

Circom Report

CIRCOM Regional News monthly • CR is the European Association of 380 Public Regional TV Stations in 38 countries • November 2002/No 37

[Nov. 29-30, at 9.30 am](#)

CR Executive Committee and European Board meetings in Trieste, Italy

Meetings of the CIRCOM Regional Executive Committee and European Board will be held in Trieste, Italy, Nov. 29-30.

The meeting of the EC members will take place at 9.30 am (Friday 29 November) at RAI's headquarters. Among the topics are the 21st CR annual conference, Prix CIRCOM 2003, Training programmes, Current coproductions and Participation in int'l tenders, Euromusica, CoPro Office, Finances, CR Action Plan, Elections.

On Saturday (30 November), at 9.30 am, same place, is the meeting of the European Board members. Topics include: establishing presence and the necessary quorum, confirmation of new National Coordinators and changes of membership, analysis of past events, adoption of the 2003 budget, etc.

The most influential int'l TV professionals of 2002

This January, Television Business International will publish the TBI 20, a definitive "who's who" of the international TV programming business. This exclusive list will profile the 20 most influential executives working in the global TV industry today, from channel heads to studio execs, and from up and coming indies to programming hot shots.

The TBI 20 will serve as a platform for highlighting the achievements of these 20 individuals over the last 12 months. Individuals will be nominated by their industry peers and the final 20 will be chosen by TBI's worldwide team of writers.

To nominate candidates for the TBI 20, one has to fill an entry form and return it to TBI by November 30th.

_ Nominations must be based on achievements over the past 12 months and should be based on the following criteria: innovation, creativity, leadership, vision and business sense.

_ Individuals should have made an impact in both their own domestic market and overseas as well.

To be nominated for the TBI 20 individuals must meet the following criteria:

_ Nominees must be actively involved in the business of TV programming: whether this be producing, distributing,

commissioning, buying, scheduling, marketing, managing or another related area.

_ They should also have made a significant practical or financial contribution to their sector in 2002; and

_ Have made an impact in both their own domestic market and overseas as well; or

_ Are recognised as leading lights or rising stars within their particular sector of the global TV business.

The TBI 20 will be published in the January issue of TBI

[The world's first](#)

Digital terrestrial broadcasting service in Germany

Germany will have the world's first digital terrestrial (DTT) broadcasting service from now on.

A joint venture between the Media institute Berlin-Brandenburg (MABB), several television stations and T-systems will offer a range of regular television channels that can be received over the normal television antennae. From 2010, all of Germany should be covered by the digital signals.

Viewers in and around Berlin can initially receive eight channels, including public and private stations such as RTL, ARD and ZDF. With a special dish and decoder, television signals can also be received on mobile units, such as telephones and PDAs. Due to the compression rate of the digital signals, one carrier can transmit four times as many channels as analogue TV.

The set-top boxes needed for the decoding of the DTV signals have proved very successful in Berlin, with certain locations selling out of the devices. With a price of up to 400 euros users do not need to pay a monthly subscription afterwards.

CR programs on EbS in November - December

Some of the most interesting CR programs are on EbS (Europe by Satellite) on the following dates:

- "Swiss World No 9 and 10" (RTSI Lugano) on Nov. 20, 21 and 23
- Quartette (MTV Szeged) and "Quartette" (TVP Rzeszow) on Nov. 27, 28 and 30
- "Slovenian Magazine" (RTV Slo) on DEC 4, 5 and 7
- "Balkan TV Magazine" (ERT3, Greece) and "Balkan Video Clip Magazine" on Dec. 11, 12 and 14
- "Europeos No 18" (France 3) and "Swiss World No 11" (RTSI Lugano) on Dec. 18, 19, 21

First transmission is at 22.00 CET, second at 05.30 CET and third at 11.00 CET

Television: supreme news medium

A new major study into UK audience attitudes to television and radio news has been published.

'New News, Old News' is the culmination of an eight-month research project, led by Ian Hargreaves, director of journalism studies at Cardiff University, and now a board member of Ofcom, the Government's media and communications super-regulator.

The report confirms the long-term reduction in audiences for television and radio news, but discovers that television is the "supreme news medium", with 95% of respondents in a 4,000-adults survey saying they were either very or fairly satisfied with broadcast news, and 65% saying television news was their main source of news (against 16% for radio, 15% newspapers, 2% the internet and 1% word of mouth).

Flabby journalists sent to boot camp

The Pentagon press corps has received a call-up for a military boot camp to prepare them to cover a war in Iraq after US troops in Afghanistan complained of having to wait for 'flabby, unfit journalists to keep up with them.'

The training sessions, the first of their kind, will begin at a string of bases in the eastern US in mid-November, indicating that the Pentagon is still preparing for war. "While no decisions have been made about future operations, prudent planning demands that we prepare for embedding media with military units," said the Pentagon announcement on the training courses said.

Lessons will be on the assault course, where would-be war correspondents will face a five-mile "tactical road march"

with a 11kg rucksack, learn how to get on and off helicopters with all their baggage, and use "survival-level navigation" skills. Most ominously, the lessons will include "nuclear, chemical and biological protection". The boot camp is not obligatory for military journalists, nor does it provide a guarantee that reporters who participate will be allowed to accompany troops into battle, the Pentagon points out. But news organisations who boycott the course are likely to be frowned upon.

