

**Philippines on alert  
for campaign against  
foreign channels**  
*Industry prepares to  
fight charges of  
constitutional violations*

As Asia's multichannel industry pours more resources than ever into the Philippines, local sentiment against the increasing influence of international entertainment brands appears to be on the rise.

So far, the source of strategically timed news articles in local papers is unclear. However, many in the industry are speculating about who might be behind the move to invoke constitutional clauses that could prevent foreign-owned companies from ramping up their involvement in local content creation and broadcast.

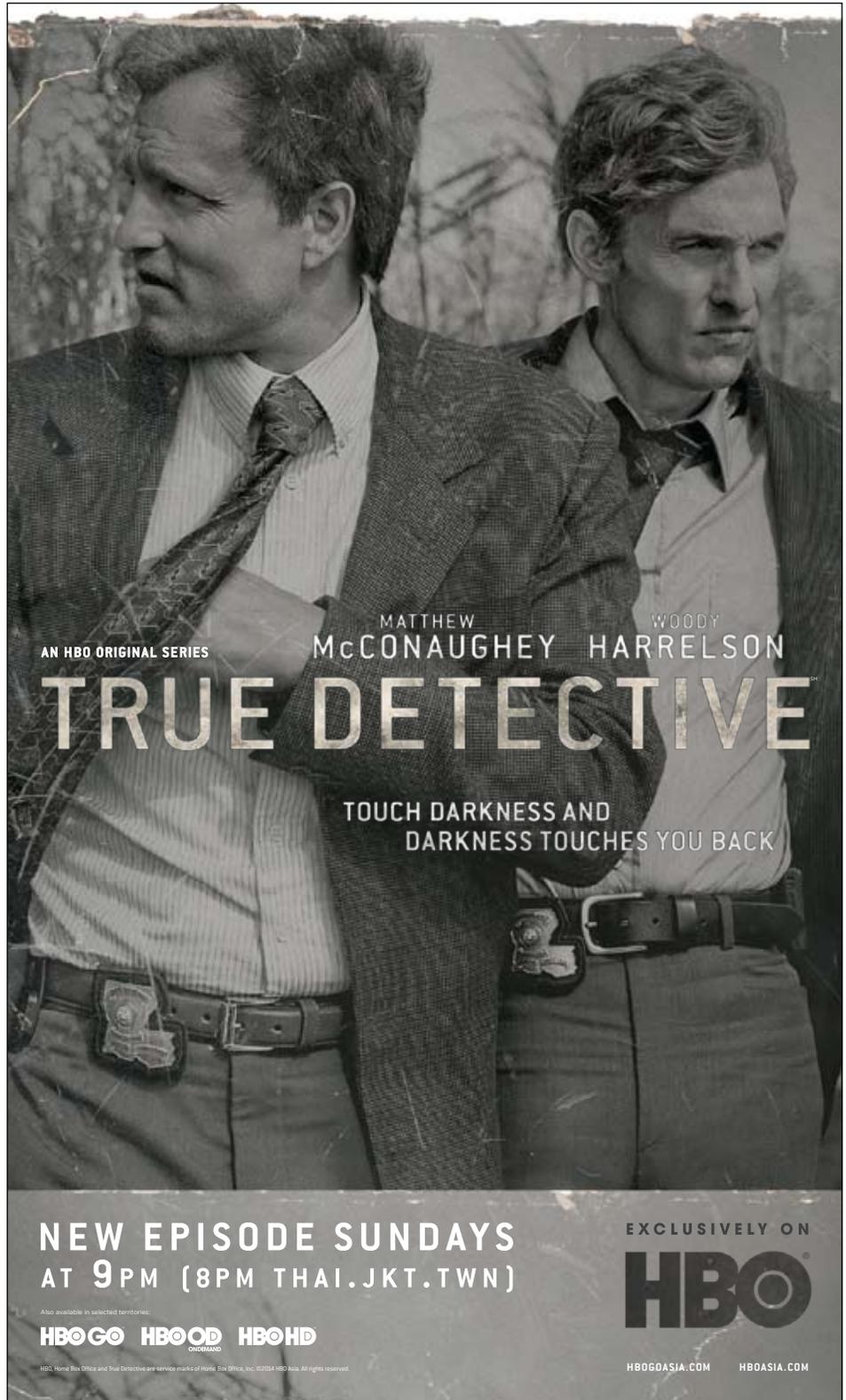
Local industry body, the Philippines Cable Television Association (PCTA), has rejected outright newspaper reports that say it is planning legal action against Fox International Channels (FIC) and Sony Pictures Television Networks' AXN. The PCTA called the reports false and without merit.

