

Turner launches new factual channel Q2 Asia debut for World Heritage Channel

Turner Broadcasting is adding a documentary channel to its Asia bouquet, picking up the pace on a regional expansion strategy that kicked in with the appointment of Ricky Ow in January 2014.

The pan-regional World Heritage Chan-

More on page 13

\$\$\$ format bet kicks off in Asia 4 regional mega formats herald new content era

Star World's Asia's Next Top Model and AXN's Asia's Got Talent kick off a year of regional mega-formats in Asia, adding an estimated US\$16 million into the region's original production purse and boosting optimism that what works now will be repeated later... and be even bigger.

Asia's Next Top Model premieres on Star World on Wednesday, 25 March, two

More on page 9

Singapore clears schedules for LKY A nation's father remembered on screen

Singapore broadcasters cleared their schedules from Monday morning to make way for programmes commemorating the life of former prime minister Lee Kuan Yew, who died in the early hours of 23 March. Mr Lee was 91.

Regional networks also shuffled sched-

More on page 6

Georgina Wilson
Supermodel and new celebrity host

ASIA'S NEXT top model 3

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HBO Asia preps for April Durst fest

HBO Asia will run the Robert Durst documentary series, *The Jinx: The Life and Deaths of Robert Durst*, on three consecutive nights from 1-3 April on HBO Signature and HBO Go, followed on 6 April on HBO On De-



Robert Durst

mand. Durst made headlines around the world in March after being arrested days before the series finale in the U.S. He has been charged with murder.

AMC, Sundance add big-brand duo to line-up *Honourable Woman*, *Walking Dead* spinoff head for Asia

AMC Networks has picked up Asia rights for award-winning political thriller, *The Honourable Woman* (2014), for the Sundance channel across Asia.

The eight-part show, starring Maggie Gyllenhaal, will premiere across the region on 7 May at 11pm (Singapore). The first-window rights exclude Thailand, where the series has already aired.

The acquisition coincides with the announcement that AMC Networks International has bought international rights to *The Walking Dead* companion



Maggie Gyllenhaal

series (working title).

The series is scheduled to air globally – including Asia – from late summer, followed by season two in 2016.

Plans are to air the series within 24 hour of the U.S.

The Walking Dead companion show, produced by AMC, is set in Los Angeles and stars Cliff Curtis (*Missing*, *Gang Related*), Kim Dickens (*Gone Girl*, *Sons of Anarchy*), Frank Dillane (*Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince*) and Alysia Debnam Carey (*Into the Storm*).

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FremantleMedia ups Rahman for Asia

FremantleMedia International's (FMI) Haryaty Rahman has been promoted to senior vice president for Asia sales and distribution, based in Singapore.

The promotion is part of the reworked global structure being put in place by new FMI chief executive Jens Richter. Rahman reports to Ganesh Rajaram, executive vice president, sales and distribution for Asia, who now reports directly to Richter.

Richter said the changes "reflect our increased commitment to the emerging markets, and the potential opportunities they offer". FMI said the new structure strengthened central operations and finance functions and increased sales focus in emerging markets.

Discovery airs Air Asia crash special in April

Discovery has added 60-minute Air Asia crash special, *Flight 8501: Storm Disaster*, to its April grid as part of a global telecast in 220 countries/territories.

The programme, produced by ITN Productions for Discovery Networks International, will air first on Discovery feeds in Japan, Australia and New Zealand on 5 April, followed by Taiwan, India, Malaysia, Southeast Asia and China through April.

The flight crashed on 28 December 2014 on its way from Indonesia to Singapore, killing all 262 people on board.



Coronation Street

ITV Studios Global Entertainment is fast-tracking two iconic soaps in Asia to air on regional channel ITV Choice within a day or two of their U.K. telecasts. The new windows kick in on 18 May.

ITV Choice is also shortening windows on a wider slate of drama and entertainment programming, including tentpole entertainment title *The Jonathan Ross Show*.

The majority of dramas going forward, including *Home Fires* (5 May, prime time across the region), will air first and exclusive within two days of the U.K.

The new windowing strategy across Asia and the Middle East follow the channel's expansion into Africa in a carriage deal with MultiChoice's DStv platform across the African continent.

The Africa service, which launches on 5 May, will be driven out of the channel's regional HQ in Hong Kong.

From May, *Coronation Street* and *Emmerdale* storylines will run at the same time in Asia as in the U.K. Currently, *Coronation Street* is about a year behind and *Emmerdale* lags behind even longer.

A catch-up special has been commissioned from U.K. production company Shiver to fast-track viewers through a year's worth of *Coronation Street* storylines. The

Coronation Street special airs on 15 May, with encores on 16 and 17 May.

The *Emmerdale* fast-forward will be online and via social media.

Both series will be stripped Monday to Friday. ITV in the U.K. airs double episodes of *Coronation Street* on Mondays and Fridays, with a single episode on Wednesdays. Monday's U.K. episodes will air in Asia on Wednesday and Thursday. Friday's episodes will air in Asia on Monday and Tuesday.

ITV Choice channel director, Nic van Zwanenberg says the new windowing is part of an ongoing initiative to keep the channel current and relevant, "not just for soaps but across the network".

The revamped ITV Choice was announced less than two weeks after ITV said it would acquire Talpa Media for an initial €500 million. The total value of the deal could rise to €1.1 billion over eight years.

ITV Choice fast tracks soaps in new express play Short windows coincide with Africa expansion from Asia

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Huy wins MPA Vietnam movie pitch Workshop ups skills as film scene booms

Vietnamese filmmaker Tran Dung Thanh Huy has won a feature film pitching competition held as part of the one-day Hanoi Spring 2015 Film Workshop on 17 March.

The event, designed to boost global best practice production skills, was hosted by the Motion Picture Association (MPA) and the Embassy of Denmark and comes amid major growth in theatrical screens and film production across Vietnam.

