

Sony Pics restructures Asia Networks ops *Asian, English content teams merged*

Sony Pictures Television Networks has restructured its Asia operation, consolidating Asian and English-language content portfolios and trimming the Singapore-based team by a rumoured seven more people.

News of the layoffs filtered out on Thursday, just before the May Day long-weekend.

SPT Networks has not confirmed numbers, but says roles were eliminated as part of the re-org and a small percentage of employees were affected.

The latest layoffs follow the exit earlier in April of English-language programming vice president, Yan-Jong Wong, after 15 years. Also out is Chih Yeong Voo, vice president, business operations and development.

Asian content vice president, Virginia Lim, has taken over the content and marketing portfolio as vice president.

The restructure comes ahead of SPT's launch of new Asian general entertainment channel, Gem Asia, with Japan's Nippon Television Network Corporation.

The new channel – Nippon TV's first out-

Story on page 8

OTT, streaming top APOS conversations *Content comes first, industry leaders say*

Industry heads gathered in Bali for this year's Asia Pacific Video Operators Summit (APOS). Here's some of what they said.

See pages 10-16

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\$30m more drives ifix SE Asia growth

Philippines' PLDT backs regional OTT

Southeast Asia's new regional streaming platform ifix has completed a US\$30 million round of funding and said at the end of April that it was "primed for growth".

The round was led by international investment firm, Catcha Group, and Philippine Long Distance Telephone Company (PLDT).

The company says the money will be used to continue to roll out ifix, acquire rights to new content, produce original programming and marketing.

ifix says it is targetting Southeast Asia's 600 million consumers, 240 million of whom are currently internet users.

The platform is planning launches in Malaysia, Thailand, Philippines, Indonesia and Vietnam this year, offering more than 10,000 hours of U.S., Asian regional and local TV shows and movies.

Each subscription will allow a user to access the service on five devices, as well as download content to their mobile, tablet, computer, or television set, for viewing anywhere, anytime.

Pricing has not yet been disclosed. ifix co-founder/chief executive, Mark Britt, told *ContentAsia* that the idea was "a low price point that will be impossible to say no to" (*ContentAsia*, 20 April 2015).

Content partners have not been confirmed. ifix says it is working with more than 30 Hollywood, Asian and local distributors.



G.O.D.

Korean entertainment and media giant iHQ has opened its Southeast Asia headquarters in Singapore, pushing TV, movie and music sales and talent management services in the region for the first time.

The new operation is headed by managing director Jung So-In.

iHQ, listed on Korea's Stock Exchange, represents artists such as G.O.D., Jang Hyuk and Kim Woo-Bin, as well as TV titles from its production unit.

Drama productions include *A Deep Rooted Tree* for SBS; *Pinocchio*, starring Lee Jongseok and Park Sinhye, for free-TV broadcaster SBS; *Iron Man*, starring



A Deep Rooted Tree

Korea's iHQ opens Southeast Asia office
New operation to rep TV, movies, music & artist management

Lee Dong-Wook, for KBS2; and *Cha*, starring Kim Boyeon and Oh Gwangrok, for MBC.

Through its merger in Korea with CU Media, the company also has access to about six cable channels, including AXN, Dramax, Comedy TV and Y-Star.

Jung says iHQ's goal is strategic alliances across the region to co-create, promote and distribute entertainment content.

The Southeast Asia office is iHQ's fourth international operation after China, Japan and the United States.

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Fox Sports extends UFC

Fox International Channels' Fox Sports and mixed martial arts organisation UFC have extended their multi-platform broadcast rights deal. The regional deal excludes the Philippines, South Korea and Taiwan.

Marsh tapped to head WWE Asia Pacific

Former Disney exec Chris Marsh has joined WWE as general manager, Asia Pacific, reporting to Ed Wells, senior vice president/managing director, international. Marsh spent more than 10 years with Walt Disney Studios, most recently as GM for the Southeast Asia division. He has also worked for Warner Bros, Lucasfilm and Turner.



Chris Marsh

Youku Tudou, DJI tie up on aerial platform

Chinese online platform Youku Tudou and mainland tech company DJI have tied up on an online aerial videography platform. New video shot with DJI's drone and other aerial cameras will be released on a dedicated DJI channel on Youku Tudou. The channel will also feature new launches and reviews.

Celestial Tiger seals five new carriage deals

Celestial Tiger Entertainment (CTE) has signed five new carriage deals across Asia.

The deals include CTE's first entry into Papua New Guinea (Click TV) and Sri Lanka (Dialog Television), a prime-time

programme block in Vietnam (Yan Media Group), and additional carriage agreements in Indonesia (Dens.TV) and the Philippines (Olé TV).

The deals cover Celestial Movies, Celestial Classic Movies, Kix and Thrill.

BARC puts Star Plus, Sony Max in top spots World's biggest audience measurement system hailed

India's high-profile BARC (Broadcast Audience Research Council) measurement system has unveiled its first results, putting Sony Max in top spot among all channels across all India for the week ended 24 April.

Star India's Star Plus, which topped the Hindi general entertainment channels list, was second in the all channels list, followed in third spot by Hindi GE channel Colors. Sony Entertainment Television limped in at eighth place.

Colors was at number one among Hindi entertainment channels during prime time, followed by Star Plus and Zee TV.

The top three English-language entertainment channels for the week in six mega cities were Comedy Central, Zee Cafe and Sony Pictures Television's AXN.

The top three English-language news channels across the same six mega-cities for the week were Times Now, NDTV 24x7, and Headlines Today.

Nickelodeon topped the kids category across all India for the same week, followed by Turner's Pogo in second spot and Cartoon Network in third.

Discovery leads the infotainment pack, followed by National Geographic and Animal Planet.

Ahead by a long way in the business news category was CNBC TV18, followed by ET Now and Bloomberg TV.