Journalist embrace call for media-ethics code

Presidential aide Sergei Yastrzhembskii urged Russian journalists to develop an unwritten code of conduct for crisis situations at a meeting analysing the recent hostage crisis. "Izvestiya" television critic Irina Petrovskaya similarly cited the "completely obvious" need to work out rules for covering extraordinary situations, but she emphasised that such a system should be self-imposed by journalists, not enforced by censors. The Union of Journalists has long promoted a general "journalist's code of ethics." Various documents containing recommendations for journalists working in "hot spots" or covering wars have been published in Russia as well.

Turner launches action channel

Turner Broadcasting is to launch CNX, a new action, adventure and anime channel featuring movies, live-action series and animation for the UK's 16-34 male audience. The channel is to launch in October on the Sky and NTL platforms.

BBC3 gets go-ahead for launch

New digital channel BBC3, focusing on the 25-34 year-old demographic has finally been given approval to launch in the UK in early 2003. A raft of restraint on the channel include an 80% original programming quota, 90% of which must come from the UK. A minimum 25% of the 97m. Pounds. (\$148m) programming budget must be spent on independent productions.

Journalists oppose media law reform

A press rights group has asked Romanian President Ion Iliescu to withdraw his recommendation to amend Article 10 of the draft law on the Rompres National News Agency, which guarantees the protection of journalists sources.

In its original draft, Article 10 upheld a journalist's right not to disclose their sources, except where disclosure is in the public interest and ordered by a court. The President decided to depart from this guarantee, writing a letter to Parliament that "Article 10 ... should include [amongst the grounds for disclosing sources] the prosecutor's order issued in a penal cause, because it is against the public interest to protect sources which can prevent a penal investigation..."

According to Reporters without Borders, the proposed amendment – which would grant prosecutors the authority to order disclosure of sources without resorting to the courts and without the need to demonstrate public interest in disclosure- would be in violation of international standards of freedom of expression. It also added it would comply with Romania's international obligations as a State Party to the ECHR and as a member of the Council of Europe.

UK's first internet-only TV channel launched

UK's first broadband TV station, Worldart Media Television (WAM TV) , has finally launched on the internet after six years of production and development.

WAM TV transmits globally 24 hours a day showing alternative arts and entertainment from around the world. The internet channel, which is only available via broadband or ISDN, has developed from the Edinburgh Festival Revue, which has been transmitting the Fringe in August every year since 1998 to a worldwide audience.

Paul Blyth, WAM TV's chief executive officer, said: "It has taken many years for us to gather and produce over 5,000 hours of original material. WAM TV is a great example of how new technology allows the distribution of television on a scale previously impossible".

No other TV station in the UK has taken the plunge yet, to transmit on broadband only, but WAM TV is confident it is at the forefront of a revolution.

"We are already being sought out by broadband internet users globally. Our audience is not about the UK only, as most come from the US, and that is without previously releasing the fact that we are there. We are extremely proud to have achieved this from Scotland. The proof is in the watching, and we are already over the moon with the results," Mr Blyth added.

Big changes for Hungarian TV

The Hungarian government wants to inject 5.1 billion forints (21m euros) into the Hungarian state television network MTV and allocate 6m euros to the state-run satellite channel Duna TV. In addition, the 2003 budget sets aside 90m euros for the three state-run stations (MTV-1, MTV-2, and Duna TV) in order to offset the abolition of viewer-subscription fees. MTV's management also announced plans to attract viewers with a revamped image and programmes, as well as a new logo. The station has also invested in prominent personalities from commercial television networks.

Virtual journalist makes the news

Online reporters beware - an American University has created a 'virtual journalist' that uses the latest algorithms and artificial intelligence techniques to process and write information.

Still at an experimental stage, the 'Columbia Newsblaster' rewrites reports from 13 sources, including Yahoo, ABCNews, CNN, Reuters, Los Angeles Times, CBS News, Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, Virtual New York, Washington Post, Wired, and USA Today.

Its creators at Columbia University's Department of Computer Science claim it will never replace human writers, as they have the ability to interpret and analyse information. Human journalists make connections between facts and between events or stories that can add context to a current report.

John Pavlik, contributing editor at Online Journalism Review, tested Newsblaster for himself. "Reading over the summaries at the Newsblaster site, and comparing what it has written with the stories its summaries are based on, it appears to be pretty accurate," he said.

Meanwhile Dan Dubno, producer and technologist for CBS News, said he was concerned that such technology could dull the 'editorial edge' a reporter or editor brings to covering a story.

Photojournalists as fashion icons?

Army jackets with hundreds of pockets. Enormous shoulder bags filled with lenses and film. Faded denims with grubby knees thanks to all those tripod-free shoots. It hardly sounds like Vogue. Are photojournalists fashion icons? According to a new men's magazine Jack, launched in the UK last month, they are. The publication opens its fashion pages with a profile of photojournalist kit.

Described by the magazine as "professionals whose choice of clothes is functional but still fashionable," stylish photojournalists this season will be wearing orange sports gilets, grey combat jackets, baggy waterproof trousers and heavy workboots.

This isn't the first time photographers have been style icons: the sharp Italian suits of the paparazzi in Fellini's *La Dolce Vita* started a trend, while in late 1999 Wallpaper magazine named photojournalism as one of the top professions of the 21st century. Furthermore, the shapeless jackets beloved of photojournalists made a return to the catwalks this Spring.

So next time you sling that old holdall over your shoulder, or decide that those denims can go another week without a wash, remember to strike a pose: there's obviously nothing to it.