One of the reports in local daily *PhilStar* quotes the PCTA as accusing the international channels of "wholesale violation of the Constitution, statutes and rules and regulations governing both mass media and advertising industries".

The reports coincide with increased focus on the Philippines by, in addition to FIC, Turner International and RTL CBS Entertainment, both of which announced new Philippines' country heads in January.

Former Viacom/ACCION exec, Rene Esguerra, has joined RTL CBS Asia Enter-

More on page 16



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**Outdoor shifts mainstream with 2014 slate**  
*New travel strand, more local sports*

Outdoor Channel (Asia) is switching to a more mainstream positioning in 2014, building on its established core of fishing, off road, extreme sports and entertainment themed sports shows.

"The next part of our growth strategy is to support our widening viewership," says Kevin Sim, director of Multi Channels Asia, which operates the Outdoor Channel.

The channel will shortly unveil a new brand tagline, and is making its maiden foray into sports travel in the region.

The new strand of travel programming kicks off with adventure/lifestyle travelogue, *A Sporting Paradise*, which travels across the Asia Pacific to destination-driven events such as the Great Barrier Reef Swim. The series was acquired from Australian production house RJ Media.

The channel is also introducing a Wet & Wild destination-viewing theme night on Wednesdays for 2014.

Along with new original productions and a bigger slate of Asia programming, the initiatives are designed to "reflect the growing mainstream appeal of Outdoor Channel as a destination for sports and lifestyle programming that cannot be seen anywhere else on pay-TV," Sim says.

Original Outdoor Channel productions that will premiere on the Asia service this year include new reality series *Bottom Feeders*, which follows the lives and struggles of

commercial fishermen to bring in their hauls.

The Asia service is also bringing back *Savage Wild*, which follows predatory expert Manny Puig (*Jackass*, *Wildboyz*) through his encounters with everything from wild boar to great white sharks.

Exclusive Asia premieres include *Trip Gone Bad*, a new adventure series that focuses on survival stories told by the outdoorsmen who lived to tell the tales; and comedy series *Marc and Todd's Crazy Clips*. Another new original is *Dirt Trax Television*, which features stories from the world of off-road adventure.

Sim says Outdoor Channel has strengthened its commitment to Asian programming with new shows such as Ironman Asia Pacific Championships, adventure race Australasian Safari in Western Australia's Outback, World Heli Challenge and Action Sports Games.

Other new and returning Asian and international sports franchises include adventure and extreme sports series *Wild Spirits*, FIA Asia Pacific Rally Championships, Langkawi International Mountain Bike Challenge, Kiteboard Tour Asia, Wake Park World Championships, Peak to Creek, Haute Route and Red Bull Romaniacs.

# STAR CHINESE CHANNEL

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With a 20 year history, the very best in Chinese entertainment and 1,500+ hours of original content produced each year, STAR Chinese Channel is Asia's leading Mandarin-language GE destination. This January, it took the Chinese genre to new heights by breaking an industry record and becoming the first international Chinese channel ever to rank

# No. 1 in Singapore



**FOX** International Channels

Source: Kantar Media, people 15-49 with pay TV. Week of Jan 6-12, 2014.