The one-day workshop was part of a bigger 10-day film production training course aimed at building knowledge and skill levels for Vietnam's leading film producers.

Huy's prize is a trip to Los Angeles for a five-day film programme in November ahead of the American Film Market (AFM).

His project, *Thong Rom (Lanky Lilbrat)*, is

a social realist tale about a boy who takes risks with a mafia gang to save his mother and her neighbours from having to give up their home in a decaying building.

The MPA Film Workshop featured international producer Jon Kuyper, production supervisor for Warner Bros. Pictures on Baz Luhrmann's *The Great Gatsby*, Peter Jackson's *The Hobbit* trilogy and most recently as independent executive producer of Sean Penn's *The Last Face*.

Judges and mentors involved in the pitch included Vietnamese filmmakers Dang Nhat Minh (*The Guava House*) and Pham Nhue Giang (*Lost*), Bui Thac Chuyen (*Adrift*).

The Vietnam workshop is MPA's seventh in the past 12 months.

Philippines ups post-9pm audiences Bridges of Love tops Two Wives in late prime-time

Philippines' new drama *Bridges of Love* is reinvigorating ABS-CBN's later evening prime-time slot, with national ratings hitting 24.4% in the week of 16 March (source: Kantar Media), national free-TV network ABS-CBN says.

The series airs at 9.10pm-9.55pm stripped across weeknights.

At the same time, *Bridges of Love* is still nowhere near the ratings of the earlier 8.45pm slot filled by *Forevermore*, which reached a rating of 33.8% and share of 57% nationwide on Friday, 6 March.

Light family drama *Dream Dad* (the Philippines' top show in February/Kantar)

rated even higher, with 34.4%, although share was lower at 57%.

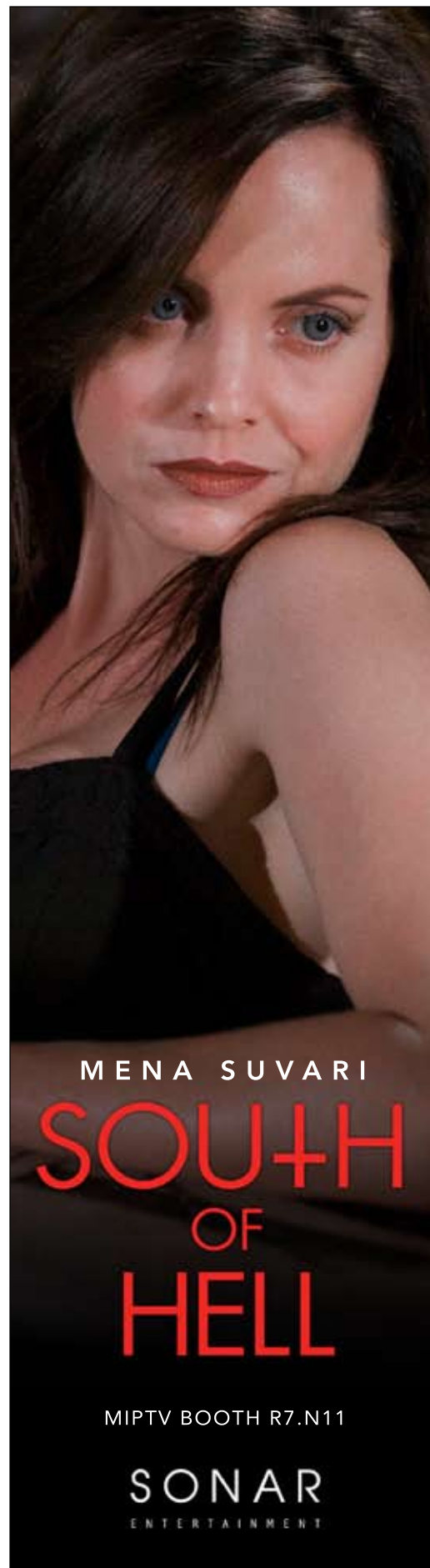
Bridges of Love, produced by Star Creatives (*Forevermore*, *Princess and I*, *The Legal Wife*) tells the story of two brothers separated by tragedy and later united by their fascination with the same nightclub dancer.

The show replaced *Two Wives*, a remake of the Korean drama, which premiered in October last year.

So far, *Bridges of Love* ratings tops the final months of *Two Wives*, which scored 21.4% average through February, up from 18.9% in January.



Maja Salvador in *Bridges of Love*





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India's DD adds "first fresh blood" in 20+ years

India's Prasar Bharati has appointed 55 people to key positions – including programming – at TV broadcast network Doordarshan and radio network All India Radio. Prasar Bharati chief executive Jawhar Sircar tweeted the landmark event, saying, among other things, that this was the "first fresh blood" in 20+ years. Sircar also said DD had 17,000 vacant posts.

China, Korea up profile in Africa

China is the country of honour at this year's Discop Africa, to be held in South Africa in November. Along with China's growing involvement in Africa, organisers also said Korea would host a new pavilion at this year's event in Johannesburg from 4-6 November. The fourth edition of indie production-focused Discopro will run alongside Discop Africa. Organisers Basic Lead said the two events are expected to attract more than 2,500 delegates from 85 countries.

News Corp's Storyful launches Youku channel

News Corp's Dublin-based social media news agency, Storyful, has launched a Chinese-language channel on online video platform Youku. The channel will showcase trending viral videos licensed by Storyful. Youku Tudou senior vice president, Frank Wei Ming, says Storyful has "created a unique way to resolve the copyright problems that have long troubled the viral video space".

ABS-CBN seals

Coconuts exchange deal

ABS-CBNnews.com has signed a two-year content-supply deal with local Philippines' city website network Coconuts Media. The deal includes the exchange of news, features and video content.



