technologies is in fact bridging the digital divide. This enabling effort requires a physical infrastructure and the opportunity for people to acquire the related skills. It also needs a medium to long-term national policy developed and implemented largely through government initiatives, at least in the developed world. A classic example of success in this is our host country Malaysia and its neighbour Singapore, both of whom can no longer be classified as lesser-developed nations.

My country Sri Lanka is a lesser developed or a developing nation. Sri Lanka is a country of some 64 thousand square kilometres with a population of 20 million people and a high literacy of 92 to 95%, male and female being equal, and with a private sector that works in English. My country is rich in history with strong tourist potential. However, it is plagued by an on-going separatist war in the North and East for the last 25 years that has hampered the development of the economy and the infrastructure. Per-capita income now stands at US 1600 dollars although there is a skew between the more developed Western province and the rest of the island, with the Western province enjoying a more developed infrastructure and a per-capita income of over US 3500 dollars. Thirty-five percent of the population has no access to the national grid and although education through university and health care are free, facilities vary considerably between states and areas.

Radio is analogue FM and highly proliferated with achieving a 98% penetration, with some 48-radio stations across the country. Television for the most part is analogue, free to air terrestrial on UHF and VHF and cable and DHF subscribers' number only around 80 thousand. There are seven soon to be eight telecom operators, serving close to 7 million subscribers and offering fixed lines, GSM, CDMA, wireless local loops and 3G and 3.5G SHDPA as well as ADA kind of services. Of course 90% or 95% of these subscribers are on very basic landlines or GSM. So, the added value usage is very-very low. International call charges are however quite high in comparison to the rest of Asia and the cost of a unit of electricity which combination of gas turbine and hydropower is one of the highest in the world.

Therefore, it's my premise that to be able to bring a country into the modern world and bringing it to a level of being able to compete effectively in a global market place it is necessary to have a medium to long term national policy on key areas such as economic development, infrastructure, education and social and cultural integration that will not immaterially change with changes in the administrations.

Unfortunately for us in Sri Lanka, we have a constitution that concentrates executive power in the hands of a President who can pretty much do anything he likes and it gives him immunity from prosecution. And due to the proportionate representation in the system, which was brought in, in the 80s, we have failed to elect a parliament with a clear-cut majority since the introduction of this system. As such a coalition government has been vulnerable to the minority parties such as the Marxist JVP, who have used their ability to influence the balance of power to stall and delay the major development initiatives including a proposal to re-introduce English as a stream of education in the government school system.

Sri Lanka is also dependent on donors to fund development and donor agendas and interests also influence the nature of the projects undertaken. The successive governments' inability to develop coherent policy has left a vacuum for donor agencies and institutions to fill and push their own initiatives which have up to now been project oriented rather than sector-wide. Frequent elections and additional changes in ministries, we now have 103 ministers in a parliament of 235, usually result in senior civil servants being transferred here and there. And even in the implementation of policy, let alone its formulation there is no continuity leading to in-action and confusion. One of the examples of this is the US four billion dollars that was pledged by donors at the Tokyo Conference in 2003. The bulk of this money has not been made available largely due to the inability of the current government to meet peace milestones and other criteria.

This is not to say that all is bleak. For instance, the information technology agency of the government which was formed in 2003 has made some headway in making available connectivity and internet facilities to lesser developed areas at a very low cost through a network of 512 and growing tele-centres across the island, which offer internet and net to phone facilities to people in the area. Recently, I had the opportunity to use one of these centres to change a flight and 15 minutes of internet time cost me only US 15 cents. The centres are also franchised to local individuals and provide a new avenue for income generation. The development of local language fonts have also been an encouragement by making web based information more accessible to the local population.

I am using the Sri Lankan experience and example here and the take-out really is that though like water finding its own level, if people want it badly enough, access to information will happen over time. It's governments that have to provide the accessibility and the provision or the encouragement and the investment in the infrastructure. A medium to long-term policy frame must be developed and policies funded and implemented and information permitted to flow without restriction of content, so that people across the globe can learn, interact and discuss thus enabling the development of the developing world not just in Asia or Africa.

The advantages of bridging the digital divides are well known and we only need to look as far as India and its success in cornering a substantial share and reaping the shares of the development in these industries. China is a huge manufacturer of microchips and computers and communication equipment. As far as the developed world is concerned, developing countries and markets in Asia and Africa provide not only low cost manufacturing potential but also are the present and future market for their products and technology.

Governments must realise that while protecting their individual cultures, they have to join the global village in order to develop their economies and in order to do this they have to use the powerful technologies of today to enable their people to communicate with the rest of the world and to improve their knowledge, skills and competencies as to be able to hold their own in the global market place. There is no doubt that the digital divide will be bridged, and the faster we address this, the most likely we will bring about a more equitable distribution of the fruits of development across the world and the raising of the quality of life for more than half of the population of this planet.

Mano Wikramanayake, Group Director, The Maharaja Group, Sri Lanka

ITU's Initiatives in Connecting the World

Aurora A. Rubio

The ITU is a specialised UN agency for telecommunications. It was founded in 1865, hence making it the oldest international organisation in the world. It joined the UN in 1947 and in 1934 it changed its name from The International Telegraph Union to the International Telecommunications Union. The membership of ITU is quite unique because members come from Member states and from Sector members. The Sector members can be the telecom operators, other ICT service providers, the academe, regional organisations such as the AIBD and so on and so forth.

The structure of the ITU is that it has three bureaus looking at three areas. First, we have the radio telecommunications bureau, which looks after spectrum allocations, frequency coordination and the likes. The other one is on standardisation, which of course deals with standards making, and the third one is the development bureau.

To bring this development arm closer to the developing countries, the ITU-D has regional and area offices in the five regions of the world. At the World Telecom Development Conference that was held in Doha in 2006, the conference decided that each region should focus on five regional initiatives. For Asia-Pacific, the regional initiatives are on policy and regulatory cooperation. The second one is on rural communication and the third is on NGN (next generation network) planning. The fourth is on the unique needs of the Pacific Islands and Small Island developing states (SIDS) in the Asia Pacific region. And the fifth is collaboration between the ITU-T and the ITU-D because most developing countries say that they don't know how the standards are being developed and they cannot participate in the works of standardisation. That is why we have this regional initiative. Now we are inviting partners to implement any of these regional initiatives and if you are interested to participate in these regional initiatives, the link is provided in the slide. (<http://www.itu.int/ITU-D/projects>)

I would also like to inform you that we have centres of excellence in the Asia Pacific region and the five hosts dealing with spectro-management, policy and regulation, business management, technology awareness and rural ICT development. So, as far as bridging the digital divide is concerned we have this mode, which is rural ICT development, which is hosted in Malaysia. It is hosted by the University Utara Malaysia. So, the role of ITU there is to assist this host in terms of programmes, giving speakers, experts and so on. This Asia-Pacific centre of excellence is connected with the centre of global excellence of ITU. So, there are also centres of excellence in the other regions of the world, such as in Africa, in the Arab region, America and so on.

The World Summit and Information Society was mentioned yesterday and also today. There were two phases. The first phase was in 2003 held in Geneva and the second phase was held in Tunis in 2005. In that summit there were action lines which were identified and the corresponding moderators and facilitators were also identified in order to be clear who will be leading each of these action lines. As far as ITU is concerned, it is the lone moderator for the action line C2 and C5. C2 is the communications and information infrastructure and C5 is building confidence and security in the use of ICT. ITU is also a facilitator of other action lines that you can see on the slides. You'll notice that action lines C8, C9 and C10 are missing from this slide.

C8 is actually cultural diversity and identity, linguistic diversity and local content. And the moderator for C8 is UNESCO. C9 is about media and the moderator for C9 is also UNESCO. C10 is ethical dimension of the information society and the moderators are UNESCO and ECOSOL. So, you'll notice that we are leading in two action lines, C2 and C5. Therefore with regards to these action lines, the focus area for ITU is first bridging the digital divide, which is related to action line C2, and second is cyber security, related to C5 and emergency communications, which is also related to C5.