**Split media ownership & politics, new civic group says**

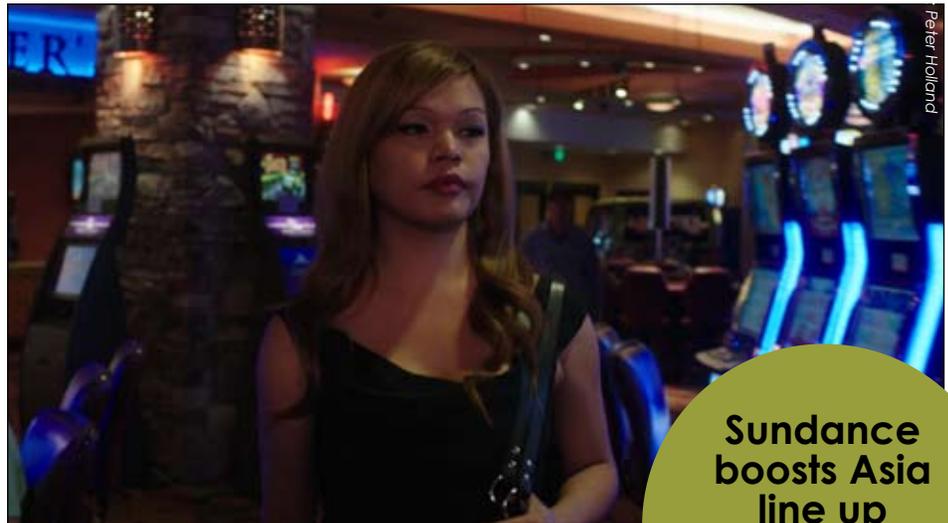
A new Indonesian group, Frequency Belong to the Public (FMP), is pushing for a tougher approach to politicians using their stakes in private TV stations to influence public opinion. FMP's line is that political ads violate the country's broadcast laws, which enshrine political neutrality. Local media are quoting the group as accusing broadcast watchdog KPI of "turning a blind eye" to undue politics, among others, TV One and Antv, both controlled by the powerful Bakrie family, and RCTI and Global TV, which are controlled by Hary Tanoesoedibjo's Media Nusantara Citra (MNC). The group warns of the dangers of reducing media to political mouthpieces for media owners. TV stations have told the KPI to back off, saying that political coverage is above their pay grade.

**StarHub rebrands pay-as-you-go platform**

Singapore pay-TV operator StarHub has rebranded its pay-as-you-go platform, Anytime TV, as StarHub TV Lite.

The revamped service offers home broadband subscribers 16 freeview channels and complimentary set-top box rental and *a la carte* channels and content for S\$6/US\$4.70 a month.

"StarHub TV Lite is all about giving customers control and choice over their viewing habits," says Lin Shu Fen, StarHub's head of home solutions.



Peter Holland

*Drunktowns Finest*

**Sundance boosts Asia line up**  
**Channel buys exclusive rights to six festival movies**

AMC/Sundance Channel Global has acquired exclusive rights to six indie films from this year's Sundance Film Festival. The titles will air this Spring.

The new slate includes *The Disobedient* by Serbian director/screenwriter Mina Djukic; *Liar's Dice*, by Geetu Mohandas; U.S. director Tim Sutton's *Memphis*, about a singer drifting through the mythic city; *This May Be the Last Time*, about filmmaker Sterlin Harjo's grandfather and the native American songs sung after he mysteri-

ously disappeared; and *To Kill a Man*, by Alejandro Fernandez Almendras.

U.S. filmmaker Sydney Freeland's *Drunktowns Finest*, which will air everywhere in Asia except Malaysia, is the story of three young native Americans – a rebellious father-to-be, a devout Christian woman, and a promiscuous transsexual – who come of age on an Indian reservation.

**Aliens lead ntv7's prime time Sundays**

Malaysian free-TV channel ntv7 has given ABC's sci-fi sitcom *The Neighbors* a prime time 9.30pm slot on Sundays.

The 22-episode series, by *Cars*' creator Dan Fogelman, premiered this weekend.

