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## Asia's mobile OTT revenue "pitiful"

Current benefits only for U.S. studios, MPA says

Mobile over the top (OTT) revenue in Asia Pacific may be "pitiful" at the moment, but potential is high and as the region's OTT addressable market grows, pay-TV in mature markets is coming under pressure, says Media Partners Asia (MPA) in its latest report.

MPA analysis of the OTT ecosystem across Southeast Asia, India, Hong Kong and Taiwan "suggests that while OTT is gaining user traction, services remain nascent, with linear TV, through both free and pay platforms, retaining room for growth".

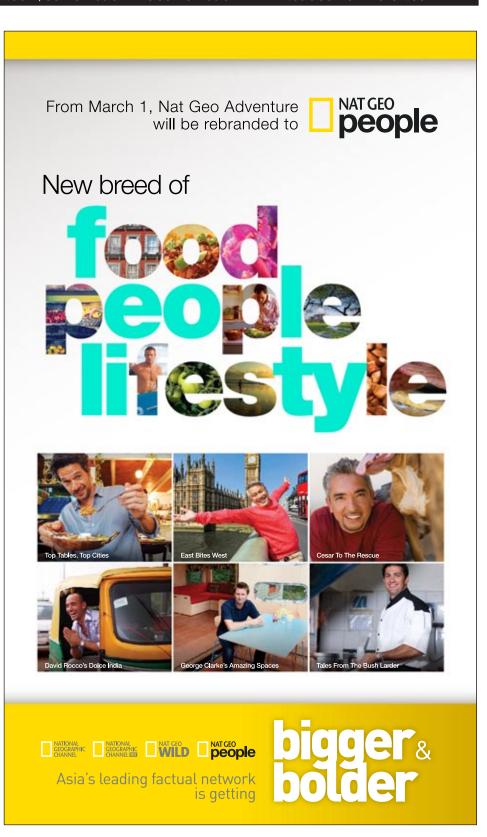
In the 10 markets surveyed, MPA expects TV advertising share to grow from 43% in 2013 to 46% by 2018 (29% free to air, 17% pay-TV). Excluding India, there will be seven million cumulative net new pay-TV additions over the next five years; this will be driven by Southeast Asia.

"With the notable exception of India, OTT services in almost all the territories surveyed are largely driven by existing, well-entrenched players in the ecosystem (pay TV and mobile operators and branded content providers) rather than by independent operators," MPA said.

The nine pan-Asia OTT players are becoming largely corporatised and include groups such as Viki, which has five million subs, and was acquired by Japan's Rakuten last year.

"Our view is market participants and product offerings will further consolidate and transition over the next two years. At present, business models behind OTT are not scaling sufficiently for any of the players," the report said, adding that a typical mobile operator in Southeast Asia is spending between US\$30 million and US\$50 million to deliver video. "But user in-

...more on page 12





#### FROM THE HORSE'S MOUTH

105 inches of curvy wonder says the big screen is alive, well and will continue to live happily alongside every other kind of device in our living rooms, handbags and pockets.

Presented as the ultimate in immersive experiences, Samsung's new ultra high-definition sets with curved screens were showcased at the Samsung Southeast Asia Forum in Bali last



Samsung's new 65" curved screen

week along with the Korean company's smart-phone-washing-machine-vacuum-cleaner innovation.

The big secret still is the shape of the new Samsung entertainment platform that's coming out of Nicholas Wodtke's Singapore-based content division.

Wodtke, vice president of content and services, talked about a release in the second quarter of this year, with a kids' platform to follow later this year.

Despite our best efforts, Wodtke isn't giving away much other than that the approach to entertainment is "more about curation and discovery than about warehousing rights" and that everything is designed around loyalty to Samsung devices... whatever their size.





## Japan's Imagica ventures into SE Asia Post facilities open at Pinewood Iskandar in March



From left: Michael Lake, Candelon Ventures spokesman and CEO Pinewood Iskander Malaysia Studios; Yukihiro Fujikawa, Imagica; Shinichi Nogoci, Imagica SEA

Japan's Imagica Corp is setting up postproduction facilities at Pinewood Iskandar Malaysia Studios in a RM9 million/US\$2.7 million joint venture with Candelon Ventures, which is backed by Malaysian government investment arm Khazanah Nasional Berhad.

The new facilities, Imagica Southeast Asia (Imagica SEA), were unveiled at Pinewood Iskandar earlier this month and are scheduled to open in March this year.