SMS journalism: cell phones as a news medium

Increasingly, Web portals are offering users the option of getting SMS messages (short for "Short Message Service") with stock exchange quotations, horoscopes, utility info, news and other types of material usually published in online or traditional newspapers.

Would the size of the messages be necessarily a bad thing? After all, journalism is all about concision. What better use can one get for the old inverted pyramid? SMS seems to be the ultimate expression of journalistic concision.

In the spirit of convergence, TV stations in Europe are using SMS as the alternative for viewer's phone calls, and e-mails. As a medium for television audience voting, SMS has made its way into shows like Big Brother and music-by-request programmes on channels like MTV Europe. In the UK, several magazines and newspapers have launched SMS news services, such a weekly NME, which is using content from its website.

Of course, SMS is only one way to offer news to mobile devices. In Europe, it's more popular than WAP, probably mostly because it's cheaper. As more media outlets are using SMS to offer news and other services, the standard itself is changing. Soon, people will be able to use their phones to send and receive long messages. One thing is certain: one way or another, jnlsm's cmng 2 Ur phn.

ITV bankruptcy creates media policy turmoil

ITV Digital, the world's biggest and most expensive digital terrestrial TV project, was forced into bankruptcy, throwing government broadcasting policy into turmoil and the future of lower league football into doubt. Granada and Carlton Communications said they were "throwing a lifeline" to their loss-making pay-TV platform, by putting the business in the hands of administrators at Deloitte & Touche. It is hoped that ITV Digital can be rescued as a slimmed-down company to continue to compete with Rupert Murdoch's British Sky Broadcasting in the pay-TV market.

Administrators will run the business as a going concern and Carlton and Granada have committed funding during a process that is expected to last weeks. If the administrators cannot renegotiate much cheaper content deals - the biggest of which is with the Football League - ITV Digital will be closed. Ministers admit privately it will make it difficult to achieve the government's target of starting to switch off the analogue signal to UK homes by 2006. Kim Howells, broadcasting minister, said: "If the terrestrial platform was to collapse that would be a significant setback though by no means a fatal one for our plans for digital switchover." But he added: "We are sticking to our target because we think switchover is achievable between 2006 and 2010."

Wide gap between youngsters and newspapers

Young people see a wide gulf between the kind of news they want and what they believe newspapers are likely to offer, according to MTV Networks research. While acknowledging the importance of newspapers, younger consumers are more likely to turn to television or the Internet for information, according to the survey conducted this month.

The findings were detailed last May at the annual meeting of the California Society of Newspaper Editors and Associated Press News Executives Council.

The MTV Networks survey of 570 people aged 14 to 24 found that the stories most important to young readers are in order, about music, local news, current events, international news, national news and politics. Newspapers have a far different emphasis, according to those polled, with politics of greatest importance and news about young people and music at the bottom of the list.

When young people do pick up a newspaper they prefer a local one, perceiving it as less biased toward their generation and more understandable.

The write stuff

How many reporters reckon they could give it all up and write a novel? It's not as easy as it sounds. Inspiration for fiction can come from many sources, and journalists are luckier than most.

The nature of their work allows them to meet a huge range of people in a variety of situations. The ability to dig for stories means they have great research skills. They can make creative connections between people, places and events.

The inspiration for journalist Jerry Armeric's latest novel, "Gift of the Bambino", for example, came from a photograph. The novel is based on a real incident about baseball.

Writing fiction, however, differs considerably from journalism, Mr Armeric warns. "There is a huge difference," he says, "Having a background in journalism, and especially in newspapers is good training because it teaches you to write tight. I've been a newspaper columnist, a reporter and a feature writer, but writing novels is different from all those. It takes discipline. I once heard that talent isn't rare, but discipline is, and this is very true".

Single licence for Internet music 'simulcasts' says the European Union

The European Commission is to give an anti-trust exemption for one-stop agreements for licensing TV and radio music via the internet. It hopes this will create a legitimate marketplace for so-called 'simulcasting', which will benefit both consumers and rights-holders.

Under the rules, broadcasters would get a single 'one-stop shop' licence from royalty collecting agencies which will cover internet broadcasts across most of the 18-nation European Economic Area (EEA). This would replace the old system where they need to secure a license from each national copyright administration and collecting societies.

The Commission believes the new system will also boost competition among the societies that collect the royalties on behalf of the music industry notably in terms of the fees they charge.

Competition Commissioner Mario Monti said: "Consumers will be able to access their favourite radio and/or TV music programmes from virtually anywhere in the world. At the same time, the framework put in place ensures that the rights-holders will be properly paid."

This is the first EU decision concerning the collective management and licensing of copyright for the purposes of commercial

exploitation of musical works on the Internet.

Commission clears licensing agreements for Internet TV and radio music

In short:

An antitrust exemption by the Commission will introduce more competition for EU television and radio companies, which simultaneously broadcast music shows on the Internet.

Brief news:

An antitrust exemption granted by the Commission will introduce more competition for EU television and radio companies, which simultaneously broadcast music shows on the internet. Under the new rules:

- broadcasters can get a single 'one-stop shop' licence from royalty collecting agencies to cover Internet broadcasts across most of the European Economic Area (EEA);
- competition among the societies that collect the royalties on behalf of the music industry will be boosted;
- transparency would be clearer as regards to the fees charged for a copyright license;
- licences will include the repertoires of all societies party to the agreement;

The International Federation of the Phonographic Industry (IFPI) stated it will present the Commission with a set of proposals by the end of 2003, aimed at separating the copyright royalty from the fee meant to cover the licensing administration costs of each society. This is the first decision by the Commission concerning the collective management and licensing of copyright for the purposes of commercial exploitation of musical works on the Internet.