Now, before I talk about bridging the digital divide, I would like to inform you very briefly on the activities of ITU with respect to cyber security and emergency communications. For cyber security we have developed and implemented a global cyber security agenda, which looks at five pillars, namely, legal, technical and procedural measures, organisational structures and international co-operation. In fact, last week a meeting of the International Multilateral Partnership against Terrorism (IMPACT), which is a global public- private initiative against cyber terrorism, which was initiated by the government of Malaysia, was instituted. ITU participated in this event and it has identified IMPACT as being a strategic partner for ITU against cyber crime.

We have also developed a lot of publications. So, I would like to invite you to look at our website because we have lots of publications, particularly on cyber security guide for developing countries and the likes. On emergency disaster communications, we have prepared for some countries National Emergencies Telecommunications Plan and we also provide direct country assistance to countries during emergencies. In fact recently, we dispatched 100 satellite phones to Myanmar in connection with to the cyclone Nargis. We also provided free airtime so that it would facilitate the relief operations in Myanmar. The same was done in China. We also provided a certain number of satellite phones to China. We also have some tools regarding disaster communications.

Now with regards to digital divide, we are very active with respect to monitoring, implementing and benchmarking the targets of WSIS in the media development roles. In fact, there has been a shrinking of the digital divide with respect to mobile and satellite phones. The gap has shrunk more than four folds. It is basically due to the very rapid increase in mobile phones. One of my slides explained the role of ICTs as a moderator and facilitator in achieving the other MDGs. For example, for health you could have tele-health. For education we have tele-education or tele-learning and so on and so forth.

Now what I am trying to say here is, as a whole the digital divide has decreased but if you were to look into the details, you would see that there are lots of disparities that remain. For example, our previous speaker mentioned that Africa and South Asia are still lagging behind compared to the other countries in the world. I had also showed you my slides in my presentation the ITU activity on Connect the World. Again, our previous speaker already mentioned that. Under "Connect the World"; we have Connect the World Series. For example, the first one was done in Africa in Kigali Rwanda in October 2007. In that summit we were able to raise more than 55 billion dollars in kind and in cash. Africa identified 11 flagship projects and we have also identified the partners that will be assisting the different countries in Africa in this regard. For example, there is a project, Africa Health Info-Way, which is a joint collaboration between ITU and the World Health Organization and there is a commitment of about 100-500 million dollars. And there are a lot of activities or projects that have been identified in the Summit.

Due to the success of Connect Africa, ITU also plans to do it in other regions. We will launch Connect Asia, Connect America and so on and so forth. And that would probably be done late this year or early next year.

Aurora A. Rubio, Senior Adviser for Asia and the Pacific, International Telecommunication Union (ITU) Area Office, Indonesia

Session 7

MEDIA AND RESPONSIBLE PRACTICES

Investments in social and environmental governance are being taken into account as never before in the changing competitive landscape as reflected in numerous industries including the media. People are demanding more transparency and more eco-friendly initiatives from both government and the private sector. They want better subscription to the 10 universal principles on human rights, labour rights, the environment and the fight against corruption. They seek responsible practices from industry and the government. How can media assist in pushing for corporate social responsibility initiatives? To what extent is media adopting and implementing responsible practices?

The Media and the Public Interest

Kreszentia M.Duer

A robust, pluralistic and independent media sector is vital to a country's good governance and development. Freedom of expression, the free flow of information and perspectives, and reporting and analysis independent of government and commercial influences are important accelerators for the development process. For people to participate effectively in development, they need to be informed, and this requires accountability and a diversity of ideas. A flourishing media sector enables people to make more informed decisions, making them more effective participants in society's development.

Broadcast media in developing countries and regions have by far the greatest reach and comprise the primary source of information and news for most people. While newspapers are largely urban-based and serve the literate, broadcasting reaches into rural and remote areas in which a large proportion of poorer and often illiterate populations reside. Pluralistic broadcasting can play a particularly powerful role because of its ability to offer a range of perspectives, and its unmatched reach. It can foster information exchange and the airing and sharing of diverse perspectives, and stimulate public debate on how government impacts their lives.

Media operating the public interest is an important complement to governments' efforts to support development and to improve transparency, accountability, and effectiveness. Genuine accountability is a continuous process of interaction between government and the people that should not be limited solely to elections times.

A robust, independent media, and a broadcasting sector that provides opportunities for public discourse is vital, to develop an engaged citizenry and is a crucial part of good governance.

Grassroots community radio is providing a forum for poor people to voice and discuss social and other issues affecting their livelihoods that otherwise don't get discussed, to call in and get advice from local experts over the air, and to have a give-and-take in which everyone in the listening area can participate. For the many marginalized people, the opportunity to speak out, and to hear the voices of their neighbors on the air and in their local languages, have a profound empowering effect. Community non-profit radio also stimulates dialogue on local public interest issues and helps cultivate the habits and skills of citizen participation, including interacting with those in power.

Factors Impeding the Media's Public Interest Role

Limits on Expression: Censorship, banning and licensing of newspapers and other outlets, and political control over the regulation of broadcasting are used in country after country to suppress news that the government considers critical of its policies. Roadblocks to a free and independent media also stem from corporate influences wielding advertising dollars to exercise leverage over news operations. In many cases, commercial pressures are as strong a force as outright government control. And where government and business elites are closely allied, pressure on the media not to report information critical of power-

government and business elites are closely allied, pressure on the media not to report information critical of powerful interests is often intense – even in countries where formal laws stipulate guarantees for freedom of expression. Such barriers impede a healthy media role in exposing corruption, malfeasance and maladministration.

Freedom of Information: Obstacles remain in most countries today, preventing media access to public information. The lack of transparency involves not only data from government agencies but also from nongovernmental sources relevant to the public good. Freedom of information legislation and its effective implementation are still the exception, but many countries are now developing and implementing legislation to expand transparency.

Regulation: Few countries have established an authoritative independent regulatory body for the broadcasting sector. Even where formal policy and legal instruments are in place, the reality on the ground is often very different. The capacity of nominally independent regulators to be effective can be undermined by corruption, negligence and bureaucratic inertia. Regulators can become subservient to partisan interests, particularly in government. In many countries, a successful regulatory regime is threatened by a lack of capacity and regulatory experience. Officials are often out-matched by well-funded and influential national and international media interests. Only a minority of governments has demonstrated a determination to renounce interference with the broadcast media.

Culture of Governance: The challenge of converting state-controlled broadcasting into thriving clusters of public service, commercial and non-profit community broadcasting demands a fundamental shift in the culture of governance and a new philosophy about the role of broadcasting in society. In few countries have media succeeded in fully severing government controls. While many countries are moving away from direct state-controlled media, few have achieved an environment in which public service broadcasting can thrive. Commercial broadcasting has helped diversify the media sector, but has not reached its full potential in promoting good governance and development. In many countries, a “reckless commercialization of content” needs to be constructively addressed.

Market Forces and Development: Private commercial broadcasters face business pressures to reduce costs and maximize profits. This has led to trends toward cheaply produced popular or imported entertainment formats and mass-marketed programs, and minimal investment in more costly niche and public interest programming. Market and commercial influences have impeded the production of in-depth news, analysis, and information dissemination. Programs generally target audiences with spending power, often at the expense of serving a broader social good.

The prevailing trend among private broadcasters is to view news coverage as a commodity, often bearing no greater priority than other programming. High costs have left many unwilling to allocate resources to produce in-depth news.

Impediments for the Poor: Many nations still do not recognise community non-profit broadcasting. In countries that have not allocated a portion of the frequency spectrum for community-based initiatives, they get crowded out by commercial users. In other cases, applicants, often poor communities, face insurmountable licensing fees.

What is Needed?

Government and the Press: A New Paradigm: The challenge of maximising the media's contribution to good governance and development centers first on creating and nurturing a legal and regulatory framework that allows an independent press to operate free of government and corporate interference. It also requires internal mechanisms that promote professionalism, ethical and conflict-of-interest standards. Together, they form a foundation onto which the public trust is built.

Freedom of Expression: Respect for the right to freedom of expression in society is fundamental to a media role in development. A free press is a cornerstone of democracy and good governance, and constraints on investigating and reporting on matters of public interest undermine governance, transparency and the public trust.

Access to Information: Timely access to information of public interest is critical to the effective operation of the press in a democratic society. Such access is a direct measure of government transparency.