Candelon will hold the majority 51% stake in the new venture. Imagica Corp subsidiary, Imagica International Asia, will hold a 49% equity interest in Imagica SEA.

In addition to digital post-production facilities, Imagica SEA plans to offer digital distribution services, such as digital cinema delivery and digital distribution management, and archiving and restoration services.

The venture is Imagica's first in Malaysia, said Shinichi Noguchi, chief executive of Imagica South East Asia Sdn Bhd during the launch.

Candelon Ventures Sdn Bhd's spokesman and Pinewood Iskandar chief executive, Michael Lake, spoke about Malaysia's economic transformation programme.

He called the timing "perfect" and said the new facilities coincided with a large increase of companies based in Johor to service the film industry as well as a "large inflow of production" and the emerging base of human talent in the area.

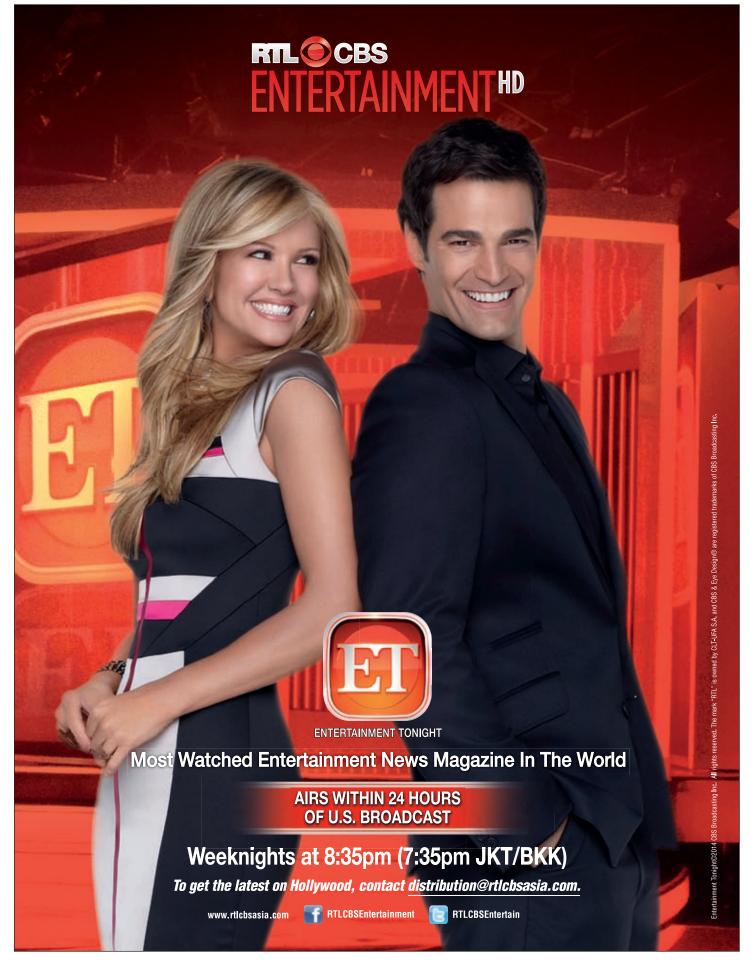
"I'm very bullish now of the potential of this industry within Iskandar," he added.

JUST SAYING...



# Thailand should no longer be a dumping ground for electronic waste."

Thawee Udomkitchote, managing director of Samart Engineering, a subsidiary of Samart Corporation, talking about his campaign for set-top box quality standards ahead of Thailand's multibillion baht coupon initiative to migrate the country's 22 million homes to digital TV. He warned of the dangers of flooding the market with sub-standard devices. Digital boxes to receive DTT signals will cost from THB700/US\$21



### Scripps ups Chorlins to int'l content and brand role

Scripps Networks Interactive has upped Kevin Chorlins to the newly created role of senior vice president of international content and brand strategy. Chorlins, previously VP of marketing and communications for Scripps Networks International, has been involved in the launch and expansion of global networks and programme sales. He reports to Jim Samples, president of Scripps Networks International.

# India closes in on 800 private TV channels

India had 786 licensed private commercial television channels at the end of January this year, the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting says. Of those, 389 are news and current affairs channels. The majority of the services are allowed both to uplink and downlink from India.