Digital radio gets go-ahead

US Federal regulators gave the go-ahead for digital radio, approving a plan to modernise the medium with better sound and new features for personalised programming.

The iBiquity technology allows broadcasters to use their existing airwaves to simultaneously send digital and analogue signals. Listeners won't have to buy a new radio to continue listening to their favourite stations, but they can if they want better sound and other options.

Manufacturers plan to sell digital receivers for car stereos and high-end audio systems starting next year, adding about 100 euros to the price of a traditional unit. It's unclear how soon digital technology will be included in portable radios.

Supporters say the new technology will bring CD-quality sound to FM broadcasts, an end to static for AM and new data features.

The approval allows radio stations to immediately begin broadcasting digital signals, though it probably will take a few months for the first stations to start.

The commissioners enthusiastically endorsed the technology, saying it will benefit the industry and consumers.

"We don't get many items where it's a win-win for everyone. There's no down side," Commissioner Kathleen Abernathy said.

TV5 Monde launches on BskyB digital

French TV5 has launched on BSKyB's digital package, transmitting to six million homes in the UK.

Although BSKyB already broadcasts 20 non-English-language channels, this is the first to be included at no extra cost in the basic package.

The service brings TV5's total audience up to 130m homes globally. In the UK there are 250,000 French expatriates, 300,000 Francophones from countries such as Switzerland, Belgium and Sierra Leone, as well as a million school-children learning the language. Additionally, some 11m British holiday in France annually.

Call to ban Al Jazeera in Gulf states

Ministers of information in the GCC (Gulf Co-operation Council) states recommended that the Qatar-based Al Jazeera satellite TV channel be banned in their countries "for the news and programmes it broadcast that offend the whole Gulf region," The Al Jazeera web site said. The web site story said that the recommendation was made during the meeting of the GCC information ministers in Muscat yesterday.

"The ministers also discussed the means of developing media in the GCC countries to be able to address the West properly," said the web site.

The ministers issued several recommendations, including the creation of the post of assistant secretary general for information and culture at the GCC and the use of cable for GCC television transmission through a suitable package.

News marked out for copyrighting

The European Broadcasting Union has announced that its Eurovision News Exchange will start to use a new digital watermarking and reporting system to monitor news broadcasting across Europe.

Teletrax, developed by Medialink Worldwide, uses patented digital technology to embed an invisible watermark into material whenever it is edited, broadcast or duplicated. Reuters Television has already been using the system extensively.

Once material has been 'marked', a network of global detectors tracks all broadcasts from it via satellite, cable or terrestrial, generating tracking reports for the original producer of the material. The reports can be used to monitor copyright violations as well as to confirm performance reports.

MGM signs channel deals

MGM Networks has boosted its channel distribution with a deal to launch two channels – MGM Movie Channel and MGM Networks Latin America LLC – into Africa via Multichoice Africa's DStv platform. The studio has also entered into an agreement with Multichoice Hellas' Nova to launch a round – the –clock, MGM – branded channel in Greece.

Proposed new rules on digital TV

The Spanish current commercial and digital TV (DTV) legislation that limits the percentage a single shareholder can have in a TV company is likely to be relaxed from 49 per cent to 100 per cent, according to a proposal from the Spanish Government.

In the same vein, the proposal would allow a single shareholder to have more than five per cent in two different TV channels. This change would allow Sogecable and Telefonica to keep their stakes in Canal Plus and Antena 3 TV and to form the planned single digital satellite platform, thereby paving the way for the merger.

According to the Spanish Government, the current 49 per cent limit made sense "when the number of TV operators was very restricted" but "does not make any sense in the multichannel era". It added that "the number of existing [TV operators] guarantees pluralism with no need of share limits".

Regional and local government must have enhanced role in shaping enlarged EU

A conference on the "Future of Europe- A Question of Governance" held in Tullamore, Ireland on the 18th October heard Committee of the Regions member Hasse Svensson (FIN/ELDR) argue that better quality legislation and greater democratic legitimacy will result if local and regional government - represented by Committee of the Regions - is more closely involved in the shaping of the enlarged European Union.

On the question of decisions being taken at the level closest to the people, Mr Svensson, who is a Member of Parliament of the Finnish (Swedish speaking) autonomous region of Åland, re-iterated the Committee of the Regions recent call to extend the subsidiarity principle to include all sub-national levels of government. Clarification of the responsibilities of different spheres of government is urgently required, he said. He also stressed the need for a clear allocation of political responsibility: It is important that the citizens know who-does-what, and who can be held to account.

On enlargement, he underlined the responsibility of local and regional government in putting in place an important part of EU legislation but cautioned that a determining factor for successful enlargement will be the degree of preparedness of local and regional authorities in the candidate countries.

Speaking on the eve of the Irish Referendum on the Treaty of Nice, Mr Svensson, told his audience that enlargement is a unique opportunity, indeed the only way to establish peace,

democracy, stability and prosperity on the whole continent. While acknowledging there were costs involved, he argued that, the costs of not enlarging are much higher. He warned that European integration, including enlargement, will fail if it does not have the support of the people.

He stressed public debate was a key element of democracy. No institutional reform can make up for the absence of public debate, said Mr Svensson. All citizens, but in particular politicians at local, regional and national level have a huge responsibility in this area. He criticised politicians who he said, all too often use the EU as a scapegoat for just about anything rather than initiate a real, open and honest debate about the cost and benefits of European Integration.