Media Diversity: The public interest is best served in a multimedia environment, where government fosters public service, commercial, community-based and other types of media. Good practices are emerging in countries around the world, including not only France, the Netherlands, Australia, and the United Kingdom, but also South Africa, Mali, Benin, Venezuela, Nepal, and most recently, India. Media dominated by government or powerful commercial interests have a diminished capacity to contribute to societal development.

Accessibility: Print and broadcast media must be accessible to the people. This is a matter for public policy. Prevailing commercial interests that control media outlets typically have no incentive to extend their reach to be all-inclusive and take into account geographical, ethnic, economic and language barriers that leave large portions of societies marginalized. But government licensing requirements and incentives can change this calculus, and encourage the development of media pluralism.

Sustainability: A sustainable resource base is critical to effective media. In public interest journalism, a sound financial base is vital for promoting the resource- and time-intensive activities of investigative and other forms of accountability journalism. Further, private commercial broadcasters need to diversify their pool of advertisers to help insulate them against undue corporate influences. Community radio requires the resources to train participants, purchase and maintain equipment and other operating costs. Several countries have established excellent public finance mechanisms to support non-profit broadcasting, complementing local resources they raise themselves.

Some sources of funding carry inherent risks: the possibility of withholding public funding gives leverage to government officials. Corporations and businesses may threaten to withhold advertising funds to sway coverage. Insufficient resources exacerbate dependence on funding sources, whether public or private, and increase the risk of partisan influences and of censorship and self-censorship. Media in developing countries, with limited access to investment and revenue, can find it especially difficult to balance the needs of economic viability, independence, and diversity. Government can create incentives through tax policies and other mechanisms to aid media development.

Media Accountability: Sustainability is not just about finances. It includes the relationship between a media outlet and the audience it serves, including its credibility in the eyes of that community. The consequences of a loss of audience support on a commercial broadcaster may be measurable in terms of revenue. Public service and community broadcasters and print publications have specific obligations to the communities they serve, and a loss of support, measured in audience share or public attitudes, can undermine their sustainability.

Broadcasters and other media outlets must also be concerned with institutional sustainability. Transparent and effective governance of a public broadcaster, for example, is central to its credibility and its ongoing ability to operate. For community broadcasters, participation by and accountability to their community are crucial to their success. Good practice includes holding commercial broadcasters to certain standards, including the allocation of time for public interest programming and public service announcements.

A number of other factors are also important to a healthy media, including associated institutional support. Robust and effective professional associations can significantly reinforce media efforts to remain independent and enable the emergence of effective self-regulatory media codes and standards. Trade unions can strengthen the hand of journalists and other media workers in producing unbiased, high quality content and defend and promote the practice of impartial journalism. Training organisations can build the capacity and professionalism of media workers.

The World Bank has recently completed its first documentation and publication of good practices from around the globe on all these fronts, as a tool for practitioners and policy makers. This recognizes that media and broadcasting policy are an integral part of supporting good governance and sustainable development.

Kreszentia M.Duer, Program Manager, New Bank Practices in Civic Engagement, Empowerment, and Respect for Diversity (CEERD), World Bank Institute (WBICD), USA

Social Responsibility

Abdul Rahman Abdul Aziz Al hazaa'

In recent times, mass media has developed its ways and administrations; its role is no longer limited to news and entertainment; it goes beyond other contents.

Today, mass media has become an effective tool in creating public opinion and affecting society's culture. Individuals react and are affected mentally and behaviorally by what they watch, hear, or read. Its influence has gone beyond the national level, enabling the world to become one village.

Hence, media professionals assume a big responsibility; so do public and private investors who must take into consideration the demands and aspirations of the audiences.

Societies especially in the developing countries enjoin mass media to be more transparent and pursue positive initiatives to make its ambitions, expressing opinions within the bounds of law. Individuals have a right to get acquainted with the culture around them, and with the various media messages they receive daily.

To achieve these challenges, media men must consider the following: concern for various issues in a society; exposure to all opinions and attitudes between the supporter and the opponent, in complete freedom and equilibrium; opportunities for individuals to express what they want; and pursuit of mass media as a bridge between the broad audience and the officials (leaders).

Now the question is : Are media men and the investors able to do that?

The answer is : (NO) because of several concerns like: -

First: the big gap between the developed and developing countries in the information field

It's crystal clear there's a big gap between the developed and developing countries; the former has the information and ways of dissemination; they can control the quality and quantity according to their goals. The latter that often represents the information receiver does not have any choice in determining its contents or goals. The one-way huge information flow creates extreme danger to society's identification and values in the developing countries, and put their governmental local and private mass media in front of a big challenge to face the cultural globalization.

It's known to all that the U.S.A, the European nations and some other countries have invested yearly billions of dollars to transmit their mass media to the other nations especially in the Middle East, Asia and Africa. The developed countries don't aim to achieve the financial profit from these investments, but to realize their goals such as gaining public opinion, improving their reputation, and attracting more supporters at the expense of the needs of societies in these countries.

Second: the commercial dimension, profitability searching and advertisers' satisfaction.

This problem has confronted the society. Individuals differ in opinion about what they want to watch, or to hear, or to read in their mass media. Focus is on what the advertisers want to the extent that useful ideas and information are neglected, preventing individuals to practice their rights and duties as good people.

Third: absence of information honour codes and career respect.

This is a major obstacle that has prevented media officials to pursue their moral responsibility to address the needs of the individuals. When we watch a new TV channel, see the birth of a broadcast station and read a newspaper or magazine, we see that some have deviated from the morality of society. Some of those have become wide stage for political and religious struggles, the music, the sex, the magic and the sorcery. These new channels have lots of followers and fans especially from the young who refrain from reading, or hearing, or watching the other moderate channels, which try to show entertainment and enlightenment, and at the same time protect the goals and the morality of the society.

Media organisations and other bodies must assume a big international responsibility towards their society in this regard. They must help enact laws and legislations to promote ethics and freedom of expression. I believe this type of legislation has often been neglected and needs following up and activating.

In the Arab World, the ministers of information have agreed lately on the issue of an information honour code that focuses on securing the region inhabitants from the negative affects which occur from the deviation of the channels or the broadcasting stations away from the public line, and concentrate their dissemination on other useless issues such as political and religious struggles, the magic, the sorcery, the sex and the bad music.

The extract:

Mass media in the developing countries should take responsibility towards the society in complete manner and right way, but to achieve this goal we need to bridge the gap between developed & developing countries, and give a chance to mass media to play its role. We must not give a chance to the advertisers to be in control of media material, or its dissemination time. We need to provide and honour standards aimed to protect the morality and values in the society.

Abdul Rahman Abdul Aziz Al hazaa', Assistant Deputy Minister, Ministry of Culture and Information (MOCI), Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

Media in Poverty Reduction

Steve Buckely

I am speaking here today in my capacity as President of AMARC, which is the French acronym for the World Association of Community Radio Broadcasters. AMARC is a membership association that groups together community radio stations, production groups and the federations of community broadcasting in 117 countries today. We consider community broadcasting to be broadcasters which are independent, civil society-based, operating for social benefit and not for profit.

I want to address this session's theme of 'Media and Responsible Practices' from the perspective of alleviation of poverty and hardship and to pose the question "What role for media in poverty reduction?" I would look at how community broadcasting in particular is making a contribution.

Here is the view from a window of a community radio station in urban Jakarta. As you can see, it is a slum area with a filthy river running by. Poverty has many dimensions. Income for people here are very low, mainly from an informal economy and life is precarious. But their biggest concern is the dirty water. Each of these makeshift houses has had a well dug, but when it rains, the river floods and the wells become contaminated.

Here is the radio station. It's called Radio CBS and just like its community, it is very poor and it's rather precarious. Mostly it plays music for a few hours a day to help people feel better. Local people tune into it. It's close to them. It's produced by people they know. It's not portraying some unattainable luxury and it shares their concerns. The radio station has taken up the issue of the water supply. When I visited, the radio had recently forced the resignation of a local leader who was failing to get public action to assure local access to clean water. This I submit to you is an example of responsible practice.

There are hundreds of small stations like radio CBS in Indonesia. People living in poverty face particular barriers to voice and to have access to information which are directly associated with the conditions in which they live. These barriers reduce their ability to make informed choices, to draw attention to their needs and concerns, to participate in political life and to mobilise and to improve their conditions. They include social barriers such as discrimination in access to services, lack of education including illiteracy and lack of provisions in appropriate languages. They include lack in basic infrastructure such as electricity, transport and telecommunications. They include repression and lack of will of states to allow access to voice for the most marginalised groups as well as direct forms of censorship and restrictions on access to information.