## Viet co furious over Kitchen Gods clips

Vietnamese IP security company Dao Viet Dung is livid over clips of Lunar New Year show Kitchen Gods 2014 on YouTube and other online sites, and said this month that it would seek compensation using legal avenues if it had to. Local news agency VietNamNet Bridge said Dao Viet Dung had been charged by Vietnam Television to protect the show's copyright. Dao Viet Dung parent company Hi-tech Security Investment and Development Company (CNC) has exclusive rights to air the show online and charges VND3,000/US\$0.14. Dao Viet Dung said the unauthorised clips had been removed and that YouTube had blocked the accounts of users who posted pirate clips. The show is an annual highlight featuring mythical Gods.



The Musketeers

Sales of British drama are "significantly" up in Asia as part of a five-year upward trend for BBC Worldwide in international markets. The increase is driven in part by series such as *Doctor Who* and *Sherlock*, which has been picked up by free-TV, pay-TV and online platforms across Asia. Details, including percentage increases in Asia, have not been disclosed.

Speaking at BBC Worldwide Showcase 2014 in Liverpool, BBC Worldwide global markets president, Paul Dempsey, said "buyers are realising that U.K. content can really provide an alternative to U.S. fare as audiences recognise the quality of British dramas for their high production values, unique British culture and humour, as well as the creative ideas".

BBC said 725 buyers were at this year's event, which closes on 26 February. Heading into the four-day showcase, BBC Worldwide announced global sales of 670 hours of drama, including Atlantis, Luther, Sherlock and Call the Midwife. The number of hours sold to Asia was not immediately available.

BBC said China was the first county in Asia to premiere season three of *Sherlock* (ContentAsia Insider, 3 January 2014) and claimed 49 million hits for episode one on online portal Youku. Site figures

captured by
ContentAsia
showed almost
six million viewers
of the premiere episode after two days. The
Shanghai Media Group's IPTV platform,
BesTV, also carries the series.

Doctor Who,

Other Asia sales are A Young Doctor's Notebook season one to Japan's Wowow, which also acquired Fleming and detective series DCI Banks season three. Japan's public broadcaster, NHK, bought Sherlock season three and Unlocking Sherlock, while Sony Pictures' AXN Mystery picked up Father Brown season two, Ripper Street season two and Death in Paradise season three.

Dominant broadcasters in Korea and Hong Kong have also added British titles to their schedules for this year. In Korea, KBS bought BBC One's prime-time series Atlantis, while Television Broadcasts Ltd (TVB) in Hong Kong acquired A Young Doctor's Notebook, starring Daniel Radcliffe and Jon Hamm.

Titles launched during this year's 38th annual showcase include new dramas *The Musketeers*, a 10-part co-production between BBC Worldwide and BBC America set on the streets of 17th-century Paris.



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### KIX debuts fresh look, premiers new slate

Asian channels operator, Celestial Tiger Entertainment (CTE), has unveiled a new look for action entertainment channel Kix and a slate of Asia first-and-exclusive premieres that includes reality show *The Incredible Mr. Goodwin*, which follows the daredevil stunts of professional escapologist Jonathan Goodwin.

Dubbed "the Houdini of the 21st Century", Goodwin unlocks himself from a car hurtling off a cliff and breaks free from a straight-jacket while hanging upside down from a burning rope attached to the London Eye, among other crazy "do not try this at home" situations.

The Incredible Mr. Goodwin airs Sundays at 10pm (Hong Kong, Philippines, Malaysia, Singapore) and at 9pm in Indonesia and Thailand.

CTE has also added BAMMA (British Association of Mixed Martial Arts) to its Monday night prime-time line up.

New titles for March include the latest season of Top Gear Korea.

CTE also said that all its feeds will now be offered in true HD.



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The Incredible Mr. Goodwin



The first season of Nickelodeon's CGanimated *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles* premieres in Japan in early April on free-TV network TV Tokyo.

The half-hour weekly episodes will air in a 7.30am slot on Fridays from 4 April. This is the first time the show will air in Japan.

MTV Networks Japan, which operates Nickelodeon for the Japanese market, said the series would also air across other TXN Network stations. In addition to TV Tokyo, these include Television Osaka, Aichi Television Broadcasting, TV Setouchi Broadcasting, Television Hokkaido Broadcasting and TVQ Kyushu Broadcasting.

The original series aired in Japan in the 1990s. The update is set in present day

New York
City and follows the adventures of four humanoid turtles and a six-foot-tall rat, Master Splinter.