The new platform in this market of 160+million television homes was hailed for its breadth and transparency.

Calling the service the "world's largest and future-ready television audience measurement" platform, BARC said the system was "a brilliant example of Unity in Diversity that Indian media, marketing and advertising industry has achieved". The BARC platform took two years to develop. The first results were released at the end of April.

Initially, BARC India will release data for 1 lac+ C&S markets. This corresponds to a sample size of 10,760 households. BARC says it will actually measure 12,000 homes in phase one, increasing to 20,000. 300 channels are included.

The data roll out follows the launch of SpotTrek, which monitors about 360 channels and tracks commercial spots and movie trailers on TV.

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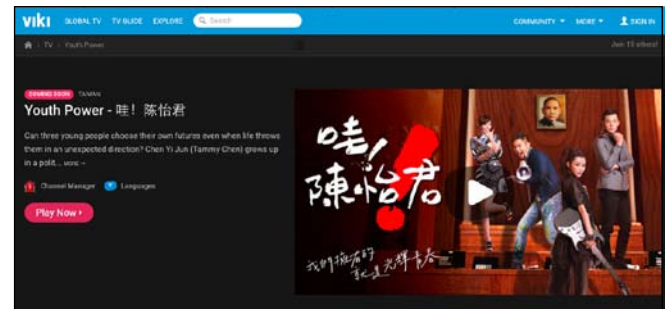
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Viki picks up pace on Taiwan *2-hour window on new political drama*



Youth Power

Global streaming site Viki has picked up exclusive U.S./Americas rights for Taiwanese political drama *Youth Power*.

The acquisition from TVBS in Taiwan rides a growing global trend that offers a wider range of content to general audiences rather than focusing on niche expatriate viewers.

The 21-episode *Youth Power* – aired in Taiwan as *Wow! Chen Yijun* – will be available on Viki every week two hours after it airs in Taiwan. New episodes premiere in Taiwan on Fridays at 10pm.

The series, which received a NT\$40 million/US\$1.3 million drama subsidy from Taiwan's Ministry of Culture, is part of Viki's rising focus on Taiwanese drama.

Sara Jen, Viki's vice president of content partnerships and general manager of Viki Greater China, said the fan-based language customisation facility was "opening up a global audience for Taiwanese shows".

Directed by Chou Mei Ling, *Youth Power* stars Tammy Chen as the daughter of a political family determined to pursue her passion for music... until she meets rising political star Jiang Ye Qing, played by Yao Yuan Hao.

In the past year, 18% of content added to Viki.com was from Taiwan; almost 30% was from Korea.

In February 2015, Viki significantly upped its Taiwan profile, adding almost 900 hours of Taiwanese entertainment to its online video platform.

The deal with six major Taiwanese broadcasters included exclusive first-window streaming in the U.S. and Americas of shows such as *Angel 'n' Devil* from Gala Television (GTV), *The New World* from Taiwan Television (TTV) and *Rose Battle* from TVBS.

The other three broadcasters supplying content are Sanlih E-Television, Next TV, and CTI TV.

Five of Viki's top 10 mobile countries are from Asia, including Indonesia (second), Malaysia (third), Philippines (fourth), Singapore (sixth) and Thailand (seventh), according to stats released last year.

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ABS-CBN cancels *Forevermore* concert

Hit drama transforms village, environmental concerns rise



Erich Gonzales in a special appearance as Alex on *Forevermore*

Philippines's broadcaster ABS-CBN has cancelled its *Forevermore* thanksgiving concert "following some environmental concerns raised regarding the event's venue".

The concert was due to take place on 10 May in Sitio Pungayan, which was the inspiration for the series fictional straw-

berry farm Sitio La Presa. The prime-time drama transformed the village near the summit of Mount Cabuyao into a tourist destination.

Local media say citizen groups are concerned about the increased traffic and its impact on the environment.

2 new Asia pick-ups for U.S. comedy

PT Television (Indonesia) and AXN South-east Asia have picked up rights to comedy show, *Top 20 Funniest*, for the first time from Alfred Haber Distribution. Long-time buyer, Philippines' free-TV network GMA, renewed licensing deals for the show, which has been renewed for its third

season by truTV and starts airing in the U.S. this month.



Top 20 Funniest

From page 1: Sony

side of Japan – is part of an ongoing swing towards Asian content across the region. SPT already operates the hugely successful Korean channel One.

Gem Asia targets Southeast Asia and Hong Kong and will be operated separately from the existing Gem Vietnam channel, which will continue to be wholly owned by SPT Networks.

The new regional pay-TV channel will feature first-run and exclusive dramas, comedies and variety entertainment shows from Japan and other North Asian territories, and will have exclusive access to more than 500 hours a year of Nippon TV content. SPT Networks will be responsible for distribution and advertising sales.

The deal is subject to regulatory approval.



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Who was at... this year's Asia Pacific Video Operators Summit (APOS)



CK Lee, Henry Tan, Astro Malaysia



Attaphon Na Bangxang, Naratip (Nuke) Wairatpanij, TrueVisions



Handhi Kentjono, MNC; Lee Mee Fung, DW

Disney's opening party



Ben Pyne, Disney



Adam Chesnoff, Saban Capital; Rob Gilby, Disney; Russell Wolff, ESPN; Uday Shankar, Star India

HBO Asia's closing party



Tan Tong Hai, StarHub; Jonathan Spink, HBO Asia



Jacelyn Kek, HBO Asia; Rudy Tanoesoedibjo, Indovision



Tham Loke Kheng, PCCW; Avi Himatsinghani, Rewind Networks



Julian Lim, HBO Asia; Azwan Khan, Dialog Axiata



Veronica Lai, StarHub; Gan Ling Sze, Sony Pictures Entertainment Networks

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Fox Party



Hernan Lopez, Fox International Channels (FIC)



Ernie Deviana, Topas TV Indonesia



Lee Chu Yong, Amanda Loo, Astro Malaysia

Who said what... at APOS 2015



Vivek Couto, Media Partners Asia (left) with James Murdoch, 21st Century Fox

“Build an audience first,” Murdoch tells delegates

21st Century Fox's co-chief operating officer, James Murdoch, has described opportunity in India as "staggering" and told delegates at the Asia Pacific Video Operators' Summit 2015 (APOS) in Bali that the company's India business would be worth US\$1 billion by the end of the decade.