Father of a Nation: Lee Kuan Yew, Discovery Channel

From page 1: Lee Kuan Yew memorial

ules after the Prime Minister's Office announced Mr Lee's death at 3.18am.

Free-TV broadcaster MediaCorp has suspended regular schedules during the seven-day national mourning period.

Special broadcasts across all seven terrestrial television channels and online platforms started at 8am on Monday (23 March) with a live transmission of Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong's address to the nation. The address was also transmitted on MediaCorp's 13 radio stations.

Channel NewsAsia, MediaCorp's dedicated news channel, will telecast live the procession from the Istana to the lying-in-state proceedings (25-28 March) and the state funeral on 29 March.

Channel NewsAsia's feed will be made available to the international media and news agencies.

Four other MediaCorp TV channels and four radio stations will air *Farewell to Lee Kuan Yew – Lying in State Ceremony* at 9am on 25 March and the state funeral. All will air in Singapore's four official languages.

MediaCorp's memorial programming

includes three-part documentary *Time Nor Tide: Remembering Lee Kuan Yew*; *Lee Kuan Yew: In His Own Words*, a six-part series with extracts of key speeches; and *Lee Kuan Yew: Forging A Nation*, a series of five-minute capsules featuring key points in Singapore's history.

CNBC aired a special hour-long programme, *The Legacy of Lee Kuan Yew* at noon on Monday (23 March), only hours after the official announcement, replacing the repeat telecast of *Meet The Press*. Hong Kong station TVBJ aired *Lee Kuan Yew 1923 – 2015* from 7.30pm-8pm on Monday.

Discovery Channel airs one-hour special *Father of a Nation: Lee Kuan Yew* across Southeast Asia on Tuesday, 24 March, at 9pm (Singapore/Malaysia) with encores throughout the week. The programme will also air in Australia, Hong Kong, India, Japan, New Zealand and Taiwan.

Discovery said the special "documents the story of how one man survived World War 2, took on the British Empire, struggled for independence and fought for the people and country that he loved".



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Sony Japan rolls out 1st OTT platform

Sony Pictures Television (SPT) Networks' Animax Broadcast Japan is launching its first over-the-top OTT platform on 25 March. The app, Animax Plus on PlayStation is advertising-supported and free to PlayStation users. The service is available on PlayStation3 and PlayStation4. The service will offer about 500 episodes of anime such as *NeonGenesis Evangelion*.

Musti 3D comes to Asia

Singapore-based content distribution/production house, Bomanbridge Media, has added ER Productions/Paradiso TV's children's series *Musti 3D* to its Asia



Musti

catalogue. Animated kitten *Musti* was originally created in 1969 by Belgian graphic artist Ray Goossens, for kids two to six years old. This is the first time the new 3D series and merchandise will be available in Asia.

ITN Source marks end of 2nd Sino-Japanese war

ITN Source commemorates the 70th anniversary of the end of the Second Sino-Japanese War with a curated collection of archive news footage. The collection features footage from 1930 to the present, including digitised images from the run-up to the war that hasn't been seen since its original broadcast.

Outdoor takes digital-first route MCA ties up with BNM/4ME to boost online biz

Outdoor Channel has added a digital-first angle to its Asia strategy, kicking off the new direction with multi-channel network (MCN) operator Brand New Media (BNM).

The strategic alliance takes Outdoor Channel programming into select territories, including Singapore, as part of BNM's 4Me online lifestyle platform from 30 March.

Outdoor joins A+E Networks' History channel onto BNM's MCN. Historyplus.sg offers standalone two- to three-minute shorts from linear channel strands/shows such as *Big History*, *Special Forces*, *Counting Cars* and *Pawn Stars*.

BNM will offer short-form Outdoor Channel programming, as well as develop original and branded lifestyle entertainment content.

The decision comes against a backdrop of rapidly changing media consumption habits, says Gregg Creevey, managing

director of Multi Channels Asia (MCA), which operates Outdoor Channel.

"The specific in-market MCNs will allow us to accelerate Outdoor Channel's market penetration, and to better reach and engage with the underserved and passionate communities of people who embrace the outdoor lifestyle and its myriad of pursuits," Creevey adds.

BNM's global director, Damien Bray, says the MCN's focus is "a handful of lifestyle content genres that will be able to command a loyal community".



Gun Stories with Joe Mantegna

At the same time as ramping up its digital exposure, Outdoor's schedule has shifted to focus on story-telling. Exclusive titles on the channel in May include *Gun Stories* with *Criminal Minds*' star Joe Mantegna, who looks at state-of-the-art weapons; and

Kenny Mayne's Wider World of Sports, which goes in search of the world's most unusual sporting events.

Youku Tudou content spend tips \$97m in Q4 2014 Content costs at 48% of net revenues

Youku Tudou's daily video views have topped 900 million, with consumer revenues up 473% to US\$24.4 million in 2014 compared with 2013, the online video platform said in its latest results.

At the same time, 2014's net loss soared to RMB888.6 million/US\$143.2 million, up from RMB580.7 million/US\$93.6 million in 2013. Net revenues rose 33% to RMB4 billion/US\$649.5 million.

Chairman/chief executive officer, Victor Koo, says other monetisation initiatives are in place in addition to advertising.

Consumer revenues for the last three months of 2014 were US\$11.2 million, a 649% increase on the same quarter in 2013.

Youku Tudou attributed the growth primarily to subscriber-base expansion and pay-per-view orders.

"Our long-term goal is to build a content eco-system in which over half of the revenue and video traffic is derived from our web-native content, i.e. original content, PGC, and UGC," says platform president Dele Liu.

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From page 1: Formats

weeks after AXN's *Asia's Got Talent* premiere on 12 March.