Nickelodeon premiered the CGanimated TV show in the U.S. in 2012 and has already commissioned a third season.

Viacom International Media Networks' (VIMN) Japan announcement comes less than two weeks after the merchandise being developed around Michael Bay's Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles movie, due out in August this year, was showcased at the Toy Fair in New York.



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# StarHub adds Redmi to shelves from end-Feb

Singapore's StarHub adds sexy new smartphone - Xiaomi's Redmi - to its shelves on 27 February. The S\$169/US\$133 phone will also be offered free as part of mobile post-paid contracts. The Singapore launch earlier this month follows roll outs in China, Hong Kong and Taiwan, where handsets were sold out almost as soon as they were released and led to disgruntled wanna-be owners accusing the company of limiting supply to simulate high-demand. The dual-sim Redmi is designed for mobile web access, comms and gaming. The Android-based MIUI v5 phone also has an 8-megapixel Samsung/OV camera. StarHub says it is using the Redmi "as part of our efforts in encouraging even more consumers, including current 2G mobile users, to jump onboard the smartphone wagon".

# ABS-CBN to spend US\$20m on content

Philippines broadcaster ABS-CBN plans to spend Ps900 million/US\$20 million on content and programming rights this year, the company said. The spend is part of at least Ps4 billion/US\$90 million set aside for network and infrastructure expansion, including digital terrestrial development, this year.

# HK judge clears public appeal

A Hong Kong high court judge has said two members of the public have constitutional grounds for an application for a judicial review of the government's decision not to grant a free-TV licence to Hong Kong Television Network (HKTV). The government rejected HKTV's licence application in October last year, awarding two licences to the territory's existing pay-TV platforms. A hearing to decide on whether the public appeal can go ahead will be held on 30 April 2014.

## SE Asia drives ESPN to digital highs

## Fans in 3 markets log 1.2 billion minutes in 2013

Visits to ESPN's digital properties in Singapore, Malaysia and Indonesia were up almost 10% to more than 197 million visits across computers and mobile devices in 2013, with fans from the three countries logging nearly 1.2 billion minutes.

Mobile was the fastest growing platform, with visits to ESPN mobile properties up 64%, ESPN Asia Pacific said this month.

Indonesia was the fastest growing region, with combined mobile and computer visits up 24% in 2013 compared to 2012. In the three countries combined, video starts grew to 56 million, an increase of more than 470% over 2012, the company said.

ESPN was the top English-language online sports brand in Singapore and Ma-



laysia, with 84% more total minutes than its closest competitor in Singapore and 50% more than its closest competitor in Malaysia (excluding mobile).

ESPN also said that football platform ESPNFC was the top English-language digital football brand in Singapore and Malaysia, with mobile visits up 91% since 2012.

Globally, ESPNFC reached an average of nearly seven million online (not including mobile devices) unique visitors a month in 2013. The site recorded a record high of 250 million total video starts in 2013. This was an increase of 697% compared to 2012 totals. August 2013 marked a one-month record of 39.4 million video starts. ESPN said.

Around the world in 2013, sports users logged 154.5 billion minutes via online and mobile devices (not including video).

Citing Adobe Analytics, ESPN reported a total of 17.4 billion global visits, an increase of 14% compared to 2012.

ESPN's mobile properties now accounted for 41% of total digital (non-video) minutes in 2013, the company added.

In the Asia/Pacific region, across computers and mobile devices, fans registered 1.6 billion total visits in 2013 (up 18% from 2012) and registered 14 billion total minutes.

4.7 billion minutes were spent on mobile in 2013 in Asia Pacific and 527 million visits were made to ESPN's mobile properties (mobile Web and apps). App use was a key driver of growth, with time spent on ESPN apps doubling year-on-year.

ESPN's online network averaged 11 million unique users a month on computers alone (not counting mobile). Over the course of 2013, those users spent 4.3 billion minutes with ESPN digital brands and viewed four billion pages.

Asia-Pacific sports fans also logged nearly 145 million views of video in 2013, an 80 percent increase year-on-year.



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18-21 March 2014 chengdu China ContentAsia's regular section, ContentAsia Formats, is dedicated to formats and format development in Asia, including new seasons, series and trends and what these mean to channels, producers and the overall formats industry in the region.