Star India's new OTT platform, Hotstar, had 15 million downloads in the first two months. Murdoch described Hotstar, which is designed for lower bandwidth environments, as "a very useful, attractive additional way for people to consume programming". So far, he added, there is no sign of cannibalisation of existing pay-TV services.

Outlining the thinking behind Hotstar, Murdoch said the aim was to "build an audience before we get to the revenue part... We produce 14,000 hours a year of Indian programming and we own pretty

much all the rights and we thought we should just make this available to customers in a new way".

"We thought 'our programming is good, it appeals to many generations and we should just get on with it and build an audience'," he said, highlighting India's "explosive growth" in mobile broadband and the "enormous number" of smartphones being sold.

Hotstar is being offered free in a market where "infrastructure bottlenecks make it hard". Murdoch said making the service free was designed to remove any possible additional "friction" in the mobile experience.

"One of the problems with mobile broadband is that the data tariffs are not fit for the modern consumption of video," he said, adding that consumers were con-

More on page 12: APOS

“ We use big data, small data... we are a very data focused company. But let us not become data monkeys.



Data helps you understand the patterns but the creative leap is where the individual comes in. I don't think it's possible to automate the next story that will be a big hit.”

Uday Shankar, Chief Executive, Star India

“ We have gone into Japanese content, into Asian documentaries... [these are] all niches that no one else is satisfying. There's the danger when factual gets



into the realm of general entertainment, into reality. We have some concerns about that. A lot of Asians want to hear stories about themselves. There is a greater interest in where they come from. We see a gap there and we see an opportunity, which is why we did [factual channel] Spark Asia.”

Henry Tan, Chief Operating Officer, Astro

From page 11: APOS

scious of data tariffs.

“That is the reality. We figured that if we put too much friction for the customer to download, it would be a real problem...,” he said.

“The authentication pathways for delivering great differentiated digital experiences are really hard for customers and we need to get way better than that... the reason Netflix is growing so fast is that it's so easy to sign up and use. We need to work with our partners to make the experience frictionless,” he added.

Hotstar may introduce a subscription but “we haven't decided when or what”, Murdoch said. An advertising platform is currently being built that was “highly localised and targeted... A lot of advertisers in India today are only able to advertise on radio or local vernacular press,” he said.

Speaking about Fox's sports business, Murdoch outlined a 10-15 year time frame and called sports “a new pillar” and “something that is tremendously valuable”.

He also highlighted the value of original content, saying “we see an enormous response from customers when we innovate and put great stuff on screen”.

Asia presented “more and more opportunity to invest in local programming”, including extending movie and drama production in Taiwan and Japan. “These are things that will continue to grow for us,” he said.

He also emphasised the long-term commitment to “our partners who are the creators and artists who make programming”. Murdoch added that “we want to make sure that we are the best buyer of their programming...”.

Fox's approach to Asia depended on the market. “What we try to do is work with key partners in every market we can. Lots of Southeast Asian markets have a very dominant platform in place and that's

a different relationship than when there are four or five very competitive platforms who are going to be innovating in a different way,” he said.

“When we look at our global business, it's really not about doing the same thing everywhere. There are a few markets in the world where we invest very heavily and go very deep, India is definitely one. It's not a cookie cutter approach and it will differ everywhere,” he said.

“Generally speaking, we like the wholesale business, we like being able to partner with a large customer-facing organisation that can package us with others to get the widest reach,” he added.

“One thing that we are sure of though is that people are paying for audio visual entertainment. All of that is pay television and we see that universe growing very dramatically across Asian markets.

Murdoch said the 21CF business would continue to be “dominated financially for a while by selling programming in packages to MVPDs [multichannel video programming distributors]”.

At the same time, “we see rapid growth and change in the digital video advertising space as the industry moves away from DVRs and local storage to IP to streaming... the ad model will emerge to monetise in a new way,” he said.

“I think the wholesaling to MPVDs will continue to be strong for a while, but it is certainly evolving and the new pay-TV retailers that are emerging are changing that landscape and in a positive way. The barriers are coming down and that creates a lot of demand for a lot of great programming and also for great brands,” he said.

More in ContentAsia's June print/online issue, published for CommunicAsia & BroadcastAsia in Singapore

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MNC Indovision channel winners (from left): Ricky Ow, Turner; Rob Gilby, Disney; Ella Kartika, MNC; Rudy Tanoesoedibjo, MNC/Indovision; Joon Lee, Fox International Channels; Jonathan Spink, HBO Asia; Todd Miller, Celestial Tiger Entertainment



Rob Gilby, Disney; Rudy Tanoesoedibjo, MNC/Indovision; Jonathan Spink, HBO Asia



Ricky Ow, Turner; Adam Chesnoff, Saban; Todd Miller, Celestial Tiger



Ling-Sze Gan, Sony Pictures TV Networks; Yoko Takashima, Nippon TV



Ann Chan, Li TV; Tan Tong Hai, StarHub



MNC Dinner



Naveen Chandra, Times Television Network; Peter Limbourg, Deutsche Welle (DW)



Michele Schofield, A+E Networks; Patrick Hurr, Sparks Asia; Kim Loh, Moving Visuals