*The Neighbors* stars Lenny Venito and

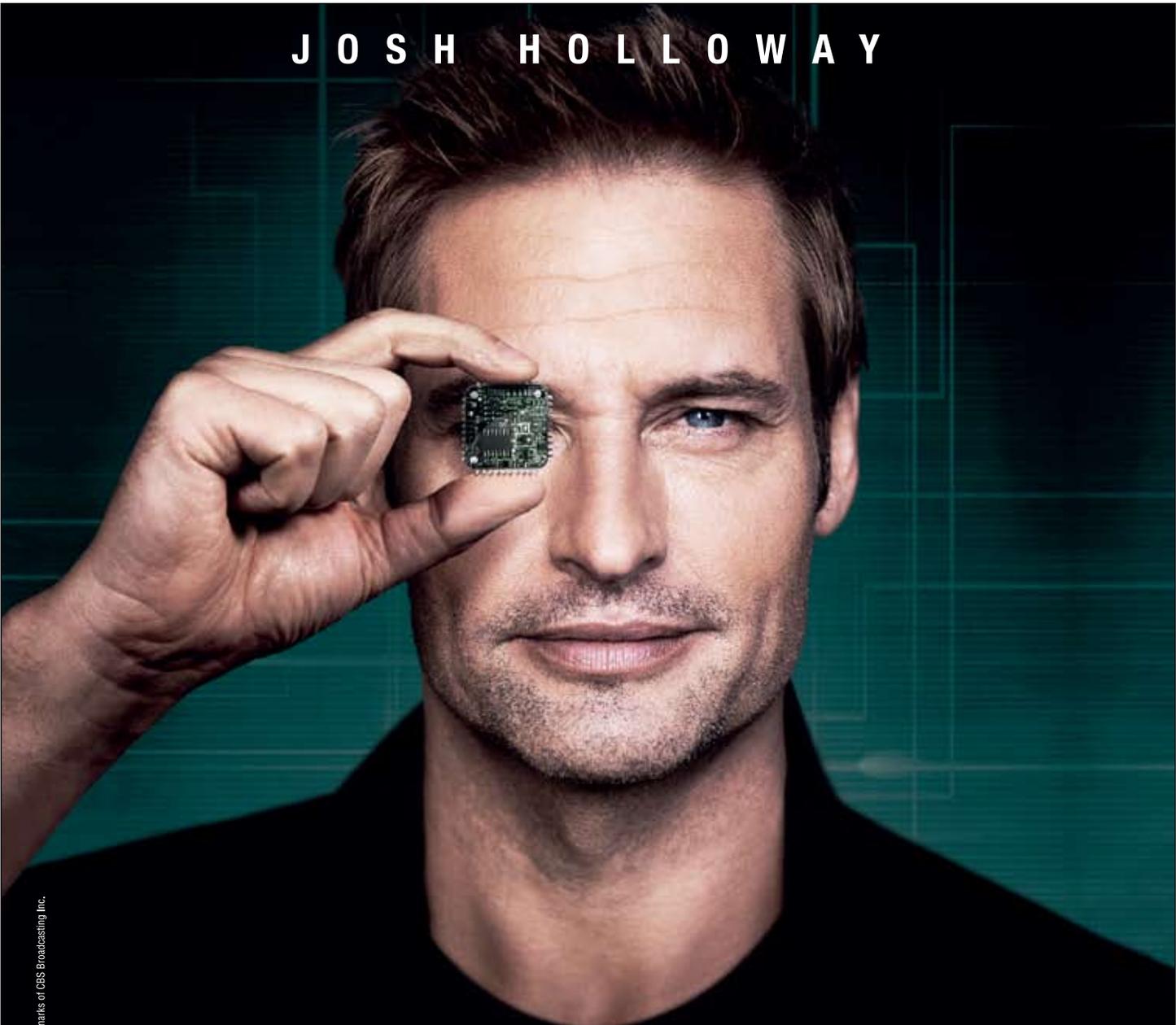
Jami Gertz as a couple who buys into an exclusive gated community... only to find their neighbours are aliens.

ntv7 has done well with paranormal in the past. *Seekers* season nine topped ntv7's urban belt from January to end November last year.

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**GMA pushes content boundaries with new drama**

The Philippines' GMA Network goes live this week with its latest in-house drama series *Rhodora X*, continuing the tradition for pushing the content envelope started with gay-themed *My Husband's Lover* last year.