Next up are NBCUni's *How Do I Look?* for Diva in mid-2015, and, later in the year, A+E Networks Asia's *MasterChef Asia* for Lifetime. *MasterChef* is being produced in Asia by the Singapore-based production unit of the Endemol Shine Group. *How Do I Look?* has been commissioned from NBCUniversal-owned production house, Matchbox Pictures.

Between them, the four new series add 52.5 hours of new and original video content and countless hours of audience engagement into a market clamouring for local relevance and with pay-TV platforms demanding original shows.

The four also push the envelope on budget, raise the bar on production values, and potentially set a new standard on what can be achieved in viewership and sponsorship.

Asia's Got Talent set the ratings bar high, boosting competition and optimism that record-breaking production spend will pay off for everyone. The premiere topped its slots in Singapore, Malaysia, Philippines (source: Kantar Media S'pore/Philippines, AGBN-MR Malaysia supplied by AXN). Sony Pictures Television (SPT) Networks Asia said the episode delivered 10x the rating of the next English-language GE channel in the three markets. In Taiwan, *Asia's Got Talent* was the day's top programme among international GE channels, with a 79% share.

Covering 15 markets, *Asia's Got Talent* ticks multiple 'firsts' boxes, including the world's biggest talent

show by country, the first regional talent show of its kind in Asia, the most expensive in Asia in its category, and the most logistically complicated format ever.

SPT Networks Asia's executive director of production, Derek Wong, says balance was important. "We didn't want one country or one genre to dominate," he says, adding: "We know people will be watching the balance quite closely".

In addition to driving AXN's regional original content agenda, *Asia's Got Talent* has been filmed with local host links for four local markets – India (VH1/Viacom TV18), Indonesia (Anteve), Vietnam (VTV-6) and Thailand (Channel 3). Local terrestrial stations air the show with their own host links.

The additional local channel exposure is a key element. "Given the size of the investment and for a project like this to be able to achieve the financial goal, we needed to think out the box," says SPT Networks Asia's senior vice president and GM, H.K. Ang. "We are addressing a market where free TV and pay TV have the opportunity to cover a different segment of the audience," he adds.

Perhaps the most talked-about aspect of the long-running negotiations ahead of the September 2014 greenlight was Sony's appetite for the risks involved in being so ambitious.

The day after the show premiered, Ang said he was happy with the sponsorship secured by both SPT's in-house team and the team at Fremantle-Media out of Singapore. "Of course as a business person there is never enough, but I'm happy..."



Asia's Next Top Model season three host, Georgina Wilson

**Adapted from ContentAsia...in print. Out on 1 April 2015.
Distributed at MIP Doc (11-12 April),
MIP TV (13-16 April)
and at MPA's APOS (22-24 April).**

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ContentAsia Schedules – a look at scheduling strategies around the region.

HBO

Time/Day	Monday, 23 Mar	Tuesday, 24 Mar	Wednesday, 25 Mar	Thursday, 26 Mar	Friday, 27 Mar	Saturday, 28 Mar	Sunday, 29 Mar
7pm			5.30pm: The Odd Life of Timothy Green (2012)	Escape Plan (rated 16, 2013)	Red 2 (2013)	6.50pm: The Last World: Jurassic Park (1997)	5.50pm: Open Season (2006)
7.15pm	5.50pm: Jerry Maguire (1996)	6.35pm: The Da Vinci Code (rated 18, 2006)	2 Guns (rated 16, 2013)				The Fast And The Furious (2001)
9pm			Casual Vacancy S1 Ep1 (rated 18, 2015)	Casual Vacancy S1 Ep2 (rated 18, 2015)	Casual Vacancy S1 Ep3 (rated 18, 2015)		
10pm	Girls S4 Ep10: Home Birth (rated 18, 2015)	The Amazing Spider-Man 2 (rated 16, 2014)				Malavita (rated 16, 2013)	Fast & Furious 6 (rated 16, 2013)
10.30pm			Gravity (rated 18, 2013)				
10.50pm				47 Ronin (rated 16, 2013)			
11.10pm	Paranormal Activity: The Marked Ones (rated 16, 2014)				Man of Steel (2013)		
11.20pm						Elysium (rated 16, 2013)	
11.30pm		The Assassination of Jesse James By The Coward Robert Ford (2007)	Girls S4 Ep10: Home Birth (rated 18, 2015)				Hannibal (rated 18, 2001)
11.45pm	The Best Man Holiday (rated 16, 2013)						
12am							

- Action/adventure: 8hrs/22%
- Crime/thriller: 6hrs/16%
- Sci-Fi: 5hrs/13%
- Comedy: 4hrs/12%
- Superhero/fictional: 4hrs/12%
- Drama: 4hrs/11%
- Romance: 3hrs/8.5%
- Horror: 1.25hrs/3.6%
- Animation: 0.3hrs/0.7%

Time/Day	Monday, 20 April	Tuesday, 21 April	Wednesday, 22 April	Thursday, 23 April	Friday, 24 April	Saturday, 25 April	Sunday, 26 April
7pm	5.05pm: Beyond Borders (2003)	5.30pm: Treasure Planet(2002)	5.10pm: John Carter of Mars (rated 16, 2012)	6pm: Dinosaur (2000)			
7.10pm					6.55pm: Jurassic Park (1993)	6.50pm: Captain Phillips (2013)	6.50pm: Fast & Furious 6 (rated 16, 2013)
7.20pm	Collateral Damage (2002)	Escape Plan (rated 16, 2013)	Poseidon (2006)	Austin Powers: The Spy Who Shagged Me			
7.25pm							
9pm	Encore of 9pm premiere: Game of Thrones S5 Ep2 (rated 16, 2015)	Labor Day (rated 16, 2013)	A Single Shot (rated 16, 2013)	Afflicted (rated 16, 2013)	300 (rated 16, 2006)	A Million Ways To Die In The West (rated 16, 2014)	Red 2 (2013)
10pm	Encore of 10am premiere: Silicon Valley S2 Ep2 (rated 16, 2015)						
10.30pm	Encore of 10.30am premiere: Veep S4 Ep2 (rated 16, 2015)			Silicon Valley S2 Ep2 (rated 16, 2015)			
10.50pm				Veep S4 Ep2 (rated 16, 2015)			
10.55pm					300: Rise Of An Empire (rated 18, 2014)		
11pm		Kick-Ass 2 (rated 18, 2013)	Game of Thrones S5 Ep2 (rated 16, 2015)	Blade II (2002)		Stranger Than Fiction (2006)	Labor Day (rated 16, 2013)
11.30pm	Pain & Gain (rated 18, 2013)		Hollywood On Set S93 (2003-)				
11.55pm							
12am							