Community broadcasting has emerged as one of the means by which some though not all of these barriers can be overcome. It is certainly spreading across the Asia Pacific region. But for it to develop and flourish, the commitment of governments is also required.

In Indonesia, community radio emerged after the fall of former President Suharto. The opening up of the media was driven especially by independent-minded journalists who had bravely worked underground during the Suharto years, producing distance and alternative newssheets.

But the earliest community radio in Asia were those of the UNESCO supported Tambuli Project in the Philippines, starting in 1991. In Nepal, community radio began in 1997 with Radio Segamasuri in Kathmandu. Community radios in Nepal played a central role in defending democracy and human rights in the period of direct rule by King Gyanendra. All political parties in Nepal now support the development of community broadcasting.

In Thailand, community radio took off after the Broadcast Frequency Act in 2000, which allocated 20% of the FM radio spectrum to “not for profit” community broadcasting, although there is still no clear regulatory framework. In Timor Leste, community radio started under the UN transitional authority. In Afghanistan, community radio started after the fall of the Taliban but continues to operate at high risk. Zakiah Zakir, the station manager of Sada-E-Sol, which means Radio Peace, was brutally murdered last year following threats by local warlords. At the time of the first Asia Media Summit four years ago, these countries together with Australia and New Zealand were some of the principal locations of community radio activity in the Asia and the Pacific. But there have been no significant development since then.

One of the drivers has been the response to disaster, especially the Tsunami. When communities in Aceh, coastal areas of Bangladesh and Tamil Nadu were overwhelmed in December 2004, it highlighted not only the lack of early warning but also the vital importance of communications in the recovery efforts.

In Aceh accelerated efforts were made to establish new community radio stations, with five new stations on air within five weeks of the disaster and another 15 over the next year. In Bangladesh, local radio services were established as part of the reconstruction effort and have contributed to the government of Bangladesh’s decision to put in place a community radio licensing policy that promises many more by end of the year.

In India, one of the first community radio services to be licensed under the 2006 Community Radio Policy is a coastal community radio in Tamil Nadu, linked to a network of coastal communications centres. For India the community radio policy is particularly seen as a way of giving voice to community based non-governmental organisations that meet the communications needs of the rural and urban communities.

Now, let me turn to the role of the media generally. Since poverty is a matter of social and economic welfare, let’s see what some leading economists have to say. The most well known observation on the role of media and poverty reduction is Amartya Sen’s assessment that *“no substantial famine has ever occurred in any independent country with a democratic form of government and a relatively free press”*. Another Nobel Prize winning economist Joseph Stiglitz has drawn on his research on information asymmetries to argue that the balance of power between citizens and their governments is improved by access to information through independent media. Paul Collier, the Oxford economist and author of *“The Bottom Billion”*, had investigated the reasons the poorest countries in the world struggle to improve the conditions of their people. Among the four principal reasons he identifies is the problem of corruption. He suggests that the most important remedy for corruption is the adoption of appropriate rules and regulations that enables a diversity of free and independent media.

Media pluralism has also come to be understood as meaning not only plurality of content and plurality of ownership but also plurality of types of broadcasting, including public, commercial and community broadcasting. Community broadcasting has been seen to have a specific role in giving voice to the poorest and most marginalised people. Among the most recent standard setting statements in this respect is the joint declaration on diversity and broadcasting on the four international mandates on freedom of expression by the United Nations, the Organizations of the American States, the African Union and the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe. Their declaration states among other matters, community broadcasting should be explicitly recognised in law as a distinct form of broadcasting; it should benefit from fair and simple licensing procedures, should not have to meet stringent technological or other licence criteria, should benefit from concessionary licence fees and should have access to advertising.

Finally let me finish with some observations from poor people themselves. These are drawn from testimonies gathered by a friend and a colleague of mine in Nepal, Suman Barsnet. The first is from a vegetable farmer in Palung. He says, *"In my village vegetable farmers received enhanced bargaining power after our local community radio, "Radio Palung" started to provide the latest vegetable rates from Kathmandu. Earlier we were exploited by middlemen who made good on the information gap"*.

Here is a single women activist in Dang. She says, *"Radio Sworgadwari is the guardian of all single women of our area. It is through this radio that we first ran a programme to dispel social myths and superstitions regarding widows"*. And here is the voice of a visually impaired programme producer from community radio Himchuli. He says, *"I receive tons of letters from my listeners. They tell me that my programme has raised awareness about our people and the understanding and respect from our community has increased enormously"*.

It is for people like this and millions of others that community broadcasting exists to serve.

Steve Buckely, President, World Association of Community Radio Broadcasters (AMARC), UK

Session 8

Media And Family

The family as an institution is increasingly under threat. Some blame excessive materialism, and the proliferation of illicit drugs and violence. Their corrosive influences undermine the family. Others cite “harmful” media messages, especially those directed to children and the young, who spend hours watching TV, music videos or movies, listening to the radio, or playing computer games. Many media studies have shown that media violence, for instance, has an effect on subsequent aggression in children. In a media-driven society, how can media help preserve family values and promote family cohesiveness? Is media literacy enough? Do we need new rules? How can media consumers play a critical role in strengthening the family?

Promoting Greater Family Values

Zohra Chatterji

The advent of television in its early stages brought the family closer as they all crowded around the television to watch, discuss and wonder in suspense what the next turn of events would be in the episodes to come. A number of forces have led to a complete change in the scenario today. As the means of information and communication and the associated gadgetry have multiplied manifold each member of the family specially in urban literate households likes to view their own favorite channels based on their individual likes or dislikes. Those who can afford it provide multiple television sets in the homes otherwise the children go off to friend's houses to watch their favorite programmes or games together. Alternatively they can view it on their mobile or simply on their computer screens. Time- shifted television enables storage of programmes to be viewed at convenience at a later time, which also obviates the need for everybody to sit together to watch a popular programme. And thus the TV-viewing culture of by-gone days is almost vanished when the family sat on a sofa like the Simpsons touching each other more and bonding much more while their eyes remained glued to the TV.

Though we know the picture has changed there is very little concrete data available about family media usage and media habits. However, it is beyond doubt that the negative impact of the television is increasingly being seen in the actions of children and adults alike. A number of juvenile crimes, school children attacking and even killing fellow school mates are increasingly being reported. In a bizarre case that happened recently in India, two brothers aged over 50 years fought over control of the remote. One of them accidentally broke it and the other actually hanged himself. Unbelievable but true!

Of greatest concern is the impact on children who are growing up in a media saturated environment. The television dominates children's media landscape. Music, computer use, movies and video games account for the rest of the electronic media diet. The amount of media consumption by a child may be related to a number of family variables. Children in a single parent home watch more television, more movies and listen more to the radio each day than children in two-parent homes where parents, grand parents and siblings are hovering around.

The first noticeable impact of television in children is exhibited through their copying behaviour; they like to dress and dance like media stars, clamour for products being advertised. Some times they get so scared about something they have seen that they may not be able to sleep at night and this affects the whole family. Even more dangerous is the negative impact on the psychology of the child. The silent insidious cancer which could be converting an innocent child into a demon without anyone even realising it. Other negative outcomes include lower school performance, increased aggression, increased obesity, and the prevalence of symptoms of psychological trauma including less contact with other human beings, lower communication and increased depression and loneliness.

On the plus side it cannot be denied that television has increased exposure and knowledge levels many fold. The frontiers of knowledge are expanding much faster than parents and grand parents can keep up with. But through television and computer the children are able to keep up with and be exposed to a wealth of knowledge. Educational television helps to teach social attitude, skills, emotional recognition and empathy in contrast to the sexist and aggressive attitudes, fear and consumer behaviour instilled by the typical TV channel. Television helps parents to explain confusing situations and express feelings about difficult topics (sex, love, drugs, alcohol, smoking etc.).