Jarrod Lopez, Measat



Henry Tan, Astro



Otgonchimeg Byuanjargal, DishTV Mongolia



Petra Schneider, DW



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Celestial Tiger Entertainment's APOS "energy recharge" session



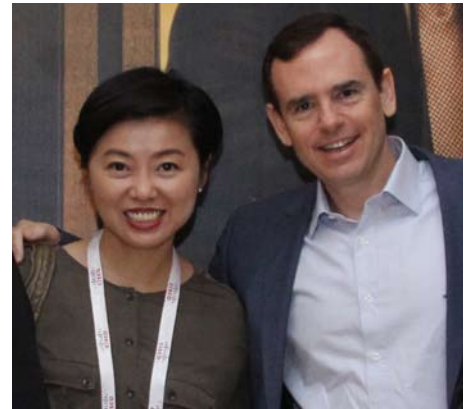
Karen Lee, Singtel; Lim Shu Fen, Veronica Lai, StarHub; Sandie Lee, Rewind Networks; Tan Ying Zh, Aileen Joseph, StarHub



Ofanny Choi, Celestial Tiger Entertainment; Janice Lee, PCCW Now TV Hong Kong



Mickey Ong, Celestial Tiger Entertainment; Zihar Zuhair, Dialog TV Sri Lanka



Cora Yim, Fox International Channels; Todd Miller, Celestial Tiger Entertainment



Andy Chang, Celestial Tiger Entertainment; Vilia Chia, HBO Asia



Timothy Bautista, Cable Boss Philippines



Jannie Poon, 21st Century Fox

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Zubin Gandevia, Fox International Channels; Rudy Tanoesoedibjo, MNC; Alan Hodges, A+E Networks; Edward Lee, Skynindo CSTV



Nguyen Hanh, QNet; Theresa Ong, Discovery; Jaja Suarez, SkyCable Philippines



Vilia Chia, HBO Asia; Carolyn So, Rewind Networks; Reagan Chan, Media Partners Asia



Ray Montinola, SkyCable



Lin Shu Fen, StarHub



Gregg Creevey, Multi Channels Asia (MCA); Anshuman Misra, Bright Lights Media; Billy Kelly, MCA



Khim Loh, Moving Visuals; Magdalene Ng, Discovery



William Lee, Digital Pathfinder; Indra Suharjono; Daryl Kho, Viacom International Media Networks

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New China force sweeps through HK's TVB

Li Ruigang on OTT, smart TV, co-production pain, regulations and creativity

Hong Kong's dominant free-TV broadcaster, Television Broadcasts Ltd (TVB), looks north in a much bigger way from about now with new mainland money and a fresh investor voice driving a more creative programming agenda, a push to be ahead of both content and delivery trends, and a shove into next-generation services targeting younger audiences.

The addition of CMC Capital Partners' founding chairman Li Ruigang – often called China's Rupert Murdoch – to the group of "young lions" that indirectly holds 26% of TVB, gives the 48-year-old broadcaster its first significant mainland investment.

Li, also chairman of the Shanghai Media Group (SMG), is part of a new era for TVB, which he describes as "too conservative" and behind the curve in serving younger audiences. At the same time, he told delegates at the Asia Pacific Video Operators Summit (APOS) in Bali (22-24 April) that TVB content had become a "basic element" in content packages across platforms serving Chinese-speaking audiences. "Everyone, no matter what platform, wants TVB content," he said.

Li said TVB had not had enough external input into content production, and that this failure to learn from outside markets "was typical in closed in-house production. The good thing is that you can own all the IP. But the bad thing is that creativity is limited. That's what we will try to figure out".

Hong Kong's Communications Authority approved TVB's new shareholding structure during the week of APOS. TVB board chairman Charles Chan said Li's "insights and network in broadcasting

and media-related industries will further enrich and expand TVB's core business in Chinese language content" and "further develop our film business". TVB relaunched its Shaw Brothers movie brand in March this year. Li's new relationship with TVB also coincides with the broadcaster's turbo charged over-the-top (OTT) efforts, announced during Hong Kong Filmmart in March. The new platform launches in 2016.

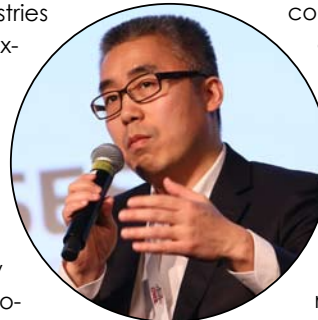
TVB, Li said, "is not the future" for young people. "TVB has to think about how to upgrade, how to change their mindset to create content to target the new audience," he added.

"The next generation of distribution will definitely be online and mobile," Li said in Bali, adding that he believed "the pay model that did not happen in cable in China will happen in OTT". His belief in OTT drove last year's merger between Shanghai Oriental Pearl and SMG's BesTV. Li also said SMG "should quickly go for OTT services or get stuck as a content provider".

Li's hardware play involves a to-be-announced smart TV set targeting young couples. Details remain under wraps.

"We have strong experience in understanding the user experience and how to aggregate content. This year we are trying to be more aggressive," he said.

Li said new regulations introducing online censorship and foreign content quotas in China were primarily driven by a government committed to looking after local interests. "People think it's a Chinese



Li Ruigang

company trying to block politically sensitive content. Yes and no. There is sometimes sensitive content on Chinese online services, but not too much. The most important thing behind the regulation decision-making is that the government is trying to promote local content and production," he said.

Right now, he said China lacked "a sustainable content creation model, in terms of qualitative story telling, creativity is lacking," he said adding that "we need some patience... there is market demand". A documentary film-maker at heart, Li mentioned food-based factual series, *A Bite of China* (2012), as one of the productions setting new quality bars.