- Action/adventure: 10hrs/28%
- Comedy: 8hrs/22%
- Crime/thriller: 6hrs/16%
- Drama: 4hrs/11%
- Romance: 3hrs/9%
- Horror: 2hrs/6%
- Sci-Fi: 2hrs/6%
- Animation: 0.6hrs/2%
- Entertainment news: 0.1hrs/0.2%

HBO Asia is stepping up its anti-piracy fight from April with U.S.-Asia simulcasts of three HBO Original series along with day-and-date prime-time encores.

The new titles bring the number of HBO/Cinemax day-and-date hours HBO Asia can make available in Asia to almost 100.

Game of Thrones season five, Silicon Valley season two and Veep season four premiere worldwide on 13 April at 9am (8am Jakarta/Thailand), followed by an encore telecast at 9pm (8pm Jakarta/Thailand).

Series that require age restrictions of 18 and above will be delayed while censors take their cut. This includes Singapore and Malaysia.

The new seasons of Game of Thrones, Silicon Valley and Veep will also be of-

fered on HBO On Demand and HBO Go, which is available in Hong Kong and the Philippines. HBO On Demand is available in Hong Kong, Indonesia, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Taiwan and Vietnam.

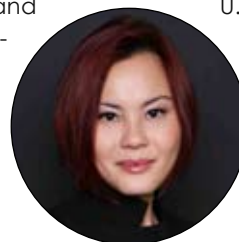
Slashing the premiere window in Asia to zero is part of an on-going anti-piracy campaign.

"Piracy has been and will continue to affect our viewership potential," says HBO Asia's head of marketing, creative and content, Magdalene Ew.

In addition to efforts with regulators and other organisations to promote legal access to content, Ew says viewer education is key to stopping piracy.

"While the simulcast of the programmes is not a silver bullet to combat piracy, it

will boost our continued effort to offer legitimate content live and direct from the U.S. without any delay," she says.



Magdalene Ew

The early-release initiative kicked off in August last year with day-and-date releases in Asia of Game of Thrones season four, Girls season three, The Newsroom season three, True Blood season seven and Veep season three.

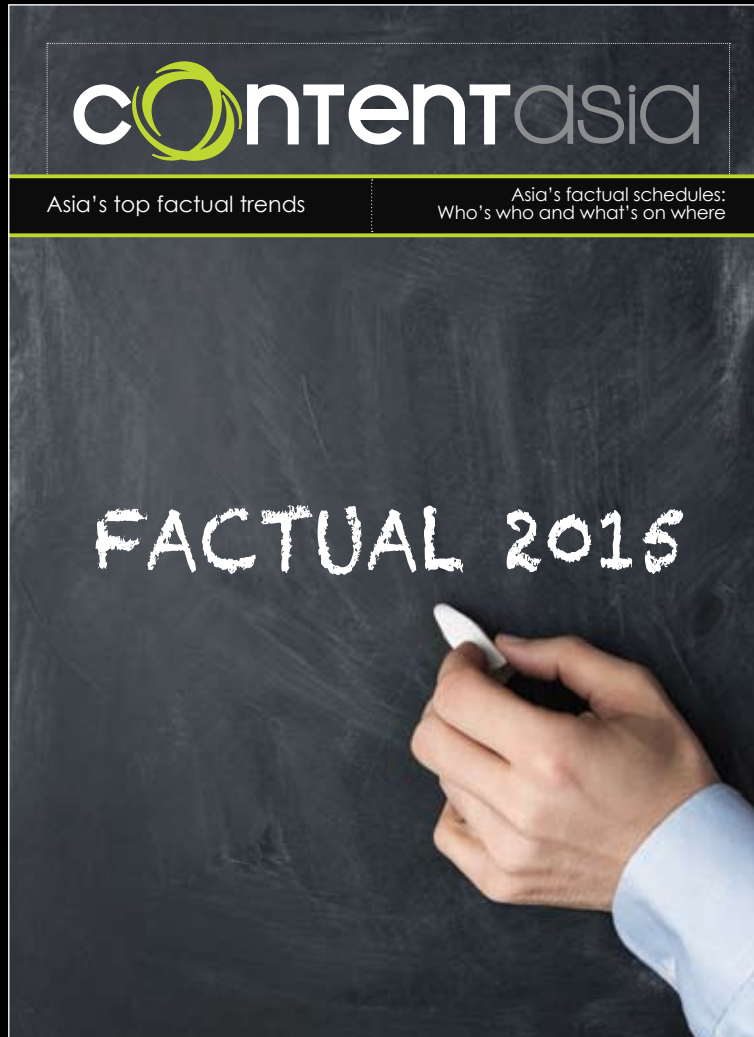
"Shortening windows in Asia vis-à-vis the U.S. is key to retaining viewership loyalty," Ew says.

Key performers for 2014 across the region included HBO Originals Game of Thrones season four and True Blood season seven.