#### The Singing Bee, Philippines

ABS-CBN's singing format, The Singing Bee, moves into a new timeslot this week, shifting from Saturdays at 3.30pm to a stripped slot Mondays to Fridays at 11am.

Based on the original creation by the U.K.'s Gurin Company, *The Singing Bee* is a musical game show, challenging contestants in singing and their knowledge of lyrics.

The Singing Bee replaces Minute to Win It, which has been running for about a year. Programmers hope to replicate the series' weekend success across weekdays.

The competition concept has been adjusted for the new slot, with champions of the day on Mondays to Thursdays. Daily champions return and challenge one another on Fridays to be the grand winner.

Now in its sixth season on the Philippines' terrestrial Channel 2, *The Singing Bee* was resurrected on 16 November 2013 after a hiatus of about three years. The first five seasons aired from 2008 to 2010.

ABS-CBN's Leng Raymundo, head, integrated acquisition and international sales, says the aim of returning the format was to entertain and uplift the Philippines' spirit following Typhoon Haiyan, which hit central Philippines in November 2013.

The Singing Bee also complements the lifestyle and culture of the Filipinos because of their passion for singing. "We knew beforehand that The Singing Bee can deliver this experience as Filipinos love to sing. Karaoke



House singers The Songbees in The Singing Bee

has been part of the Filipino lifestyle and culture," Raymundo says.

The Singing Bee ranked ninth in its former Saturday slot, with a 13.2 TV rating and a place on the top 20 programmes chart on 1 February (total Philippines, urban and rural, source: Kantar Media/TNS).

In each episode, six contestants are selected from the audience to play a series of games that test their knowledge on song lyrics. If contestants make an error, they forfeit the chance to get into the 'musical chairs'. If a contestant is not in a musical chair when the round is over, he or she is eliminated. The grand prize is Ps1 million/US\$22,346.

The Singing Bee is hosted by Amy Perez and Roderick Paulate. The first five seasons

were hosted by Cesar Montano. The programme is accompanied by house band, Bandble Bee led by Mel Villena, supporting house singers The Songbees and dance troop The Honeybees.

ABS-CBN is home to other format franchises, including 2013's The Voice, Minute to Win It and Bet on Your Baby, as well as Deal or No Deal, Got Talent, The X Factor, Big Brother, Masterchef and The Biggest Loser.

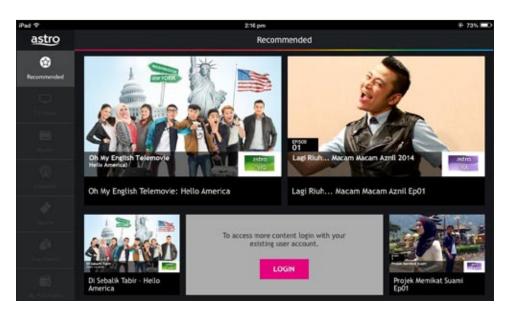
Raymundo says the aim is to offer a complete portfolio that will address diverse viewing preferences in predominantly one-TV-set homes.

80% of ABS-CBN's programmes are locally produced. 20% is foreign content.

# Contentasia FORMATS

at the ContentAsia Summit. September 2014. Be included. Contact CJ at cj@contentasia.tv

# PLatformastroonthego



In a regular section looking at up and coming platforms in Asia, *Malena Amzah* speaks to Shaiful Zahrin Subhan, vice president of Astro on the Go (AOTG) and Rozina Aziz, vice president of International Astro on the Go (IAOTG).

What is AOTG? An online service offering 30 live channels, catch-up and VOD content via internet-connected devices (laptops, smartphones, tablets). AOTG is available in Malaysia. IAOTG, offering only Malay and Malaysian sports content, is accessible in Singapore, the U.K. and Australia.

Been around since... May 2012

**Targeting...** Everyone who constantly access entertainment content via their connected devices anytime and anywhere

**Pricing...** Free for AOTG subscribers. Non-Astro customers in Malaysia pay RM30/US\$9/pack monthly or RM5/US\$1.50/pack/daily. For IAOTG subscribers in Singapore, Australia and the U.K., monthly subscription is US\$9.99 a pack. Each pack consists of up to six live TV channels tailored to different market segments.

Subscribers About 465,000 registered users

Who's driving the initiative... Shaiful Zahrin Subhan, vice president of AOTG, and Rozina Aziz, vice president of IAOTG

The offering... Live streaming of 30 local and international channels, TV shows and movies on demand as well as live sporting and entertainment events (concerts, sporting events and special coverage). Provides up to 2,000 hours of catch-up VOD content at any given time, with approximately 500 hours added monthly.