Co-production is not necessarily a silver bullet. "My experience is that co-production is quite painful," he said, mentioning his Oriental Dreamworks JV. He said approvals for movies, especially sequel movies such as *Kung Fu Panda 3*, were "really hard" because the government "will ask you where the original idea came from... the story, the talent, the distribution, revenue share, everything". The Chinese government, he added, "has become smarter and smarter to find out if you are faking or not."

Case-by-case co-productions were easier. "If you try to set up a sustainable model to continue to co-produce, it is very hard because you have to comply with both sides' demands," he said. This included censorship demands from China's government. "And on the other side, you tailor to international audience tastes. How do you balance both sides?"

#whatsyourstory



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.

The Last Cop

Japanese broadcaster Nippon Television Network Corporation will air its first localised drama format, *The Last Cop*, in early summer this year.

The Japanese version is the first Asian adaptation of the German crime drama series produced by ITV Studios in association with Red Arrow International.

The Last Cop in Japan is slated to air on Nippon TV's over-the-top (OTT) platform, Hulu Japan. The series will also air on Nippon TV's free-TV terrestrial network in a prime-time slot. The free-TV slot will be announced in the second half of May.

The original story line follows a detective who wakes up after a 20-year coma and returns to his job in homicide. Past and present collide on professional and personal levels as he picks up the pieces of his life and tries to make sense of a world that has moved on.

In the Japanese version, the leading character Kyogoku, played by Toshiaki Karasawa (*20th Century Boys*) stayed in a coma for 30 years because in Japan 30 years is the ideal "time lag to describe the difference between the current lifestyle and the past", says Hiroyuki Ueno, Nippon TV's producer and programming manager.

Ueno also says that the Japanese version emphasised more strongly the



The Last Cop



Hiroyuki Ueno

bond between Kyogoku and his timid sidekick Ryota (Masataka Kubota) compared to the original version. Emi Wakui plays Kyogaku's wife Kanako, who is now married to his junior Suzuki (Ichirota Miyakawa), who their daughter, Yui (Nozomi Sasaki), thinks is her real father.

Production in Japan involved a team of five from Nippon TV and Hulu Japan and took one year to complete.

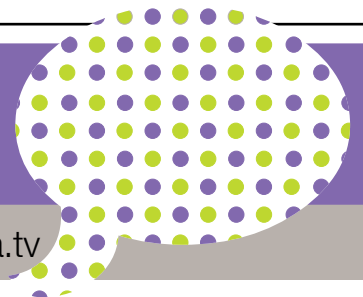
"There are a lot of people involved in this production... considering our programming strategy and performers' schedules, we took most of the time in putting our efforts in accommodating the perfect time and date for our

broadcast," says Ueno.

The aim is to "earn good enough rating for a terrestrial prime-time slot on Nippon TV" and another is to stimulate OTT subscriptions, added Ueno.

Nippon TV and HJ Holdings (Hulu in Japan) co-own the Japanese format, keeping all rights, including distribution rights to Asian territories. Red Arrow International holds distribution rights elsewhere.

HJ Holdings' chief content officer Kazufumi Nagasawa said the platform would be upping international content alongside its fledgling original slate, and would also be "collaborating with the terrestrial broadcast business to maximise each show's value".



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

History

Day/Time SGT	Monday, 9 March	Tuesday, 10 March	Wednesday, 11 March	Thursday, 12 March	Friday, 13 March	Saturday, 14 March	Sunday, 15 March
7pm	The Pickers S6 Ep115: Pick Or Treat (115)	The Pickers S6 Ep116: Lead Of A Lifetime	The Pickers S6 Ep117: Pam's Labyrinth	The Pickers S6 Ep118: The Einstein Gamble	The Pickers S6 Ep119: KISS And Sell	Vikings S3 Ep4: Scarred	10 Things You Don't Know About S3 Ep8: The Hoover Dam
8pm	Storage Wars: Texas S2 Ep22: No Stash, Moe's Stache	Storage Wars: Texas S2 Ep23: Out Of Af-Ricky	Storage Wars Texas S2 Ep24: Bubbapocalypse Now	Storage Wars Texas S2 Ep25: Night Of The Pondering Dead	Storage Wars Texas S2 Ep26: Jenny Bears All	Ancient Aliens S7 Ep83: The Genius Factor	Storage Wars Canada Ep19: Com-Paul-Sive Behaviour
8.30pm	Storage Wars: Canada Ep21: Cold Turkeys	Storage Wars: Canada Ep22: Worst Best Man Ever	Storage Wars Canada Ep23: The Lame, The Sick, And The Crazy	Storage Wars Canada Ep24: Crate Expectations	Storage Wars Canada Ep25: A Bad Day To Be Bogart		Storage Wars Canada Ep20: Psychic Psych Out
9pm	Pawn Stars S14 Ep301: Spruce Goose	Storage Wars S5 Ep99: Total Wine Domination	The Pickers S6 Ep124: Backroad Barnstorming	10 Things You Don't Know About S3 Ep8: The Hoover Dam	Vikings S3 Ep3: Warrior's Fate	Pawn Stars S14 Ep301: Spruce Goose	Storage Wars S5 Ep99: Total Wine Domination
9.30pm	Pawn Stars S14 Ep302: All In	Storage Wars S5 Ep100: The Storage Buyer In You				Pawn Stars S14 Ep302: All In	Storage Wars S5 Ep100: The Storage Buyer In You
10pm	Pawn Stars U.K. S2 Ep13: Waterloo Sash	Storage Wars Canada Ep19: Com-Paul-Sive Behaviour	Ancient Aliens S7: The Genius Factor	Appalachian Outlaws S1 Ep3: You Have Been Warned	Vikings S3 Ep4: Scarred	The Pickers S6 Ep124: Backroad Barnstorming	Vikings S3 Ep4: Scarred
10.30pm	Pawn Stars U.K. S2 Ep14: Elvis & Bond	Storage Wars Canada Ep20: Psychic Psych Out					
11pm	Ghost Planes & The Mysteries Of Flight 370	Pawn Stars U.K. S2 Ep13: Waterloo Sash	The Curse Of Oak Island S2 Ep5: The 90-Foot Stone	Pawn Stars S14 Ep301: Spruce Goose	Ancient Aliens S7 Ep83: The Genius Factor	Counting Cars S3 Ep55: Heavy Metal	The Curse Of Oak Island S2 Ep5: The 90-Foot Stone
11.30pm		Pawn Stars U.K. S2 Ep14: Elvis & Bond		Pawn Stars S14 Ep302: All In		Counting Cars S3 Ep56: Power And Glory	
12am							