HBO Asia Original mini series, Grace,

More on page 13

Out on 1 April 2015



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From page 11: Schedules

about a father's mistake that condemns his family to unspeakable horror, performed equally well last year, Ew says.

"These exclusive, first-run shows are important to our brand and help to differentiate our channel across the region," Ew adds.

More made-in-Asia titles are being planned. Details have not been confirmed but industry speculation is that one of the projects on the drawing board is a feature film based on Malaysian writer Tan Wan Eng's novel, *The Garden of Evening Mists*. If the co-production with Malaysia's Astro Shaw happens, the film will be HBO Asia's fourth local production after *Dead Mine*, *Serangoon Road* and last year's *Grace*.

It will also be HBO Asia's first based on an existing novel, following in the footsteps of HBO Originals such as *Game of Thrones*, *True Blood* and *The Leftovers*.

Programming priorities for Asia this year include adding strong, good quality independent titles to complement existing



Game of Thrones season five, HBO Asia

output deals with Hollywood studios such as Paramount Pictures, Sony Pictures, Universal Studios, Warner Bros., Lionsgate and MGM.

HBO is pushing in other directions too, adding the live telecast of the Oscars to its Asia slate for the first time this year.

The live ceremony was part of a multi-platform offering HBO Asia built around the event.

"Making our content available on multi-screens will continue to be among our top priorities," Ew says.

From page 1: Turner

– "premium and 100% pure documentary" – will air nature, travel, history and culture programming. Signature content features Unesco's World Heritage Sites.



Gerhard Zeiler

Turner Broadcasting says the channel targets "audiences who seek a meaningful and undiluted documentary television destination".

"We believe there is still a strong demand for premium documentary content... with many established brands in the documentary space adopting an increasingly factual entertainment approach to programming, we see an opportunity for a 100% pure and authentic documentary service," says Turner Broadcasting System International president, Gerhard Zeiler.

Zeiler added that the channel "will also feature more Asian heritage content and this is something that viewers in this region are seeking more and more".

World Heritage Channel brings Turner's

genres in Asia to four – kids, general entertainment, news and documentary.

Turner hasn't disclosed how many hours of content the channel will launch with but says the schedule will include "hundreds of hours" of first-run, exclusive shows.

Flagship titles include *The World Heritage Sites*, *Journey to Natural World Heritage Sites* and *Beautiful Planet*, along with Asian titles *Asia's Monarchies* and *Asia Rising*. Another Asian title is *Spirits of Orchid Island* (2008), by Taiwan's PTS, about a volcanic island on the southeast coast of Taiwan that is home to the Tao people from the Philippines.

The new channel has also acquired Sir David Attenborough's blue-chip docs – three-part *Conquest of the Skies* (2015), which aired on Sky 1/Sky 3D in the U.K. in January this year, and *Flying Monsters* (2011) – along with travel shows *Travel Bug* and *Paradise Asia*.

Titles programmed in year one also in-

clude documentary festival award winners, the Smithsonian Institution/Kajima-Vision's *Dream Window: Reflections on a Japanese Garden* (1992); Ocean-Pix's 60-minute *Salmon Forest* (2011); *Remembering Vietnam: The Wall at 25* (2007); and *MLK: The Assassination Tapes* (2011).

Zeiler says the aim is to "share mankind's greatest treasures so that they may be cherished and safeguarded for our children, grandchildren and future generations".

"Heritage tells us not only who we have been but also who we are today. Our shared heritage, as well as our historic and natural environment, are all critical to the future of the world's economic, ecological and cultural wellbeing," Zeiler adds.

World Heritage Channel rolls out with Chinese, Bahasa Malaysia, Bahasa Indonesia and Thai subtitles.

Over-the-top (OTT) and catch-up rights have been secured for select content.

Carriage deals for the new service, delivered in full HD – have not yet been disclosed.

ContentAsia's regular section, ContentAsia Formats, looks at 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.

High School Band

Thailand's ThaiTV3 Family channel has created its first high-school band entertainment format. *High School Band* debuts on Saturday, 9 May, at 10am, with the finale episode scheduled for 1 August.

The original Thai format, which cost the broadcaster about US\$150,000 to make, was created by TV3's programme acquisition exec Art Kaneearch and produced jointly by Songwut from local production house Sawasdeekrab2507 Company.

TV3 designed the 13-part one-hour format as "simply a call out to youngsters, teens, rockers and pop boy band and girl group alike who want to show off their passion for a Korean hit or a billboard ballad to more than just friends in school," Kaneearch says. TV3 says finalists will be offered a one-year internship with organising broadcasters.

"TV3 wants to be friends with high-school students," Kaneearch says, adding: "It's every broadcaster's dream to have their own format recurring every year with viewers and participants anticipating being a part of". At the same time, reaching out to local communities, schools, students, the younger generation, "recruiting them to become fans of the channel without being too cheesy is never easy," he adds.

The first season showcases local high school students from, for example, a hill tribe school in Northern Chiang Mai.



High School Band launch

Turnouts at the auditions for the Northeast and South regions on the first two Saturdays in March (7 March, 14 March) were unexpected and overwhelming. "We had to increase the audition to Sundays on 8 March and 15 March," says Kaneearch. *High School Band's* third audition was held in Bangkok on 21 March, and the fourth and last audition round for contestants in the North region will be held on 28 March.

The format, hosted by local artist Chow Chow, will allow the judges to exercise a veto against any band into the final but he/she can only do it once. "This is one of the firsts, no shows here has ever allowed a judge to do this before," says Kaneearch.

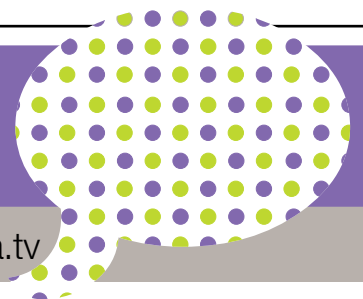
Channel 3 is happy with the sponsorship so far. "Sponsorship is full and we will

extend to neighbouring countries if broadcasters pick up the format," Kaneearch adds.