There could be a number of practical ways in which television viewing could be made a more rewarding experience by teaching the children good television habits. For example, the number of TV watching hours can be limited by fixing hours as well as providing other distractions like books, toys, puzzles, making television a complete “no-no” during the meals and home work time etc. Weekday bans could also be tried. It would be worthwhile for parents to check television programme schedules ahead of time and devise a family television viewing schedule for the week, which the whole family could watch together. This way through interaction while consciously watching television together, beliefs and values could be instilled thought provoking questions asked and if, for example, certain beliefs or cultures are mistreated or discriminated against, one could talk about why it is important to treat every one equally despite differences etc. Such active parental mediations have been shown to be related both to better academic performance and positive attitude.

Another big poser for policy makers and parents is that though the broadcasting content has one or the other form of regulation with reference to obscene content, pornography, violence etc. the children have easy access to such content on the internet. Any content regulation within the geographical boundaries of a country therefore becomes meaningless. International consensus, therefore, has to be built on preventing free access to such content.

So much so for television viewing by families with children but what of other situations - elderly and alone people who rely mainly on television for entertainment, the handicapped people, people confined in homes, hospital, jails etc. We could think of a host of other viewers or viewer groups away from their families or homeland dependent largely on television. The media can be used imaginatively as a means to connect with familiar situations back home and even family members through phone in programmes targeted to reach out to such groups. There is a need to study and identify viewing needs and such niche groups and suitably modify the content accordingly.

The increasing penetration of satellite television into rural areas, and domination of content based on urban value systems and morals and consumer habits are leading to rapidly transforming social values in rural areas and consumption habits. Because of lower literacy levels and lack of access to alternative sources of information the impact of the channels is much greater.

Another aspect of the impact of the television on the family has been through episodes based mainly on family relationships, which attain instant popularity because everybody can identify with the day-to-day situation, and relationships that exist universally in any average family. Such serials have tremendous power to influence the way we look at relationships. In a traditional society like India we have the so-called ‘SAS BAHU’ or mother-in-law and daughter-in-law serials, which have been a run away success and have

sent TRP ratings shooting to the sky. However, society moralists are deeply concerned about the effect, which such performances are having. It is alleged that they are causing rifts in the family, creating fights where once harmonious family relationships existed and encouraging woman to be rebellious and outspoken - a phenomenon which others may consider to be a positive development and view it as women's empowerment. Recently Afghanistan has taken the extreme step of banning the airing of such Indian serials in their country.

Another area of concern is the impact on husband wife relationships. Divorce is often glamorised and shown as the weapon of the empowered woman encouraging women to follow the easy path of walkout rather than the more grueling task of adjusting to relationships.

Compared to TV, the impact of press media is generally not so negative. The print media contributes significantly to vocabulary, general knowledge, spelling and verbal fluency. The books are sometimes handed down from generation to generation and children love to read the books earlier read by their parents or presented by them. It helps to bind rather than disintegrate family ties and is relatively not as damaging as television media tends to be.

As television channels get more and more sensationalised and commercialised, people are increasingly turning to radio to the entertainment. In India the private sector has recently been permitted to enter the FM space and this has been a run away success. Radio channels are rapidly becoming a means of bonding together as people exchange messages passed on through the radio jockey peppered with some colourful jokes of his own. The channels have developed a new style and language of their own and the young adopt it and identify with it. These FM Channels are also turning into a substitute for the "agony-aunt" to whom people can pour out their hearts not only about their sweethearts but also about various family problems. They are sure to receive some sage and sound advice which helps in building the family relationships. People are also able to just listen in and chat about topics of their interest. While the radio plays in one part of the house all members of the family can listen to it and still be busy in their own worlds.

Media professionals would do well to shape the content of channels so as to promote greater family values so that this powerful medium is enabled to integrate and not disintegrate the family.

Zohra Chatterji, Joint Secretary (Broadcasting), Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, India

Being a Trusted Media

Otto Evjenth

I think that the situation that we are headed into when it comes to media and family is a kind of tragic comedy. Let me start with a question. Why are media mainly discussing treatment and not prevention when it comes to harm generated by their chosen initiatives? How can we expect to be trusted when we are claiming that industries pollute and that they should not pollute or harm people in an area? How can we be trusted when we ourselves are continuously polluting ourselves by the media content we are distributing?

I think that it's suitable now to come to my first statement: Revenue is a driving force. There is no doubt that we are all driven by economy and what is important is that there are only two sources of revenues in our media value chain. That is from the two value propositions which impact our social or consumption behaviour, namely, those who are sponsoring us or those who are asking us to influence behaviour, and those who are paying money to have access to our content. The situation today is that the sources of revenues are highly driven by technologies. It is far easier for us to have revenues from advertising than it is to have revenues from access.

We haven't got the technologies as yet to have paid TV solutions, video-on-demand solutions, where we could increase our revenue stream from the end users relative to what we have from those who order us to influence markets through our media. It is known that the financial setting is tough. The number of media organisations in the market have invested more money than what usually could rationally be earned from the existing sources of revenues. It's pretty simple. In most markets look at the equation and examine what is the spending in the media sector relative to the investments and the depreciation of investment in the same markets. Usually we will find that those numbers are not matching. So for many media companies they are in a way driven by panic.

What I am saying here is that the competition is fierce and the technologies needed to increase revenue streams from readers/viewers are not at hand yet. It seems like many content providers, publishers or broadcasters are willing to "eat camels" to provide "eyeballs" for those wanting to influence consumer habits. It may be harsh but I still maintain that this is correct. But there are also rules to this game. In a market where information is abundant and the customers will have to navigate for information, only those trusted will be the "pilots". This is about being trusted. This is about those being trusted to navigate in a redundant media society. The content providers who are regarding end-users mainly as target groups for promotions are not trustworthy to be future pilots. I think we will see segmentations of market and in many markets. We have already seen them. There is a very strong segmentation where the cash flows are definitely influenced by a lack of trust.

The numbers are not made to impress. The numbers are based on research. And is this what we really want? Is this the repute that we would like to have as media players in the information society? How could we maintain that our publications are making people eat more hamburgers and simultaneously say that we are not influencing social behaviour? This is to me a comedy. I mean, how can we as editors and publishers who exert a big

influence suddenly say we have not when are criticized for what we are doing. There is something that is not fitting in these segments. Are we conscious but without conscience when we scientifically enhance the means to secure “eyeballs”?

There is a lot of spending going into influence. There is a lot of spending going into how can we further influence the audiences to change their eating behaviour. We know that we have a big problem with obesity among young people. How can we on one hand run articles or pieces on TV stations on obesity and nourishment as a problem and on the other side have big income from those advertisers? Is that trustworthy? Should we be held responsible? Should or could we stop this race towards a total loss of credibility and professional pride? Could we do something? Are there ethical norms that we would like to discuss and put up for ourselves? Or are we so dependent upon advertising, promotions and influence to change consumer habits that we have lost sight of what media is about when it comes to contributing to the development of societies?

Let me end this by telling you about the newly established Global Media Centre for Development between World View and AIBD. We have taken the initiative. We have invited a university in Malaysia to work with us to develop a kit that would teach us so that we could help teach media usage to young people.

I think that it's quite peculiar that we are in a situation where most products are regulated. This has nothing to do with freedom of speech. For instance, when we are selling jam or whatever, we have regulations on what can be done and what can't be done. It's a very difficult situation, but that doesn't mean that time and time again we as media people can hide behind the freedom of speech. It is important but how important is it relative to other parameters when it comes to development of society.

Let me quote the Head of the Faculty of ECD, University Sains Malaysia, who told me in an email yesterday that: “all the young girls want to be Paris Hilton, and the boys are exposed to so much violence that they all become desensitised towards human suffering”. That was the comment from her after they had looked at the pictures from Sichuan. I don't know what is worse, to be emulating Paris Hilton or to be desensitised.

Otto Evjenth, CEO, WorldView Global Media SA, Norway

Media Literacy Programmes for Children

Ronghuai Huang

I am going to talk about Chinese media English education through a global perspective. China is a big country and its economy is developing so fast, and a big difference exists not only between the West and the East, but also between the country side and the bigger cities.

Media literacy is becoming a hot topic in China especially because consumers are exposed to the various forms and the multifunctional features of the mass media, the influence of globalisation and the development of new media technology that has enhanced customers' access to information. This in turn provides more opportunities and a platform for the public to engage as a society through the media.