The CoR demand for urgent reform at the Convention on the future of Europe was repeated by Mr Svensson who stated that reforms must be stepped up considerably, both in the current EU and in the candidate countries: if certain institutional and policy reforms are not pushed through soon, the EU may well grind to a halt.

Corporate responsibility also concerns the CoR

Constance Hanniffy (IRL-EPP), vice-chair of the CoR Commission for Economic and Social Policy and rapporteur for the opinion on corporate social responsibility (CSR) has just taken part in a multilateral forum on CSR. The first high-level meeting of the forum was held on 16 October 2002 and was attended by European Commissioners Anna Diamantopoulou and Erkki Liikanen. Ms Hanniffy bore witness to the commitment of the Committee of the Regions in the presence of representatives of trade unions, employers' organisations and NGOs and the Council and the European Parliament.

The CoR believes that local and regional authorities can contribute as much to the forum as they learn from it, for instance by promoting CSR practices. The challenge is to also apply CSR in SMEs, public bodies and cooperative organisations. As Ms Hanniffy pointed out, local and regional authorities employ nearly 9.4 million people throughout the EU.

She particularly welcomed the round tables set up to develop exchanges of experience and good practice, and to promote corporate social responsibility among SMEs.

The local dimension of CSR represents a real opportunity for local and regional

authorities. Ms Hanniffy explained that local and regional authorities not only had a role to play in developing and promoting CSR, but they also had to take responsibility, e.g. in the case of subcontracting.

The rapporteur would like the forum to result in the creation of instruments to help all those who want to implement best practice in CSR. Ms Hanniffy welcomed the integration of CSR into education structures. She also drew attention to the importance of cultural development, from which civil society and companies both could profit.

The next high-level meeting of the forum will be held in Milan during November 2003.

Interactive workshop on EU lobbying

A two day conference and one day interactive workshop on European Union lobbying 2002 will be held at the Hotel President WTC, in Brussels, Nov. 25 – 27.

Conference members will listen to trade associations and charitable NGO's, who influence decision-making and represent over 200 million SMEs and NGOs in Europe, explain about how the lobbying process works and their experiences.

BBC in pay roll with Sky

The BBC is threatening to withdraw its basic channels from the Sky platform in a row over how much Sky charges the corporation for this service. The BBC said it might opt to withdraw BBC 1 and 2 from the basic Sky subscription next year if Sky increases its carriage fee when the contract is renewed in May. The BBC fears that Sky may triple its fees, sucking huge amounts of money away from programme production.

The BBC has joined with other UK channels, ITV, Channel 4 and Channel 5 to lobby the government over these 'access fees'. Legally, these public service channels must be available on all platforms and they argue, they should be exempt from the financially crippling fees. The fees are paid in order to encode broadcasts via the satellite platform, thus protecting copyrights and regional shows.

With changes in media ownership laws, Rupert Murdoch's News Corp, which owns and runs Sky, could soon make a bid for ownership of Channel 5. This has worried numerous politicians, one of whom told the UK's Guardian newspaper: "I have no objection to Rupert Murdoch having the opportunity to own Channel 5, but I worry that he has control of the choke-point in the system, which is the set-top box."

A strong ad message for the media

Mobile text messages are 50 per cent more successful at building brand awareness than TV and 130 per cent more successful than radio, according to research conducted for Enpocket, the wireless communications company.

Research by ICM, comprised interviews with over 5,000 mobile phone users who had been sent campaigns from a wide variety of brands between September 2001 and August 2002. All the consumers had given permission to receive third party marketing.

Jonathon Linner, CEO of Enpocket, said: "Branding is a difficult concept to define and to measure. It concerns the change in an individual's emotional relationship with, and perceptions of, a brand. For this reason marketers usually select very 'rich' media to build a brand - TV, radio and glossy print are all traditionally thought of as branding media.

"Basic SMS offers marketers 160 characters of single colour, single font text - the exact opposite of other branding media. However the results speak for themselves - SMS is proven to be an excellent means of communicating brand values.

He added: "The strength of an individual's relationship with their mobile phone is unique. It is an uncluttered medium in which the marketer's message can be tightly targeted by time of day/week, location and demographics to optimise relevance."

Int'l Festival of AV programs in Biarritz, Jan. 21 – 26, 2003

FIPA, the International Festival of Audiovisual Programs will be held in Biarritz, Jan. 21 - 26, 2003. Presided over by Marie-France Pisier, the FIPA, the festival for French and international television production, this year will showcase more than 500 new programs in the competitive sections in the running for the Golden and Silver Fipa awards as well as in the different non-competitive sections.

Thanks to an independent selection process, the FIPA advocates the notion of intelligent, diversified and quality television fare. Documentaries such as Paul Jenkins' *Soldat* (Great Britain) and Jean-Xavier de Lestrade's *Murder on a Sunday Morning* (France), Giacomo Battiato's miniseries, *Young Casanova*, (France / Italy), and *Band of Brothers* (USA), were the principal laureates at last year's edition and were unanimously hailed by audiences and professionals alike.

The FIPA has also built up a selective market for audiovisual professionals, the FIPATEL, which will celebrate its 10th anniversary. Valued for its request viewing system, the FIPATEL has become one of the festival's main attractions: in 2002, the market registered more than 2,000 request viewings.