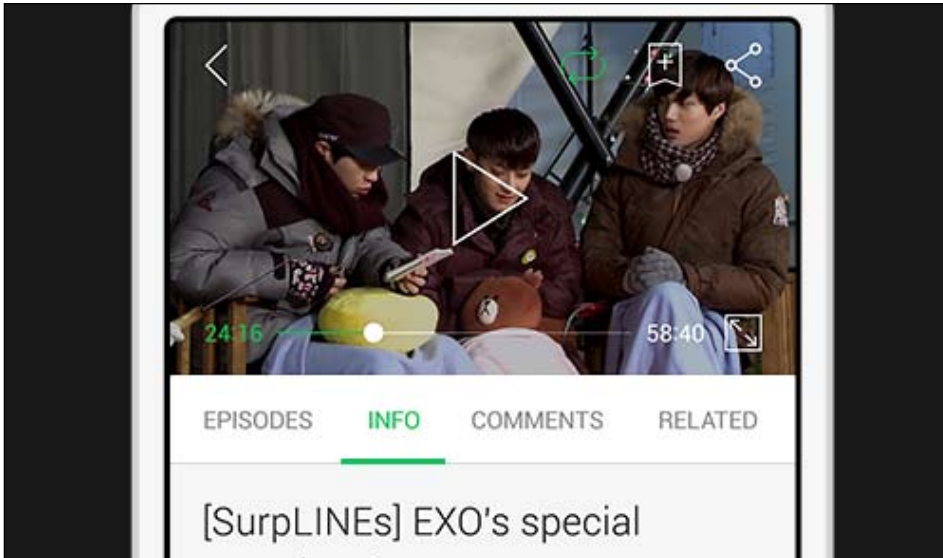
The *High School Band* format is being offered to share for free with broadcasters in neighbouring countries for at least two years. TV Stations in Vietnam, Indonesia, the Philippines, Cambodia, Laos and Myanmar have already been offered the format, including the production bible, episode treatments, flying producers and other elements designed to create successful shows.

So far, Myanmar and Cambodia have confirmed and are expected to join in the filming of the format, says Kaneearch.

"They are eager to see how the original Thai version will turn out," he adds.



In ContentAsia's regular section on up-and-coming online platforms in Asia, *Malena Amzah* speaks to Nuttawut Lertsrimongkol, senior marketing manager of over-the-top Line TV service in Thailand, owned by Japan's Line Corporation, a messaging mobile app company.



What is Line TV? Line TV is an online TV service and an extension of the mobile messenger app, Line (launched June 2011). Line TV bundles TV series, movies, music videos and Line TV exclusive content for free via smartphones, tablets and PCs.

Launch Line TV became available for download in Thailand at the end of 2014 and officially launched on 6 February in Bangkok. The development process took about six months. The service is geo-blocked for Thailand.

Why Thailand? "Thailand is a fast growing market and Thai people are open to trying new things. Currently there are more than 33 million Line users in Thailand. We believe Thai people enjoy entertainment, so we have selected series, music videos and variety shows, both from Korea and Thailand, to meet the desires of the Thai audience," says Line TV's senior marketing manager, who is responsible for the platform.

Where else? There are plans to roll out similar services in other Asian markets.

Subscription rates Line TV is a free service currently offering advertising-supported (pre-roll/post-roll) streaming video. Other business models will be considered moving forward.

The offering Key content will be original and exclusive to Line TV. Premiering series is Thai drama *Stay*, a romantic-comedy co-produced with Thai studio GTH and shot in Saga, Japan. Directed by Yong Songyos Sugmakanan, *Stay* premiered on Saturday, 14 February. The series stars Sunny Suwanmethanont, Supassra Thanachat, Teeradon Supapunpinyo and Thiti Mahayotaruk. Line TV exclusive content also includes Korean entertainment title *SurpLINES*. Korean artists include boy-bands EXO and Super Junior as well as girl group Girls' Generation. The slate also features content from local partners, including GMM, Workpoint Entertainment, Vithita Animation, Thairath TV, TrueVisions, TrueMusic, TNN, Tigercrys, Pearypie, Fedfe and Dex



Nuttawut Lertsrimongkol

Channel.

What else are you looking to buy? More variety shows, series and exclusive content.

Subscribers With more than 33 million Line users in Thailand, "we do not want to limit our potential growth by setting the expected download number for Line TV. We would like to do our best to approach anyone who wants to have fun watching a variety of content on Line TV."

Social media "We mainly use our channels, such as the official Line Thailand account and Facebook fanpage, to promote our content and feature our promotional campaigns. Our partners and content providers also help to promote us on their social networking channels."

Challenges "Line TV is trying to differentiate itself from others by providing higher quality full episodes of content (mainly dramas and movies) appealing to local tastes for free. Line TV offers content based on the analysis of local users' tastes from various angles. Also, we're

trying to provide high quality Thai subtitles... besides Thai content, we service and plan to source more full episodes of Korean dramas or reality shows as fast as we can, minimising the gap between real-time window. The goal is to also provide special functions connected with the messaging app Line as a social platform.

We also have a good rapport with content providers, including TV stations, broadcasting channels, and various production companies, who can supply good quality content for us."

Line TV's 2015 priority "Our priority is to continue to provide good, quality content for free, which appeals to Thai users and building good partnerships with content providers."