*Rhodora X* stars Jennylyn Mercado as Rhodora/Roxanne, a young woman with Dissociative Identity Disorder (DID). GMA says this is the first time the topic has been tackled on Philippines TV.

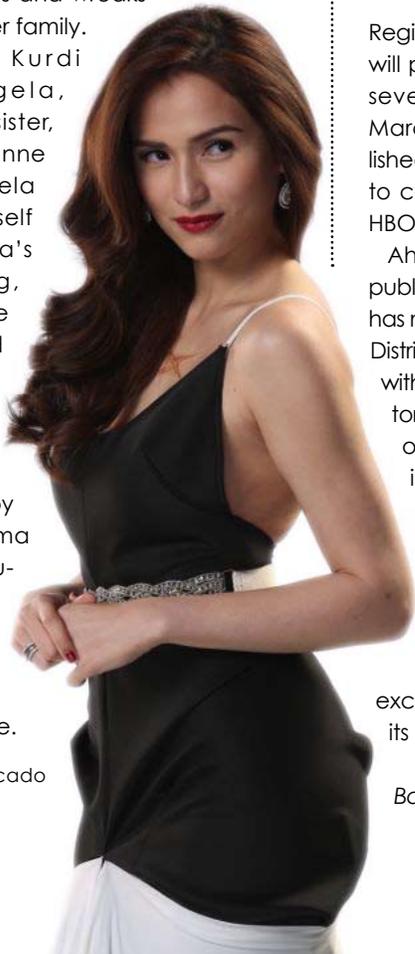
The series premieres on both the domestic channel and GMA Pinoy TV international service this week.

The story line follows Rhodora, a young girl who experiences extreme physical and emotional abuse after being abducted. As a result of her trauma, she develops a second personality – Roxanne. When she is rescued and reunited with her family, her split personality emerges and wreaks havoc on her family.

Yasmien Kurdi plays Angela, Rhodora's sister, whom Roxanne hates. Angela blames herself for Rhodora's kidnapping, and her life is shattered when she is framed for murder.

*Rhodora X*, created by GMA's Drama Group, is supervised by SVP for Entertainment TV, Lilybeth G. Rasonable.

Jennylyn Mercado in *Rhodora X*



*The Big Bang Theory*

Regional entertainment channel WarnerTV will premiere *The Big Bang Theory* season seven and *2 Broke Girls* season two in March, pushing forward with an established first-and-exclusive strategy very likely to continue after the channel shifts from HBO Asia to Turner.

Ahead of the shift, which hasn't been publicly announced, WarnerTV's Jessy Tse has moved to NBCUniversal International TV Distribution in Singapore. Tse will be working with Justin Che's team as sales liaison director. Tse was previously associate director of programming, branded services, international TV, at Warner Bros Entertainment, working out of HBO Asia's Singapore HQ.

Following its stellar performance among English-language general entertainment channels in the region last year, Warner has 10 first and exclusive titles (with some exceptions) on its March schedule.

These include linear rights to *The Big Bang Theory* in all territories except the

Philippines.

What Warner doesn't have yet are widespread day and date releases.

The new season of *The Big Bang Theory* premiered on CBS in the U.S. in September last year, as did the latest season of *2 Broke Girls*.

*2 Broke Girls* season two will air first on the linear channel in Singapore, Hong Kong, Taiwan and Indonesia. The series goes out on Wednesdays at 9.25pm, following the new season of *The Big Bang Theory*, which airs at 9pm.

Other exclusive seasons in March are *Arrow II* (Mon at 9pm); *Almost Human* (Mon at 9.50pm); *Major Crimes* season two (Tues at 9pm); and *The Vampire Diaries* season four (Wed at 9.50pm) after *2 Broke Girls*.

*Hostages* opens Thursday prime time at 9pm followed by season three of *Person of Interest* at 9.50pm. Both are linear exclusives.

WarnerTV consistently tops Singapore's list of entertainment channels.

**Big Bang & Broke Girls set for March WarnerTV pushes on with 1st & exclusive**



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***New law will drive cable penetration, say Philippines operators***

The Philippines' new signal theft law will go a long way towards driving cable take-up in both the provinces and metro Manila, delegates at Casbaa's one-day Philippines in View conference in Manila on 21 January heard.