- Character-led reality: 14hrs/40%
- Competition: 9hrs/26%
- Drama: 4hrs/11%
- Mythological/supernatural: 3hrs/9%
- People: 2hrs/6%
- Nature/disasters: 1hr/3%
- Business/jobs: 1hr/3%
- Automobile: 1hrs/2%

Day/Time SGT	Monday, 6 April	Tuesday, 7 April	Wednesday, 8 April	Thursday, 9 April	Friday, 10 April	Saturday, 11 April	Sunday, 12 April
7pm	The Pickers S5 Ep90: California Streaming	The Pickers S5 Ep87: The Million Dollar Mistake	The Pickers S5 Ep88: Haunted Honeyhole	The Pickers S5 Ep89: Ladies Know Best	The Pickers S6 Ep95: Deuce Digging	Vikings S3 Ep8	Kings Of Restoration S7 Ep115: Back To Four Square
7.30pm							Kings Of Restoration S7 Ep114: Un-Kniev-Able
8pm	Storage Wars S5 Ep87: A Time To Kill	Storage Wars S5 Ep88: Like A Kung Pao Cowboy	Storage Wars S5 Ep89: Oysters On The Half Plate	Storage Wars S5 Ep90: Old Tricks, New Treats	Storage Wars S5 Ep91: Orange You Glad Dan Sold It Again?	Angland Undercover Ep4	Storage Wars Canada Ep29: Giddy Up
8.30pm	Storage Wars Canada Ep5: It's Like Archaeology, You Dig?	Storage Wars Canada Ep6: Ain't No Locker Like A Birthday Locker	Storage Wars Canada Ep7: Wanna Smell My Hair?	Storage Wars Canada Ep8: Fashion Passion	Storage Wars Canada Ep9: Taunted, Haunted, And Most Wanted		Storage Wars Canada Ep30: Li'l Roy
9pm	Pawn Stars S14 Ep309: Daddy's Girl	Storage Wars S6 Ep105: Flight Of The Gambler	The Pickers S6 Ep114: Cammy Camaro	Swamp People S6 Ep4: Bounty On The Bayou	Vikings S3 Ep7	Pawn Stars S14 Ep309: Daddy's Girl	Storage Wars S6 Ep105: Flight Of The Gambler
9.30pm	Pawn Stars S14 Ep310: Dam Good Time	Storage Wars S6 Ep106: The Hills Have Buys				Pawn Stars S14 Ep310: Dam Good Time	Storage Wars S6 Ep106: The Hills Have Buys
10pm	Alaska Off-Road Warriors Ep3: Fallen Warrior	Storage Wars Canada Ep29: Giddy Up	Ancient Aliens S6 Ep75: Aliens & Superheroes	Appalachian Outlaws S2 Ep1: Root Awakening	Vikings S3 Ep8	The Pickers S6 Ep114: Cammy Camaro	Vikings S3 Ep8
10.30pm		Storage Wars Canada Ep30: Li'l Roy					
11pm	Pawn Stars U.K. S2 Ep5: Kray Twins Teeth	Alaska Off-Road Warriors Ep3: Fallen Warrior	The Curse Of Oak Island S2 Ep9: A Dangerous Dive	Pawn Stars S14 Ep309: Daddy's Girl	Angland Undercover Ep4	Appalachian Outlaws S2 Ep1: Root Awakening	Angland Undercover Ep8
11.30pm	Pawn Stars U.K. S2 Ep6: The Amphibious Vehicle & The Hat			Pawn Stars S14 Ep310: Dam Good Time			
12am							

- Character-led reality: 14hrs/40%
- Competition: 11hrs/31%
- Drama: 7hrs/20%
- Business/jobs: 2hr/6%
- Mythological/supernatural: 1hr/3%

Source: History, as of 2 March 2015

2014 was a big year for History. Last year, the A+E Networks channel was the top factual entertainment service in Singapore; topped the Learning Pack on Astro in Malaysia; was the leading factual entertainment channel on Thailand's True-Visions; and was the top factual entertainment channel among the Philippines' middle classes. [Source: Kantar Media

(Singapore, Urban Philippines); Nielsen (Malaysia, Thailand True Panel); average viewership, 1800-2400, audience: PH (P25-54 ABC1); SG/MY/TH (P15+); viewers from pay-TV households].

The Bible helped, driving ratings in Singapore (History's highest rated show in 2014), Thailand (beat competitors in premiere timeslot) and the Philippines (+70%

above channel average) in October/November. But there were others, including Vikings (top show of all international factual entertainment channels in Singapore/Thailand) and The World Wars (History's best rated series in urban Philippines in 2014; prime-time channel average up 130% in Malaysia).

More on page 19



Pawn Stars

From page 18: Schedules

Joyce Lim, A+E Networks' senior director, content, factual channels, says A+E invested heavily last year in docu-dramas/TV events. And this continues in 2015 with *Vikings* season three (Fridays, 10pm), *Gangland Undercover* (Fridays, 11pm), and *Sons of Liberty* (May).