So we should focus on the public's ability to use the media capabilities to criticize and its ability to engage other media. Firstly, there is an immediate need to pursue and implement media education. This means that we should promote the ability to distinguish, judge and analyse the information delivered by the media so that customers can screen good information from the bad and benefit from their contact with the media. This is because sometimes media features content that is full of conflict, violence, killings, sex and so on. Overexposure of K-12 students to media violence will create an illusion of social bias and produce a negative effect on their physiological development and behaviour as they lack the ability to distinguish or to criticize when faced with a vast amount of media information.

Secondly, it is important to have media literacy for children. This is because any education of children is the starting point of a life long education. It also establishes the foundation for individual life long development. It is also because of the potential growth of children as core media consumers who face the negative effect of mass media. So media literacy can help children reduce and resist the hand of media.

How can the government formulate an efficient policy for this? For example, there is a policy about cartoon TV programmes, many of which are domestically produced. Effective the 1st of May 2008, each and every cartoon channel has to broadcast only domestically produced cartoons or domestic cartoon programmes during the period from 17:00 to 21:00 everyday, considered the golden duration during the day. This is very important and useful as part of the media literacy programme for pre-school children. Perhaps, it would be best to integrate this into the art classes taken by the children and to expose children to media development. We should also train preschool teachers directly.

Actually the media literacy education should be run as a social system by including the schools, media and families. For the schools, I think we should set up media literacy education courses. For the media practitioners, they should come to K-12 schools to give lectures about media literacy. The media colleges should also provide support and assistance to media literacy education. On the family side, we should encourage parents to give correct guidance and timely supervision when their children come into contact with media and to help them form and practise positive media contact habits.

Finally we will talk about media and the family. Family education is a practical and effective way of carrying out media literacy education for children in China, as family is one of the most important facts in the children's socialization as well as the basis of media literacy education for children. Parents play dual roles in media literacy education, which are the subject of educating their children and the object of social education. Parents have to create a harmonious, healthy and interactive media contact atmosphere for their children.

So the value orientation of media literacy education for young children should emphasize protection, while the principle of media literacy education for older children should rely on the initiatives and creativity of the children. The media, parents and the children have a critical relationship in establishing guidelines, in fostering positive media habits, in the construction of opinion givers in the family and strengthening the foundation of the two way communication.

For us it is hard to imagine what the children think about the new media and the technology. There is a big gap between the parents and the children. Why do I think so? This is because in the new media and the ICT, these children are the native inhabitants and we, the parents, are the foreigners. So, we should pursue more researches focused on how to deal with the media literacy education.

Professor Ronghuai Huang, Beijing Normal University, China

Media's Role in Sharing Values and Normalising Behaviour

Olya Booyar

The first question that we here have to answer is, "Is the family as an institution under threat or more to the point is the media to be blamed?" There is always a worry that the media is to be blamed for undermining the family. The issue of course is much more complex than that. I personally feel that it's hard to isolate one factor that threatens the family and that there is quite a lot going on in the whole sphere and these are some of the issues.

A lot of it simply has to do with the rapid changes in society which demand more and more from people but also provide them with a lot of benefits if you can call it that. With prosperity comes less and less time to spend with our children, and more and more time children spend in front of the TV who are being bombarded by everything that comes not necessarily from their own TV stations in their own country but over borders that are becoming increasingly non-existent. But it should be acknowledged that media is important in sharing values and normalizing behaviour. So, we return to the question again, "Can media help in preserving family values and promoting cohesiveness?"

Media plays an important role in sharing ideas and values and therefore reflects social change but it doesn't drive that change alone. Just as the media often pushes the boundaries of what is socially acceptable, society sets those very boundaries for the media. That is society pushes the media back.

So, today we are going to talk about how that process works in the Australian context from the point of view of my role on the Classification Board. So, how is it that we regulate rather than control behaviour and the media's portrayal of it? I think that there is a value chain here. Well, it's more of a value circle on my slide. Now most behaviour complies with commonly accepted social norms. That is the family values in any country. Regulators don't really go there. The law deals with some behaviour, occasional and exceptional, which clearly violates our values.

Behaviour in the vast and partially cultivated and possibly unexplored area around normal accepted traditional values is the main focus of the debate in the definition. Media exposes or shines a light on individual incidence and often shows examples of wider abuses, shares the knowledge of it and provokes public debate. Society strives towards a consensus position, if that's possible and in most cases we reach a decision on whether or not the behaviour is inside or outside the acceptable norms. And then of course the media educates society on a new plot for the boundary. So, it's a constant evolving process of pushing the envelope and having it pushed back. Censorship issues can arouse significant emotion, especially at times when people consider their freedom is being eroded or conversely the people fear that their security and well-being is being compromised by unwelcome material.

In Australia as in any other country, the nature of censorship is evolutionary and this is what we do in Australia in terms of censorship. We don't censor everything. We do films, computer games and some publications on a co-operative scheme through the Censorship Scheme around Australia. Over time the Classification Scheme in Australia, including the role of the Board has evolved to provide for sensible and defensible decisions that also have regard to the sensibilities of the community.

Now how we do that? Well, first of all, the government picks all the appointees. However the interesting challenge for the government both in formulating classification policies legislation and picking the board members is determining classification to appropriately reflect the sensibilities of the communities and the standards as they are most commonly known, standards which in reality are many and varied and in a state of flux. As we all know individual sensibilities don't necessarily coincide and may in fact be in direct opposition to one another, making it difficult to determine community standards that are broadly representative of any population. For instance, do you ban materials simply because the majority consider it offensive even if there is a significant minority that feels differently? Or do you act in response to an articulate and vocal minority that may find certain material offensive even though they can choose not to access it?

The Classification Board in Australia tries to find the meeting point between a sensible approach that allows individuals to exercise a choice regarding the entertainment options and for that matter industry product material of their choice and appropriately reflect the current community standards that are quite rightly applied in order to limit access to and availability of certain material.

Let me illustrate how dramatically society's sensibilities can change. In 1931, the Motion Picture Producers and Distributors Association (MPDA) of America, the body responsible for rating the films in that country, in its code of conduct stated: "Scenes of passion should not be introduced when not essential to the plot. In general, passion should be so treated that these scenes do not stimulate the lower and baser element."

Over 75 years later, scenes of passion are routinely and abundantly seen on our screens, whether it's on television, a DVD or at the movies. In fact, it would be difficult to name a feature film these days without at least one such scene of passion, irrespective of the films' actual subject matter. This same organisation, now known as the Motion Picture Association of America, recently announced that it would specifically include smoking among the factors to be considered in the rating of films in that country. Films containing pervasive smoking or glamorised depictions of smoking may attract a higher rating. Who would have imagined that such a seemingly stark reversal of attitudes would occur, whereby scenes of passion barely raise an eyebrow but smoking raises the ire of the censors? It's also interesting to note that smoking is still a legal activity just as passion was in 1931, at least between some adults.

Nevertheless, there would always be certain materials such as child pornography, which the community would not tolerate for obvious reasons. However for other materials, particularly those at the high end of the spectrum, where decisions may result in the material either being released or banned, the use of individual standards within a community can often be distinctly at odds with one another.

The situation today is complicated further because communities' standards vary significantly across international borders, which are increasingly meaningless due to advances in the telecommunication technology. This presents significant challenges for governments in terms of regulating certain activities within a country when the same regulations do not exist outside it and when the exchange of information and communication occurs so rapidly and freely across borders. Community standards not only change with the passage of time and the crossing of borders, but also they can shift in response to technological advances and significant global events.

While there is arguably more freedom around materials that are available to adults, there is also an increase in legislative restriction on certain materials that the community has expressed concern about following the events of 9/11 and other terrorist attacks. It is against this background that the notion of sense and censorship is so important. However, I believe that the principle that underpins Australia's Classification Scheme seeks to achieve an appropriate balance between sensible classification of decision-making and consideration of community standards. This is the philosophy for the classification in Australia. Fundamentally the scheme is based on the principle that adults should be free to choose what they read, hear and see with some limited exceptions. The exceptions include certain materials such as child pornography, exploited depiction of sexual violence, cruelty or real violence and detailed instructions in matter of crime and violence. This type of material is refused for classification and, therefore, is not able to be sold or distributed.

Other important principles of this Scheme include that the standards of morality, decency and propriety generally accepted by reasonable adults should be applied and that minors should be protected from materials that might harm them or disturb them.