The Michel Mitrani Prize, named after FIPA's founder, will continue to honor a

first, second or third French work "for its spirit of resistance, the distinctiveness of its style or its innovative manner".

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President is Marie-France Pisier, Artistic director: Pierre Henri Deleau and Secretary General Jean-Michel Aussell.

The Fipa is supported by the French National Cinema Center, authors' and artists' rights associations (SCAM, SACD, SACEM, ADAMI), producers' organizations (the television commission of the PROCIREP), the MEDIA Plus program of the European Union, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Education, and local authorities (the City of Biarritz, the Aquitaine Regional Council, the General Council of the Pyrenees-Atlantiques).

CR with partner NGOs at the ATCM programme coordination meeting

At the Co-ordinating meeting with partner NGOs involved in the Assistance and Technical Cooperation in the Media field (ATCM) programme at the Council of Europe on October 16th, Christophe Poirel and Mario Oetheimer explained the current policies and activities of the Council of Europe to a number of NGO's such as Article 19, the IFJ, AIM, WAN and Internews.

Marie-Paule Urban, Deputy Secretary General CIRCOM Regional and Gareth Price, Director Thomson Foundation presented the CIRCOM Regional training proposals for 2003.

The Council representatives said that all the proposals submitted by the different organisations would be considered in detail and decisions taken in December. The Council continued to work under the same financial constraints as in the previous year. New financial guidelines will be issued to all the relevant organisations in due course for implementation from 2003 onwards". The list of participants included among others:

M. Nicholas Bell, Secretary General (Alternative Information Network - AIM),

Ms Luitgard Hammerer, Head of Europe Programme (ARTICLE 19), Mr Simon Drewsen Holmberg, Deputy Director (Baltic Media Center - BMC), Ms Marie-Paule Urban, Deputy Secretary General (CIRCOM Regional), Mr Oliver Money-Kyrle, Project Manager (Int'l Federation of Journalists - IFJ), Mr Gerd Greune, Director for European Affairs (Internews), Mr Eric Johnson, Executive Director (Internews), Mr Josh Laporte, Senior Program Manager (Media Development Loan Fund), Mr Yasha Lange, Executive Secretary of the Media Task Force (Stability Pact), Mr Gareth Price, Director (Thompson Foundation), Ms Aralynn McMane, Director of Educational Programmes (World Association of Newspapers - WAN).

Erasmus: one million students so far

Launched in 1987, the European Union's Erasmus programme has met with unprecedented success. During this new academic year 2002-2003, Erasmus will be topping the mark of one million students who have taken part in this programme.

To symbolically mark this transition, the European Commission organised an Erasmus week, October 18-25 2002, celebrated in all the countries taking part in the programme. For this event, each country chose one present or former Erasmus student to be its representative. So there 30 "ambassadors" invited to Brussels to celebrate the event.

A video report of 7'54", about the millionth Erasmus student is available (as well as accompanying transcripts) as of October 21, on Betacam SP, free of charge and free of rights.

This video report shot at the University of Santiago de Compostela, follows Guy a Luxembourgish Erasmus student and his fellows.

Order this video report at the address you will find under http://www.tvlink.org/templates/fr_v.cfm?id=64&video=9&lang=en&dg=eac

EU Enlargement policy for member states' media

The future of an enlarged Europe will be strongly influenced by decisions taken by the new European Union. Journalists in the Member States need to know more about the current policy debates in the Candidate Countries during the enlargement process.

The European Journalism Centre in Maastricht, in co-operation with the European Commission's Directorate-General Enlargement, has designed in Brussels and Riga, Dec. 2 – 6, a four-day programme to help journalists in the Member States to better know EU Enlargement policies in the Candidate Countries.

The course consists of a one-day seminar in Brussels to meet key representatives from DG Enlargement and three days in Riga, Latvia, to discuss in depth important enlargement-related issues with representatives from the European Commission's delegation and local decision-makers.

EU Environmental policy for Greek Media

The future of Europe will be strongly influenced by decisions taken by the European Union. Journalists need to know about the current policy debates in the European institutions and their historical background.

The European Journalism Centre in Maastricht, in co-operation with the European Commission's DG Environment, has designed a two-day programme to help journalists to better know EU environmental policies one month before Greek Presidency of the EU. The training will be held in Brussels, Nov. 28 – 29.

EU Broadband policy to boost e-commerce & help EU economy

The Commission, in its Communication for the Barcelona Summit, states that "recent telecoms reforms must spur the roll out of fast broadband telecoms networks. A more interconnected Europe, as well as efficient and well functioning services of general economic interest, will keep the European Union on its growth path and help to provide higher quality services to everyone throughout the Union." It said it is putting high-speed Internet access at the top of its strategy to boost e-commerce and turn the EU into the world's most competitive economy by 2010.

Background

Internet connectivity is having a profound impact on business and individuals. A move from narrowband to broadband Internet access will have a further big effect on Internet usage, resulting in higher connectivity and enabling new sorts of services. Although competition is driving Internet connection costs down, European Information Society Commissioner Erkki Liikanen has commented that broadband remains generally expensive in the EU, and fast Internet penetration is only 6 percent. Mr Liikanen recently therefore stated that "to be connected to the Internet is not enough, we have to look at the quality of the connection. From now on, broadband will be the key issue". The term broadband is often used to describe a wide set of technologies, offering data rates that are very different. Usually a distinction is made between higher bandwidth (services at speeds greater than 384kbits/s), current generation broadband (speeds of 2Mbit/s and over) and next generation broadband (speeds of 10 Mbit/s and over). An average broadband connection is currently said to be 25 times faster than a dial-up connection.