The goal... "While DTH pay TV caters to a household, Astro on the Go meets the digital lifestyle of the individuals within the Astro households. AOTG is brought to market because we realised that customers demand access to their TV and entertainment everywhere they go, and not be limited to when they're in front of their TV in the living room. In addition, we also hope to make available our channels and content to the digitally savvy generation."

The biggest challenge... "To come up with a design that meets multiple users' needs. We believe we have made the first of many steps towards building a delightful experience for our customers. We gain a lot of satisfaction from learning how our customers use our services and are always working on making the next version better."

Priorities for the next six months "We have recently launched Malaysia's First Multilingual TV guide and user interface for AOTG users. In addition, we are getting ready for our biggest event yet – FIFA World Cup 2014. AOTG will stream all of the World Cup games live."

Take-up expectations for 2014... "We have more than 700,000 downloads and a 75% increase in registered subscribers year on year. With the launch of the new multi lingual programme guide and user interface for AOTG, we expect a substantial growth this year."

What is the average viewing time? "Approximately 72 minutes weekly on AOTG, a 100% increase in time spent watching videos online over last year."

What is the most-watched content so far? "Live events, especially local and international sporting events and concerts."

Is there anything that has surprised you about usage? "We originally thought that most of the usage for AOTG would occur out of home – thus the name Astro on the Go. But what we've learned is that there are as many users choosing to watch AOTG at home, suggesting that it's being used as a second screen."

How are you using social media to expand your online presence? "Our social properties include Facebook and Twitter. With these two platforms, we provide our fans and followers the latest updates on the service and channels as well as customer support."

## OTT on centre stage at BroadcastAsia

## Int'l conference explores new tech, innovation

The explosive growth of over-the-top (OTT) and other pay-TV services in Asia takes centre stage at this year's annual BroadcastAsia2014 in Singapore (17-20 June).

StarHub's chief technology officer, Mock Pak Lam, opens the show's international conference on 17 June, followed by a keynote entitled "A global perspective on how OTT is changing the competitive landscape of the broadcasting space".

Sessions include the "Captains of industry dialogue", with speakers from Amazon Web Services, Ericsson, HBO Asia, Irdeto, Samsung, StarHub and Telekom Malaysia talking about OTT, its evolution and impact along with new technologies and innovation.

The OTT case studies being presented

include Malaysia's Media Prima Digital.

Another conference focus is the next wave of television technologies. Discussion topics include broadband and connected TV, cloud broadcasting, DVB, multi-screen environments and social media.

The two-day Creative Content Production Conference 2014 (18-19 June) incorporated with the BroadcastAsia2014 International Conference will highlight Asia's contribution towards the revenues of films and the creation of TV and film content. The conference will also explore practices for content distribution in Asia and the impact of 4K adoption.

More than 50,000 delegates from 100 countries attended last year's event, which also includes communications show CommunicAsia.

#### From page 1: Media Partners Asia/OTT

terfaces and platform functionality is poor and total user revenues typically average around US\$15,000 a month."

MPA also said the only beneficiaries were studios, which received one-time fees for "a service that's destined to fail at least once".

"Nonetheless, the role of mobile in OTT is critical since telcos have deeper links with consumers for data downloads, billing and authentication.

"In the future, content providers will captialise on this as they look to drive SVOD services, apps, games and other transactions with the consumer in return for a revenue share," the report added.

MPA also warned Asia pay-TV operators to "move rapidly to follow players such as Sky, Comcast and Liberty Global with high levels of product innovation, next-generation user interfaces and cloud delivery". So far, only Foxtel, Astro, Tata Sky and Airtel are moving in this direction.

Key factors driving the push into OTT by operators and broadcasters included a core business under pressure, piracy and a decline in the traditional voice business.

JUST SAYING...

Irrationality has never been so serious as it is today."

Asia Television Ltd (ATV) executive director Louie King-bun at a lively public hearing in Hong Kong during the first of three forums on free-TV licence renewals for TVB and ATV. Fending off a call not to renew ATV's licence, King told participants to "use your brains" in assessing complaints against the station. ATV plans to invest HK\$2.7 billion/US\$348 million in infrastructure and content over the next six years.



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