The National Classification Scheme in Australia, as the name suggests, is largely about classifying material. The primary purpose of this Scheme is to provide informal information and advice to the public so that they can make informed choices about entertainment material for themselves and those in their care. In fact, the Board does not censor material at all and must classify it in the form that it is submitted. Unlike schemes in other countries, the Board does not edit material or recommend modifications to publishers or filmmakers. We only determine a classification and give consumer advice.

Today, very few products are refused classification and, therefore, fall between what may traditionally be considered a censorship. In the last year, only 59 items were refused classification out of just under 7000.

It wasn't until the 70's that community standards have really become an important component of the Classification Scheme, which has been reflected in the classification tools, used today by the Board. An important change in the approach to classification in Australia occurred with the introduction of the R-18 plus classification in 1971. Now we have these six classifications, with three of them carrying legal restrictions. For the first time in Australia, the policy position of the rights of adults to access high impact material was articulated and children under 18 were legally prevented from seeing material which was suitable for adults only. We judge suitability by these impacts. The policy intention behind the R-18 classification was that community standards would form the basis for the decisions about wherever particular material should be made available and the community standards are around.

It's interesting to note that Australia does not have the same classification for computer games. Currently the computer games can receive a maximum classification of MA-15 plus, unsuitable for person under 15 years of age to be and to be lawfully available in Australia. For some time now, there has been community interest in introducing a higher classification that is the R-18 plus for computer games, to bring consistency into the classification Scheme. It should be noted that with Singapore about to introduce adult classification for games, Australia remains the only developed country without an adult classification for games. The key argument against this introduction is that the protection of minors for material that is likely to harm or disturb them is the difficulty in enforcing the R-18 classification, as the product would be mainly available for use in the home. There are also the potential negative effects of the interactive activity of computer player games with high impact content particularly the risk of increased aggressive tendencies with the games with violent content. The Attorney General of Australia has agreed in February this year to consult the public about the desirability of introducing this classification.

It would be remiss of me to go on at this point without mentioning the "biggest elephant in the room" in every living room in Australia at the moment. It's the latest controversy involving art, media and community standards, which is being played out in Australia as we speak. The day before I left to come here internationally recognised Australian photographer, Bill Hanson, had his latest exhibition featuring nude under-aged girls and boys shut down before it had even opened. The photos have been seized and the matter is being handled under the Crimes Act with charges possibly pending against both the artist and the gallery owner for possession of child pornography. Art critics, curators and fellow artists are dumb-founded, saying that Hanson has been doing the same sort of work for 30 years. And what are you going to do, remove all the caricatures from walls of every museum in Australia as well while you are at it?

Australian Prime Minister Kevin Rudd went into this debate, saying that he finds the images absolutely revolting and without any artistic merit. This issue has highlighted a nexus between artistic expression and community attitude towards the portrayal of adolescents in the media. More importantly this will now be played out in the Courts. It's also an interesting issue to dissect.

Personally, I think that both sides are being quite hysterical about this. The media seems to be turning this into a moral panic with the artist as the escape goat. And that is very bad, but I also think that the art world could respond much better than the usual, "Hands Off! This is art's approach. It simply no longer works like that in this day and age of inter-connectiveness. The images may have integrity in the mind of the artist and in the context of an art exhibition in a private gallery but images that circulate around the world acquire meanings that are beyond the control of any individual artist or art galleries. And pictures of nude young girls and boys are inevitably going to enlist responses in an era where the sexualisation of children is already a major public concern.

So, have we got it right? In my view, the Australian Classification Scheme serves an important function in providing information to consumers, particularly parents to enable them to make informed choices about the material that they view. Australia arguably is an open and broadminded place and this is reflected in a scheme that focuses on classification rather than strict censorship. While sometimes difficult, every decision involves balancing these competing requirements along with the rights of people to express themselves freely. This is the consumer advice that we use to go along with the markings.

Now a case to point is the BORAT. It's a free expression bid. Now if you were to look at that, all our markings are all over that. It's a MA-15 plus and it quite clearly points out what you're likely to see if you really want to see this.

So, it's given that the media, arts and entertainment industries fulfil a significant role in the society to amuse, to move, to shock, provoke, reflect, interpret and explain in the form, expose, comment, judge, critic and represent the world that we inhabit. They also have the responsibility to be occasionally inspiring, uplifting and simply beautiful. The arts and the media broadly speaking are by nature a vehicle for agitation, pushing boundaries, questioning conventions and raising controversial issues.

It is important that we are continuously seeking an appropriate balance in terms of classifications decisions and community standards. By properly managing this nexus gives certainty not only to us but also to producers and distributors when submitting their products. It increases the confidence of the community in the scheme and classification decisions and ensures the integrity of the underlying principle that the adults should hear, see and read what they choose. And apart from being practically impossible to accommodate the entire spectrum of individual sensibilities, to attempt to do so would amount to a system of censorship rather than classification.

Olya Booyar, Deputy Director, Classification Board, Australia

Promoting Media Discussion on Respect for Individual Humanity

Dr. Nafis Sadik

I am very happy to be here, because it allows me to thank AIBD, first of all for its excellent work in training and developing broadcast skills; and secondly, for its initiative in bringing us together from all over the region. This conference offers a rare opportunity for you to step back from your busy lives and look at the big picture. I'm sure you are making the most of it.

I would like to introduce three points that may help your discussion here:

First, the Asian world of the 21st century is changing more profoundly, and more quickly, than at any time in the past.

Second, these changes call for fresh ways of thinking and creative ways of responding to new challenges. All over the region, a conversation is going on about economic stress, international migration, globalization and a host of other subjects. There is even a discussion about new ways to play cricket.

Finally, media across the region have a unique responsibility to help this conversation along and report on its results. As broadcasters, you are at the very heart of the economic and social transformation of the Asia-Pacific region.

When I was a child, a railway journey was a big adventure and listening to the "wireless" was a novelty. Nowadays, we take it for granted that anyone can fly from Tehran to Tuvalu in a few hours. News, ideas, approaches to the challenges of life go across national and cultural borders at the speed of light. We are connected in ways that my parents could not have dreamed of. My grandchildren can't imagine living without the mobile phone and the internet – not to mention Wii and Grand Theft Auto 4.

We have to remember first of all that Asia's history is one of co-operation and harmony. We learned in school about battles and border wars, conquests and confrontations, within and outside the region – but co-existence, just as much as conflict, is part of the Asian way of life. The 21st century presents new challenges such as HIV/AIDS and climate change, and many old challenges in a new form, such as migration; but we will be much more likely to reach good solutions if we stress what we have in common, rather than what divides us.

There are many problems and many differences. I was privileged to be part of the Alliance of Civilizations High-level Group, which reported in 2006. Our report points out that people in many countries and cultures are under stress from economic, political and demographic changes, over which their leaders have little direct control. The Report acknowledges that tensions across cultures have spread beyond the political level into the hearts and minds of populations; but political leaders still have an obligation to act.

The Report concludes that urgent action is needed on underlying issues, especially poverty. Despite economic growth in many countries in the region, poverty and its consequences continue to put enormous pressures on Asia-Pacific societies. Fourteen of the 50 least-developed countries in the world— are in this region. To quote the Alliance of Civilizations Report, “Poverty leads to despair, a sense of injustice, and alienation that, when combined with political grievances, can foster extremism.”

More than ever, we need a universal idea which offers a space in which to discuss and reconcile different interpretations of the world, and provide a basis for action. We need a concept of internationalism on one hand, and respect for individual humanity on the other, which allows respect and tolerance for diversity, even under stressful conditions. I believe that the basis already exists, in the form of the United Nations, and in the international human rights framework, which member countries have built over the last 60 years.

As individuals and organisations, you can promote the discussion with all the different means at your disposal.

The Alliance of Civilisations proposed for example:

- Media literacy programmes in schools to develop a discerning approach to news coverage.
- The development of internet literacy to combat misperceptions, prejudices and hate speech.
- Expanding internet access for poor and remote communities and out-of-school youth.
- Research work with universities, for example on immigration and the contributions of immigrants; diversity and tolerance in Asian history; human rights and Asian societies.

For journalists, the Alliance proposed:

- Voluntary codes of conduct to ensure responsible reporting.
- Training programmes to help widen journalists’ understanding of critical international issues – particularly in those fields where politics and religion intersect.