Vikings season two was, if anything, the biggest surprise in Asia, changing History programmers' perception of what's possible in the region on a Friday night. Season two premiered on the same day as the U.S., making the Friday slot unavoidable. Lim says Friday night audiences "are traditionally not very high". The third season premiere of *Vikings*, also on a Friday (27 February), put History channel ahead of all English pay-TV channels in Singapore (Kantar Media) and Malaysia (Nielsen). The 10-part show aired Fridays (two episodes), with encores on Saturdays at 7pm and Sundays at 10pm.

If big-budget sexy docu-drama hogs headlines, competition series *Storage Wars* and character-driven reality such as *Pawn Stars* were the workhorses of History's prime-time schedule in the week of 9-15 March. *Storage Wars* aired in 41% of the 7pm to midnight band.

History's strongest viewership in Asia is from 8pm to midnight. *The Pickers*, stripped across weekdays from 7pm (6-12 April), leads into various versions of *Storage Wars*, including *Storage Wars Texas* (8pm-8.30pm, April) stripped Mondays to Fridays, followed by *Storage Wars Canada*, also stripped Mondays to Fridays, with marathons on Sundays from 8pm-10pm. The schedule was pretty much the same in May, with the addition of *Storage Wars: New York* (4-10 May).

History isn't necessarily going for day-and-date releases on all titles, although windows are being shortened. For instance, season one of *Curse of Oak Island* aired in the U.S. in January 2014 and five months later in Asia. Season one was, despite the time lag, the top programme among factual entertainment channels in Singapore, Thailand (international factual entertainment channels) and Malaysia (Astro's Learning Pack). The window was shorter on season two; the Asia premiere was on 11 February 2015, a month after the U.S. Season two performed at more than 170% above channel prime-time average in Singapore (Kantar Media) and

more than 40% above channel prime time average in Malaysia (Nielsen).

"We are also ramping up on our local production with returning series *Ride n' Seek* and others," Lim says.

Last year's original slate included first local photography competition series *Photo Face-Off*, which rated more than 200% above channel prime-time average in Malaysia. Season one, produced by FremantleMedia Asia, ran on Tuesday nights from 23 September 2014 to 28 October 2014. The series won its timeslot in Singapore, Malaysia and Thailand (Source: Nielsen Malaysia/Thailand; Kantar Singapore, Period: 23 Sep - 28 Oct 2014, Tuesdays, 10.30pm).

A+E Networks Asia has greenlit a second season of *Photo Face-Off*. The show, expanded to one-hour episodes from last season's half-hours, will air on History later this year. Season two is being produced by Singapore-based Beach House Pictures, which has just completed Asia's *Next Top Model* for Fox International Channels' Star World.

A version of this schedule analysis appeared in Content Asia Factual 2015, available [here](#)



Joyce Lim

In *ContentAsia's* regular section on up-and-coming online platforms in Asia, *Malena Amzah* speaks to Kasidit Kolasastraseni, chief executive officer of Thailand's two-month old over-the-top (OTT) television service PrimeTime.

What is PrimeTime? PrimeTime is an OTT TV service, offering on-demand streaming of international and Thai TV series and movies, geo-blocked for users in Thailand. Available on internet-connected devices, including smart TV, iOS/Android and PC/Mac

Launched on 19 February 2015 by PrimeTime Entertainment

Who's who... Kasidit Kolasastraseni, chief executive officer; Nicha Suebwonglee, chief content officer; Phattaworn Phongphaew, chief product officer; Isara Amatayakul, chief technology officer

The offering 300 movies and more than 20 TV series in three packages: 1) Premier Movies/TV series: Hollywood movies (three/four months after Thai/global theatrical releases), including *Big Hero 6*, *Theory of Everything* and *Boyhood*, and Thailand TV series/movies not shown in local theatres or cable TV, such as TV series *Black Sails* and *Power*, and movie *Annie*; 2) Movie Buffet: unlimited access to movies older than four years, including franchises such as *Harry Potter*, *Lord of the Rings*, indie movies such as *Magnolia* and classics such as *The Godfather*; 3) TV Series Buffet: whole seasons of Hollywood series such as *American Horror Story*, *Modern Family*, *Criminal Minds*, *Grey's Anatomy*, *Scandal* and *Once Upon a Time*.

Packages/rates Four packages: 1) Movie Buffet – THB199/US\$6 for 30 days unlimited access; 2) Premier Movie+Movie Buffet – THB299/US\$9 for 30 days unlimited access to movies in the Movie Buffet list and two premier movie rental tickets (must watch within 48 hours); 3) TV Series Buffet – THB299/US\$9 for 30 days unlimited access to TV series; and 4) Combo package for THB549/US\$17 for 30 days (or THB399/US\$12 for 30 days if purchased for 360 days) for all three options

New titles added monthly At least 50 movies in the Movie Buffet package and 20 movies in the Premier Movie plan, and at least 200 hours of TV series in the TV Series Buffet package

Acquisitions Expects to acquire more than 5,000 hours of movies and TV series in 2015, with strong focus on 4K content