Issues

The main issues in the broadband discussion are:

- Prevention of a new 'digital divide';
- The role of government versus private sector in making the necessary investments;
- Standardisation, e.g. of cable modems;
- Deregulation, unbundling of the local loop;
- Licensing issues in wireless broadband access;
- Legacy infrastructure;
- Market conditions.

Positions

The European Competitive

Telecommunications Association (ECTA) called on the Member States to implement divestiture, penalties and more effective regulation to deliver a competitive broadband Europe.

A European Telecommunications Network Operators' Association (ETNO) statement argues: 'let the market do its broadband work'. It states that positive market developments are due to competition, and not Internet-specific regulation. New innovative packages should be encouraged -not restrained- by regulation, particularly in the field of bundled offers. ETNO says it is essential to abstain from any intervention regarding retail prices that may either distort competition or block the development of price packages that support the take-up of the Internet. Any extension of regulatory obligations, such as mandatory price-regulated wholesale flat rates, may adversely affect incentives to the development of high-speed access services.

The Union of Industrial and Employers' Confederations of Europe (UNICE) urge Member States to take appropriate actions to promote the take-up and roll-out of broadband in Europe, with quantitative targets.

Next steps

- In October 2002 the Commission was due to present a Communication on cable access in the internal market;
- The eEurope 2005 Action Plan states that Member States should aim to have broadband connections for all public administrations by 2005. Member States should not discriminate between technologies when purchasing connections;

Also by the end of 2005, Member States should aim that all schools and universities have access for educational and research purposes over a broadband connection

Online journalists pick up the phone!

European online journalists and PR professionals gathered on Thursday to discuss "proper" ways to use the internet as a communication medium - and how to avoid "inherent pitfalls".

Panellists invited to the annual debate, hosted by European media portal EurActiv, and The Centre for European Policy Studies, discussed how to present information in a more meaningful way for the public. It also advised journalists to embrace more traditional means of communication, such as providing staff phone numbers on websites.

Aidan White of the International Federation of Journalists offered a stern warning to online journalists who are "overly reliant" on web-based information: "Journalists believe that all the information on the screen is valuable without testing it".

Merger talk raises online questions

The potential merger between news giants ABC and CNN may pose significant challenges for the their news websites - abcNEWS.com and CNN.com, reports atnewyork.com.

Even if the merger occurs, many analysts doubt the two sites can be successfully meshed, arguing that their vastly different content should be kept separate to 'preserve their distinct brands'.

Others believe that the "cross-linking" of brands seen on television would also occur online, strengthening online content. "Both are top sites, both are consistent," said Carolyn Clark, media analyst with Nielsen/NetRatings. "Everybody's weighing the offline pros and cons right now: ABC News could get a wealth of content from overseas bureaus and CNN would get a kick from the news personalities ABC News has cultivated."

Channel 4 focuses on Islam topics

Bosses of UK TV's Channel 4 say they will right some of the wrongs of the media's coverage of the so-called 'War on Terror' with a series of programmes based around the annual Muslim pilgrimage, the Hajj.

Live coverage of the pilgrimage, in which 3 million Muslims travel to Saudi Arabia each year, will form the centrepiece of a series of documentaries and news reports about Islam.

A Channel 4 News team will follow the fortunes of three British Muslims on the Hajj and a documentary will examine the relationship between women and Islam.

"A lot of media coverage of Muslims since the terrorist attacks of September 11 has concentrated on extremist groups - but these are a tiny minority," said Dorothy Byrne, Channel 4's acting head of news and current affairs.

"By reporting on the Hajj we'll offer a fascinating, in-depth portrayal of Islam, which will interest the Muslim community and help non-Muslims understand this hugely important world religion."

BBC given all-clear for history launch

The Department of Culture, Media & Sport (DCMS) has revealed it is satisfied with the BBC's plans to launch two new digital TV channels despite protests that the corporation was breaching government policy.

But the History Channel, which lodged the original complaint about the launch - which is backed by US giant the Hearst Corporation and brought the original complaint - said it was not going to let the matter drop and planned to lobby MPs.

Competitors had complained the BBC's plans to launch UK History and UK Homestyle through its UKTV joint venture contravened a 1997 agreement in which it promised to launch no more than eight channels.

However, the DCMS has ruled that a later agreement, in November 2000, which was not publicised at the time, supersedes the previous agreement. It plans to write to the History Channel next week explaining the decision.

Both BBC Worldwide, the corporation's commercial arm, and UKTV itself have already pointed to the November 2000 agreement, saying it gives them carte blanche to launch as many channels as they like through the subsidiary.

A History Channel spokesman argued there was no record of the agreement and that it hadn't been open to public consultation.

Smaller satellite and cable channels are concerned that because UKTV relies on the BBC's back catalogue for much of its programming it has an unfair advantage over other channels.