To help cross-cultural understanding directly, the Alliance proposed:

- Commentary by leaders in academia, religion, politics, civil society, and culture to deepen inter-cultural understanding, especially in times of crisis.
- Public and private donor support for films and broadcasts to improve understanding between different cultures.
- A “Risk Fund” to temper market forces that encourage sensationalist and stereotyped media and cultural materials.

These are only some ideas. I am sure you will have many others. As media leaders, you have both a great responsibility and a great opportunity to shape the future of Asia-Pacific, and the world.

Dr. Nafis Sadik, Special Adviser to the UN Secretary-General and UN Special Envoy for HIV/AIDS in Asia and the Pacific, USA

Special Report of Asia-Pacific Media AIDS Initiative (AMAI)

Moneeza Hashmi

The report of the Chairman of the AMAI to the AMS 2008

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Four years ago, under the leadership of Mr Kofi Anaan, the then Secretary General of the United Nations, the global Media AIDS Initiative was founded, with support from UNAIDS and the Kaiser Family Foundation. To forge effective media partnerships for HIV prevention all over the world, regional action arms of the GMAI were set up in Africa, the Caribbean, Russia and other regions.

Last year, in a pre-Asia Media Summit conference on Global Media Strategies for HIV and AIDS, the AIBD proposed the establishment of an Asia-Pacific Media AIDS Initiative or AMAI. After discussions with the ABU, which was also working with the GMAI on various HIV/AIDS initiative, it was agreed to combine resources and jointly establish an AMAI Secretariat.

In December last year, AIBD and ABU, organised a joint workshop for 22 producers with the goal of creating a regional co-production series and a regional seminar for decision makers of broadcasting organisations on the principles of media partnerships against AIDS, with technical and financial support from GMAI.

As a continuation of the activities, yesterday, we had a seminar on HIV and AIDS where we discussed such issues as mainstreaming HIV in media, monitoring and measuring the messages, the issue of quality in HIV communication and the need to give voices to the infected and affected. The need for capacity building of broadcasters in the region to deal with HIV and AIDS related issue in a manner which is accurate, ethical and socially just was re-iterated by many in the seminar.

In the evening yesterday, the first Board meeting of the Asia-Pacific Media AIDS Initiative was held. Moneeza Hashmi was elected as the Chairperson and Mr. Ken Clark was elected as the Vice Chairperson.

The board discussed the short-term plans for AMAI in which capacity building through In-country workshops, regional workshops and co-productions was discussed. The board also discussed strategies for strengthening the media partnership against HIV and AIDS so as to prevent HIV infections and thus so save lives.

Ms Moneeza Hashmi, General Manager, Lahore-HUM TV and Chairman, AMAI

Guidebook on Asia-Pacific Approach to Public Service Broadcasting

P. Das, Programmer Manager, AIBD

Some 35 seasoned broadcasters from Asia-Pacific examined the first draft of the proposed Guidebook on an Asia-Pacific Approach to Public Service Broadcasting (PSB) during a two-day workshop in Kuala Lumpur on May 24-25, 2008.

Organised and funded by AIBD and the Friedrich-Ebert Stiftung, the workshop was the first of a series of roundtable discussions to provide a practical reference book that will guide countries keen to move towards setting up a public service broadcasting system.

Mr. Jose Maria G. Carlos, AIBD consultant, made a PowerPoint presentation, highlighting the key principles that should guide the creation of PSB. These were the following:

- PSB should be for all citizens
- PSB should reflect diversity
- PSB should ensure quality content
- PSB should ensure editorial independence.
- PSB should ensure financial independence and sustainability
- PSB adheres to strong accountability practices
- PSB should promote a professional and creative human resource.
- PSB should promote strategic partnership and collaboration

He stressed that an effective PSB requires a media literate audience able to effectively and efficiently comprehend and utilize mass media content.

The Guidebook covers other topics such as the formation of the governing and executive bodies, laws and regulations, funding sources, training, digitisation and ways to facilitate transition from state broadcasting to PSB. During the workshop, the broadcasters were organised into two panels to review the draft guidelines on these topics, presenting recommendations and new ideas to strengthen the development of PSB in the region. They adopted suggestions to list the advantages of implementing a transition stage to facilitate the creation of PSB.

Mr. Kumar Abeysinghe, former chairman of the Sri Lanka Broadcasting Corporation, who served as chairman of the workshop, said the proposed Guidebook would serve as the contribution of seasoned broadcasters to the young broadcasters in the region.

At the opening ceremony, Dr. Javad Mottaghi, AIBD director, said the Institute has organised about 50 activities dealing with PSB over the last ten years, and the clamour among broadcasters was to set up an Asia-Pacific approach to PSB. He said there was a mandate for AIBD to pursue this approach as reflected in the Bangkok Declaration signed by Asia-Pacific Ministers of Information and Broadcasting in their meeting in Bangkok in 2003.

Dr. Paul Pasch, FES representative in Malaysia, emphasised that the Guidebook will be useful as long as there is a strong commitment among countries in the region to imple-

A small group will meet again in October 2008 to continue the review of the draft guidelines, which will be finalised and printed in time for the proposed Asia-Pacific Heads of State Summit in Vietnam in 2010.

P. Das, Programmer Manager, AIBD

Principal Sponsor
**FRIEDRICH
EBERT
STIFTUNG**

Official Broadcaster
Rajm



Supported by
Arab States Broadcasting Union, Asian Media Information and Communication Centre
Commonwealth Broadcasting Association, European Broadcasting Union
Pacific Islands News Association, Southern African Broadcasting Association,
World Radio and Television Council



ASIA MEDIA SUMMIT 2009

26-27 May 2009 Macau, China

Theme:
Media Impact, Influence
& Integrity in Changing Times

Media Impact, Influence and Integrity in Changing Times

In today's fast changing and competitive environment, the role and performance of media are being redefined more often. Its stakeholders are examining media's value and contribution amidst changing consumers' preferences. The citizens of the world are facing the spectre of globalization and liberalism, the advent of new information technology and issues related to food, fuel and other necessities. Is media seeing the bigger picture and responding to its implications? Is media equipped with new paradigms and competencies to address peoples' varying and increasing needs and expectations? Are media's impact, influence and integrity relevant in these changing times? How can stakeholders tap them to enhance media's important role in creating awareness, sharing knowledge and fostering values that impact society?

Summit Topics

- New Media, Changing the world Order
- Soaring Food and Fuel Prices - Where Can Media Help?
- Media, Democracy and Good Governance
- Rethinking Media in Conflict Zones
- Media Literacy and Education
- Attracting and Retaining the Right Media Professionals
- Keeping Small Media Stations Afloat: Survival and Growth
- New Media and Next Generation
- Marketing / Advertising Strategies in a Competitive Media Landscape
- Special Presentation on 2010 World Cup

Pre & Post Summit Events

4th May 2009

1. Media & Capacity Building: Empowering Media Practitioners through HRD (0900 – 1700)
2. Web Journalism (0900 – 1700)
3. 3rd Afro-Asia-Pacific Media Partnership Committee Meeting (By invitation only) (1700 – 1830)
4. AMAI Board Meeting (1900 – 2100)

24th & 25th May 2009

TV News Management (0900 -1700)

25th May 2009

1. GMAI / AMAI Seminar on HIV and AIDS (0900 – 1700)
2. Global Media Center for Development (GMCD) (0900 - 1700)
3. AIBD / NHK Workshop (0900 – 1700)
4. Childrens' Workshop (0900 – 1700)
5. AIBD/WRTVC Regional Workshop on Media Quality Management (0900-1700)
6. 3rd ASBU-AIBD Media Partnership Committee Meeting (By Invitation only) (1700-1845)
7. CEO Roundtable Discussion on Recruiting and Retaining Qualified Human Resources (1900 – 2030)

26th & 27th May 2009

Asia Media Summit

27th May 2009

3rd Asia-Pacific and Europe Media Dialogue: Preparatory Meeting (By invitation only) (1800 – 2000)

28th May 2009

1. International Partners' Seminar on Media Development (By Invitation only) (0900 – 1230)
2. Strategic plan Team Meeting (By Invitation only) (1400 – 1730)

More information is available on the AIBD website:
<http://www.aibd.org.my/conferences/ams/>



Asia-Pacific Institute For Broadcasting Development