



Asia Media Summit 2011

The 8th Asia Media Summit, hosted by Radio Voice of Vietnam and the Asia Pacific Institute for Broadcasting Development (AIBD), was held in Hanoi, Vietnam on May 24th to 25th, 2011. The event attracted about 600 local and international delegates from more than 50 countries and territories.

The organizer had themed this year's summit with "Digital Media Everywhere: Repositioning Broadcasting". Multiple delivery platforms had become the hot topic of discussion in the conference. We couldn't agree more that it is getting harder than ever to fight for a good viewership among different media. Traditional broadcasters are well aware of the growing significance of web, mobile and social media that chopping out our audience share everyday.

Apart from exploring how broadcasters should steer ourselves in the long run, the Summit also addressed other concrete needs of broadcasters such as pursuing more urgently the switchover from analogue to digital, strengthening capacity building initiatives with the use of new and social media, tapping quality management standards to improve performance, and pursuing better content acquisition, market share and revenues.

The speedy technological advances are bringing radical changes to the broadcasting industry, intensifying audience fragmentation and changing viewing behavior, and the challenges of strong competition. Broadcasters are facing an interesting situation here. We have stronger challenges ever in broadcasting, but at the same time the industry is attracting more and more new players, into both new and traditional media.

The two-day Hanoi Summit had been a valuable occasion in which we learnt about professional views, business practices and key strategies of practitioners on how they survived or managed the digital stress.

Survival repositioning for broadcasters

Mr. David Botbol, Deputy Managing Editor for Sports and News Magazines at France Televisions, offered five key strategies to ensure the future of television in the digital age during the three-day workshop on TV scheduling strategies and new media content held in the Summit. Aside from

moving to all platforms, Mr. Botbol said TV companies must develop new content in sports and news, interact with social media, connect Internet with television and pursue research and innovation particularly in conceptualising new formats and new ways to write across various platforms. He said these strategies have been the basis of how France Televisions, the public service broadcaster in France, has taken advantage of the digital world.

Another speaker at the workshop was Ms. Françoise

Tassera, Director of FTA Media and former Programmes Director at France 2 (the French public channel), who shared her expertise on programming strategies, revenues structures, and legal constraints, among others. She stressed the need to know media audiences well, including

their consumption behavior and lifestyle to be able to provide good programs.

Mr. Herve Michel, Deputy Director, International Affairs, France Televisions, France, said the key to success is mastering programming, and developing strong brands. "As a European media pundit put it recently: content is king and brands are king's boss: brands offer strong landmarks in our fragmented digitized world," he said.

As the traditional broadcasters prepare for implementation of the digital switchover, Mr. Michel was optimistic over the future of television. He cited as reasons for his positive outlook the growing level of viewership particularly in the European market, accessibility to more channels operated by traditional networks, and the strategy of traditional broadcasters to keep control of their audience by controlling the future means of alternative signal distribution like on-demand platforms, mobile phone services and IPTV.

Professor Li Ruigang, President of Shanghai Media Group (SMG), China, also spoke at the session, showcasing the company's initiatives to reposition its place in the digital world. He said SMG has become a full media service provider and highlighted that the TV Store is at the center of its reinvention. He also pointed out that SMG has repurposed its content production to provide new content and create a new media experience.

In his presentation, Mr. Ruigang showed how media consumption has evolved in China. Audiences



view traditional media as well as other media distribution platforms. They access not only from home and office, but anywhere. With the introduction of intelligent terminals, they have effective means to search content. He also said consumers have shifted from being a passive player to active author and distributor in TV.

Presence in Multi-platforms

The TV companies today can no longer just focus their service on TV. They need to make themselves present in all platforms to include web, mobile, tablet and IPTV to seize the digital opportunities and enhance their services, business and contribution to industry and society. Speakers at the Summit were trying to convey the same message to participants on how we should make the best use of various platforms without losing us on the track of digital media growth. Yet there was an interesting report from NHK.

In the special session named “Media and Disaster Experience”, Mr. Toshiyuki Sato, Special Controller of NHK and Mr. Tadashi Ideishi, Senior Commentator of News Commentators Bureau of NHK shared the role of Media during disaster by their experience on the recent Tsunami and earthquake in Japan. In a survey “which agency people turn to at emergency” carried out, 80.5% turned to NHK TV, 56.9% turned to Commercial TV, 43.2% turned to Portal Site, 36.3% turned to newspaper and 8.3% turned to social networking service. It showed that the mass media still has its strong presence. The tradition media, TV and Radio, have provided important and immediate information or warning to people on earthquake and Tsunami. NHK also posted information on their web and twitter to facilitate efficient delivery of information. They utilized the new media to find missing people and get information from the public. The ultimate role of media during natural disaster is saving lives and serving people. But Mr. Ideishi pointed out that the negative aspect of the new media was the difficulty or incapability to prove the truthfulness of the information and rumor could be easily spread.

The development for Radio

In session 3 “Technology Innovations: Driving Broadcasting to New Horizons”, Ms Kathryn Brown from Commercial Radio Australia introduced the World Digital Multimedia Broadcasting (WorldDMB) which is an

international non-government organization whose objective is to coordinate the implementation of all Eureka-147-based technologies, such as Digital Audio Broadcasting (DAB), DAB+ and Digital Multimedia Broadcasting (DMB). Their goal is to promote the awareness, adoption and implementation of these services around the world. They work with sound and data broadcasters, network providers, manufacturers, governments and official bodies to foster international co-operation and a smooth, coordinated roll out of services.

The WorldDMB is funded by the members from over 80 companies and international mass market medium. They include public and private broadcasters, receiver and electronic equipment manufacturers, car manufacturers, data providers, transmission providers, regulators and government bodies, such as BBC, SONY, BOSCH, etc.

Ms Brown also shared the hybrid radio in Australia. The concept of hybrid radio has been derived from long haul drivers’ habit in Australia. According to the survey, over 80% of the drivers in Australia hear the radio in the vehicles. Radio has been shifted to an online multiplier. Most people hear a relevant radio commercial referring to a website via hybrid radio, smart phone, computer, etc.

The content-providers have responded such habit of the audience so as to provide visual messages in the radio. The inclusion of visual messages into the hybrid radio has allowed the content providers not only to provide more messages to the audience but also to increase the advertising revenue.

In the course of exploring successful business strategies for the broadcasting management, it was encouraging to hear the views that management was to communicate regularly with the employees, recognize and reward their initiative and endeavor, develop a lifelong mindset and build an employee ownership and confidence on what they were selling for the organization. The need to create a high performance culture in the broadcast industry was endorsed in the Summit. We cannot agree more to the saying that, as we are all in a creative industry, the management must be aware of our needs, and develop a workplace where we have space to think, create and share comfortably.

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