Festivals, workshops and more around Europe and the world

- November 15-24: Europe. Under the name, "Cinedays", there will be screenings and events to celebrate the history of European cinema, an initiative from the Education and Culture Directorate of the European Commission. Contact: dona.vanwetter@mostra.com +322 537 4400
- November 18: President Prodi presents the Commission's work programme for 2003
- November 18-20: Latin American Screens Cartagena de Indias. Colombia (caroletvor@dial.oleane.com) www.lascreens.com
- November 18-21: Strasbourg. **European Parliament** plenary session. This will be a special "Celebration of Enlargement" session. 200 parliamentarians from the 12 accession countries will join a debate about EU enlargement, and there will be associated cultural events.
- Contact Isabelle Montoya. imontoya@europarl.eu.int
- November 18-21: DSLCON Europe www.dsicon.com
- November 18-23: Netdays Europe. A week-long EC initiative to stimulate innovative uses of the web by young people, involving thousands of schools, colleges, local councils and youth groups. The theme is "the image" with children making pictures, films, animations and photo displays. bettina.braun@mostra.com or dona.vanwetter@mostra.com
- November 19: International Emmy Awards Gala www.intcouncil@iemmys2000.com
- November 19-20: Promax Latin America 2002 www.bda.tv
- November 19-22: News World, the annual forum for the broadcast-news industry, at the Burlington Hotel, Dublin. 020 7491 0880 Email info@newsworld.org www.newsworld.org
- November 21-22: Montpellier, France. IDATE 2002. International telecom media and internet conference will examine the digital future in Europe. www.idate.org
- November 21-December 1: Int'l Documentary Film Festival www.idfa.nl
- November 24: General elections, Austria
- November 25: Int'l EMMY Awards Gala, NY city, USA www.iemmys.tv
- November 26: President Prodi meets the Presidents of Parliament from the Candidate Countries
- December 1: World AIDS Day, aimed at boosting HIV/AIDS awareness with partnerships between business, media, NGOs and charities. The European Broadcasting Union is offering its members free programming on the subject, and 90-minute televised concert. www.staying-alive.org yuen@ebu.ch
- December 1-5: German Screenings 2002 www.german-screenings.de
- December 2-3: Promax Asia Singapore Repertory Theatre www.bda.tv
- December 2-4: Streaming Media East www.streamingmedia.com
- December 2-5: ASIA TV Forum 2002 www.asiatvforum.com
- December 2-7: ITU Telecom Asia www.itu.int/telecom
- December 2-5 Asia TV Forum 2002 www.asiatvforum.com
- December 3: Brussels. Making Broadband Happen in Europe, conference organised by ETNO – European Telecoms Network Operators Assoc. Tel: +322 219 3242 etno@etno.be www.etno.be
- December 3-5 Streaming Media Europe 2002 www.streamingmedia.com
- December 3-6: Western Show www.calcable.org
- December 4-5: CASBAA www.casbaa.com
- December 12-13: Signature of enlargement agreements, Copenhagen
- January 1: Greece takes over the Presidency of the EU
- January 1: 30th anniversary of first enlargement : entry of Denmark, Ireland and UK into European Economic Community
- January 10: Presidential elections, Slovenia
- January 10: Commission meets the Greek Presidency, Athens
- January 26: Launch of the European Year of People with Disabilities, Athens
- February 4-6: MILIA. New TV Horizons. Interactive Broadcasting. Palais des Festivals. Cannes, France www.milia.com
- March 5: Parliamentary elections, Estonia
- March 8: International Women's Day
- March 16: General elections in Finland

Artur Zheji appointed new G.D. of RTSH

RTSH – Radiotelevizioni Shqiptar has a new General Director since Oct. 1. Artur Zheji, born in Tirana, August 26, 1961, who is a writer and journalist succeeds E. Mazi in Albanian Radio Television.

A graduate of the High Academy of Arts in Tirana in TV and Film Direction in 1986, Zheji was the youngest ever appointed member of the Artistic Board of the Albanian National Theatre from 1987 to 1990. During that period he also wrote and put on stage several plays.

In 1990 Zheji moved to Rome, Italy where he worked as a journalist for Radio Radicale, an Italian national broadcaster, dealing mainly with the Balkan area issues. As a special envoy for Radio Radicale, he traveled frequently to the hot areas in Croatia, Kosov, FYROM, Greece, Albania. Special acknowledgments has been particularly given to him for the news coverage and analysis of the Albanian riots in 1997 and the Kosov War in 1999. During his 10 years stay in Rome Zheji was also special correspondent for the German broadcaster Deutsche Welle.

His written contributions in Italy encompass from political articles in magazines like "Limes", "L' Opinione" and "Bota Shqiptare", to literary plays like "Il re della Menzogna" published by Grin in the series "I Copioni".

In 1999 Zheji was contacted by the national Albanian TV broadcaster TVA to initiate and direct a series of programs dealing with the hot national and international issues. The programs set up and directed by Zheji were remarkable for their professional novelty, depth of analysis and neutral editorial line paving the way for a further development of political television programs in Albania. Zheji also contributed as a columnist for most Albanian prestigious newspapers.

This dedication marked Zheji's definite settlement back in Albania and brought to his appointment as the director of Albania's most important cultural institution.

Circom Report

The "CIRCUM Report" is a monthly publication of CIRCUM Regional, the European Association of Public Regional TV Stations-available on the CR Internet site and coming to CR member stations and personnel either through E-mail or as an A4 size printed newsletter, through the CR General Secretariat from Zagreb. The French version of the CIRCUM Report is conceived and published by the Strasbourg Secretariat with support from the Region Alsace, the Conseil General du Bas-Rhin and the City of Strasbourg. The "CIRCUM Report" is planned and edited in ERT3, Thessaloniki, Greece.

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All member stations are considered as potential contributors for this publication, with stories about new and innovative ideas, co-productions, exchanges, modern technologies, etc. Especially welcome are short stories and one-liners.

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