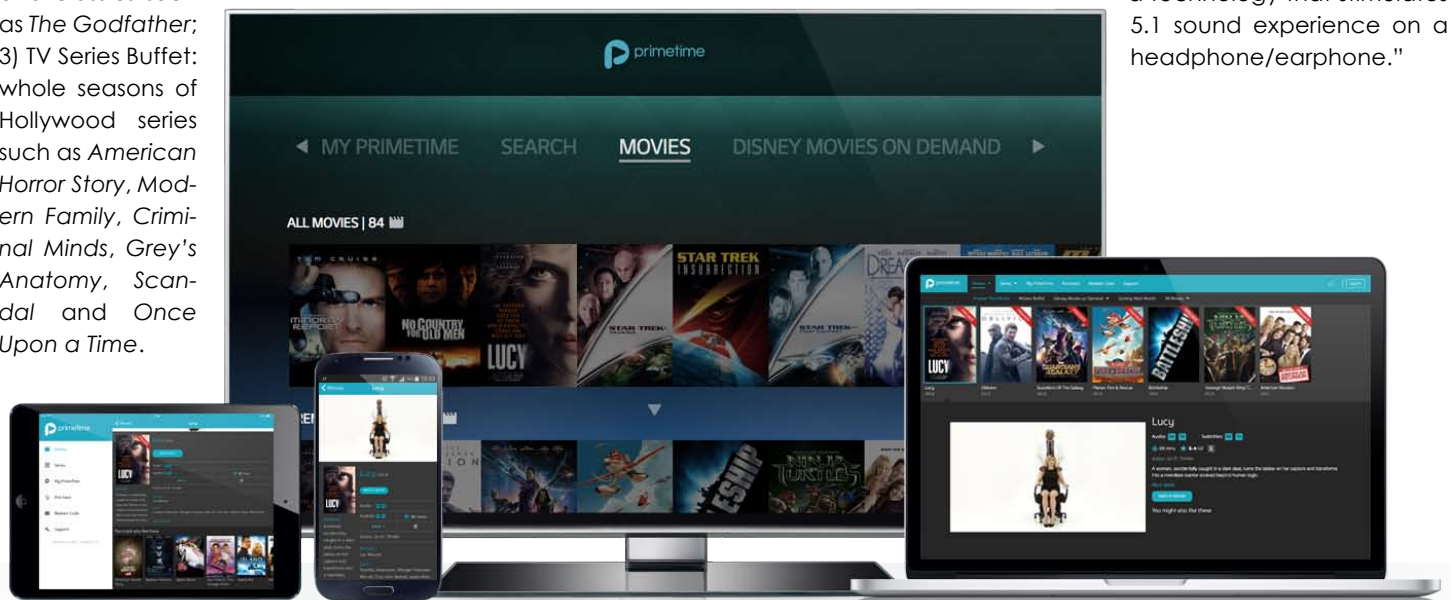
Targeted users "Anyone who owns a smart phone, tablet or PC/Mac in Thailand and everybody who loves some form of visual home entertainment."

2015 take-up expectation 100,000 users by the end of 2015

Social media "Unlike many digital services in Thailand, we want to utilise our

social media accounts to create an interactive community between all the movies and TV series lovers. We do not want to use social media to endlessly push promotions; we'd rather spawn lively discussions about all the great content we have on PrimeTime... and highlight all the improvements they want to see in our service."

Challenges "Localisation, bandwidth management, differentiation are the most important factors to win in this market. Thailand is a country where more than 70% of the audience only wants Thai-dubbed content and most viewers do not watch English programming without subtitles, so high-quality localisation is the key. In addition, bandwidth, especially 3G is much slower in comparison to developed countries, hence being able to provide high-quality streaming at a limited bandwidth has been our key focus. Lastly, we need to differentiate from other services in the region because ultimately every service will have similar content. This year, we are partnering with DTS to become the first company in the world to launch HeadphoneX, a technology that stimulates 5.1 sound experience on a headphone/earphone."



QUOTES WE LIKE...



I am sure there will not be only one TV station in Hong Kong... A smart government will not allow a single TV station to control the industry."

David Chiu on his bid for a free-TV licence in Hong Kong. Chiu, the son of former Asia Television Ltd (ATV) owner Dickson Chiu, is part of a consortium that has put its hand up for a licence in the wake of the decision not to renew ATV's broadcast licence. Chiu also said the proposed new station would not compete head on with market leader Television Broadcasts Ltd (TVB). (South China Morning Post, Hong Kong, 27 April 2015)



We recognise that technology companies and news organisations are part of the same information ecosystem and we want to play our part in the common fight to find more sustainable models for news."

Carlo D'Asaro Biondi, Head of Strategic Relationships, Europe, Google. Biondi was speaking about Google's Digital News Initiative, which is an attempt to redefine its relationship with European media groups. The initiative follows accusations by European regulators that Google distorts internet search results and has acted anti-competitively. (The Guardian, U.K., 27 April 2015)



"Art may be an exclusive experience, but the road to it should be open to everyone. We believe that our partnership with Bloomberg and the launch of *Brilliant Ideas* will further extend the boundaries of creativity and connect the international audience with art."

Wonhong Cho, Hyundai Motor Company Executive Vice President, speaking about the company's new three-year partnership with Bloomberg Television to create a global television series profiling major art personalities. The half-hour series premieres this month and will run for 25 episodes a year. One living artist will be profiled in each episode. Artists include Japanese visual and installation artist Mariko Mori, Indian painter NS Harsha, New Zealand sculptor and installation artist Simon Denny and English sculptor and ceramic artist Grayson Perry.



Freedom of speech is the media's common right, but [Peace TV] must be responsible for the content it broadcasts as well, especially when the country needs reconciliation."

Thai Journalists Association (TJA) deputy president Supan Rakcher calling on Thailand's National Broadcasting and Telecommunications Commission (NBTC) to reconsider the revocation of red-shirt station Peace TV's licence. Prime Minister Prayut Chan-ocha was quoted as saying that he had "never prohibited the media from disseminating the news as long as it airs or publishes facts. If not, order must be restored among [media]." (Bangkok Post, 29 April 2015)



The wait is over."

India's Broadcast Audience Research Council (BARC) announcing the launch of the first set of data provided by the new audience measurement platform. "For BARC India the journey has just started as we usher in a whole new era of intelligence and analytics," BARC said. (29 April 2015)



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