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U.K. shifts military satellite over Asia *Spare communications capacity to be sold*

Britain is shifting one of its communications satellites over Asia Pacific for the first time to deliver protected and secure communications services. The advanced military satellite, Skynet 5A, should be in position by the middle of this year, the U.K. said at an arms convention in Malaysia this month. The new position means greater ability to support regional humanitarian and peacekeeping operations. As part of a multi-million pound investment, Airbus Defence & Space, which operates the satellite on behalf of the U.K. Government, will also build a ground station in Australia. The U.K.'s Ministry of Defense said the move represented significant export opportunities for the U.K. as any spare communication capacity would be sold.

SpeedCast acquisition *ups energy levels*

Hong Kong-based satellite comms service provider, SpeedCast, has acquired U.K.-based managed network services provider, Hermes Datacommunications International. The acquisition, expected to be complete by 25 March, creates a new "global force" providing communications and IT services – including fibre connectivity and satellite services – to the energy sector. SpeedCast said the acquisition boosted its presence in Southeast Asia, among other spots in the world.

Analytics driving sports engagement, FIC says *Asia fans more social than in Europe, delegates told*

Fox International Channels is diving deeper than ever into sports analytics in Asia, betting its future on the ability of "big data" to deliver more engaging viewer experiences.

Panelists said during a Fox Sports Academy "power of sports analytics" seminar in Singapore this month that cutting-edge next-generation analytics were driving ratings spikes and keeping fans in the room during commercial breaks. No ratings details were immediately available.

FIC production vice president, Sam Leadsom, said content built around sports analytics was the answer to a bigger concern among sports broadcasters.

"We use sports analytics to improve our story telling and that in turn helps us achieve the bigger content challenge, which is to provide engaging content, all day, every day. Now we can produce data and analysis usually associated with digital products onto the big screen," Leadsom said.

He added that data analytics helped increase time spent on the channel, encouraged engagement across multiple screens, and drove perception of channel expertise and insights.

"63% of live race viewers also watch additional supplementary shows that are heavily based on analytics and data," said FIC vice president, ad sales research, Martyn U'ren. These also provide additional commercial opportunities he added.

The missing measurement link should be filled in next year with a new tracking system. Details remain under wraps.



Sam Leadsom, FIC Asia; Jason de la Peña, FIC Asia; Ed Fitzpatrick, Repucom; Martyn U'ren, FIC Asia

Ed Fitzpatrick, Repucom's executive vice president for Asia said the company's data collection helped businesses make more informed decisions about sports and their investments. Often, he said, "all we see is massive increase in rights fees whether on the sponsorship side or the broadcaster's side". Fitzpatrick said sponsors and broadcasters needed to understand how sports "moves the needle for them".

Social media and fan involvement was key, said Accenture Digital's managing director, Malik Bhandari. "Sports audiences in Europe and Asia behave differently on social media. Asia is far more social when it comes to sports," he added.

Jay Kidd, NetApp's senior vice president and CTO, said decisions made based on data and analytics could alter game results. "Sports such as F1 are incredibly competitive... the top 10 can be separated by less than a second", he added.

WHO SAID WHAT...

“ HBO Now offers a new generation of HBO fans many of the best TV programmes in the world without a cable or satellite subscription... Now, with the same simplicity as buying an app, customers can subscribe to HBO Now and instantly start viewing their favourite HBO programmes as they air. This is huge.”

Apple senior vice president, Eddy Cue, on Time Warner's deal for new streaming service, HBO Now, for Apple TV. HBO Now will cost US\$14.99 a month and will be available to anyone with a broadband connection, whether or not they have a traditional pay-TV subscription. The launch date in the U.S. is likely to coincide with the new season of Game of Thrones in April. Last year, HBO chief Richard Plepler said the 10 million U.S. homes that subscribed to broadband but not pay TV was "a large and growing opportunity that should no longer be left untapped". (Deadline.com, 9 March 2015)

“ The involvement of these internet companies has a positive meaning and can promote the film industry, improve the quality and make the Chinese film market bigger... meanwhile, we must regulate the market to create an orderly and fair market. We would like to cooperate with Hollywood and learn from each other. It is healthy competition.”

Luan Guozhi, deputy director of the State Administration of Press, Publication, Radio, Film and Television (SAPPRFT), told a news conference to announce details of next month's Beijing International Film Festival. (The Hollywood Reporter, 18 March 2015)

“ The troubles on *Fashion Police* are just one part of an emerging reassessment of E!'s role as a magnifying glass of celebrity beauty... the backlash has begun, not just against the vacuity of red carpet coverage, but against E!'s role in promulgating it... At its best, *Fashion Police* was a rare thing: a high-profile home for criticism on television... But E! is nothing without its celebrities [and it's reliance on celebrity interviews and goodwill makes the show] part of an untenable setup that one day reveres celebrities on the red carpet and the next day marches them onto a gangplank and pushes them into the water.”

New York Times' Critic's Notebook feature headlined "Without Joan Rivers, Fashion Police is falling apart". The column said that "without Ms Rivers as ballast, the recent episodes felt slightly unhinged, a collection of lightweights punching upward when they weren't busy fawning". The article also said Giuliana Rancic's dual role as newswoman and fashion critic was a "debacle waiting to happen". (15 March 2015)

“ To the extent that this has all gotten very intense and serious — it's meant to be fun... When it stops being fun or if we think that we're offending or crossing a line, absolutely, that's the time to re-evaluate and that's what we're doing, frankly, with things like the mani-cam.”

NBCUniversal Lifestyle Networks Group president, Frances Berwick, during the controversy over E!'s red carpet programming ... E! has put Fashion Police on hiatus after Kelly Osborne quit, followed by Joan Rivers replacement Kathy Griffin, who exited after seven episodes. Griffin said the show had "a culture of unattainable perfection and intolerance toward difference" and called it a formulaic "dog pile" on The View.

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Published fortnightly by:

Pencil Media Pte Ltd

730A Geylang Road

Singapore 389641

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contentasia.tv

asiacontentwatch.com

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MICA (P) 111/06/2013