Speaking on the future of multichannel TV in the Philippines, the chairman of the Philippines Cable Television Association (PCTA), Allan Dungao, said illegal subscribers would shift to a legitimate model when they found they could not receive cable for free. High penalties – Ps50,000/US\$1,104 plus six months to a year in prison – were a strong deterrent, Dungao said. "It takes time (for court cases), but what's important is that people know there is a law," he added.

Universal Networks International managing director, Christine Fellowes, pointed out the mobile opportunity in the Philippines, where 45% of mobile phone subscribers use smartphones.

"That's where the opportunity is with such a young population that is very smartphone savvy and is starting to go there for, at the moment, short form video. But that, to me is an incredibly exciting growth opportunity," Fellowes said.

15% of proceeds of the Philippines in View event were donated to Habitat for Humanity to aid in the rebuilding effort following the devastation wrought by typhoon Haiyan last November.

***Who was at Casbaa's Philippines in View in Manila...***



John Medeiros, Casbaa; Mariel Chavez, Venture Consulting; Chris Slaughter, Casbaa



Liza Latinazo, NBCUniversal; Virat Patel, Venture Consulting



Tim Bautista, Cable Boss; Janine Stein, ContentAsia



Bing Kimpo, Millawave Systems Corporation; Nic Gabunada Jr, OMG Philippines



Soo Yew Weng, GlobeCast, Simon Twiston Davies, SimonTD & Associates Asia



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**High hopes for new Malaysian police drama**

Malaysia's media bosses have high hopes for Skop Production's new police drama *Gerak Khas*, which premieres in a 9pm slot on 14 February on RTM's TV2. Communications and Multimedia Deputy Minister, Datuk Jailani Johari, told news agency Bernama that viewership of the series, first aired in 1999, was expected to break records. This means more than 1.5 million viewers.

**LG after Fox, ESPN content for Web-based TV platform**

Korean electronics company LG is said to be in talks with U.S. based Fox TV, ESPN and others to license content for its new web-based TV platform, unveiled in Las Vegas earlier this year. Local daily, The Korea Times, quoted an unidentified LG official as saying that WebOS TV would account for 65% of LG's total TV shipments this year. "This is a survival issue," the official said. The platform also includes a shopping component.

**Cambodia's Sothea Ines wins short film contest**

Young Cambodian filmmaker Sothea Ines has won first prize at the inaugural Tropfest Southeast Asia short film competition with her film about a children's camp during the Khmer Rouge regime. Ines wins a trip to Los Angeles to participate in a five-day film course. The initiative is supported by the Motion Picture Association (MPA).

**Singapore celebrates new media facility Infinite Studios strengthens production clout**



From left: Koh Lin Net, chief executive, Media Development Authority of Singapore; Manohar Khatani, president and group CEO, Ascendas; Dr Yaacob Ibrahim, minister for communications and information Singapore; Mike Wiluan, CEO, Infinite Frameworks; and Png Cheong Boon, CEO, JTC Corporation

The Singapore government has made a strong public pitch to attract regional and international production to the city state.

As competition from neighbouring governments and facilities increases, Singapore's Minister for Communications and Information, Dr Yaacob Ibrahim, said: "I invite international studios and production houses to look no further than Singapore for an effective, efficient and business friendly environment for your next shoot."

Ibrahim was speaking at the official opening in January of Infinite Studios at Mediapolis@one-north, the country's first multi-tenanted media hub development.

He said the development "will further Singapore's media landscape and increase the potential for more powerful media partnerships and productions".

Media companies already in the space include Discovery Networks; GlobeCast Asia; and Rewind Networks, which launched regional channel Hits, in December. Disney moves into the nearby Lucasfilm Sand-

crawler building shortly, and StarHub will also make the area its home from 2016. At the groundbreaking ceremony in December, StarHub promised the 21,400-square-metre facility would enable the company to "push the boundaries beyond conventional telcoms and media business".

Among other facilities and services, Infinite Studios houses Singapore's largest purpose-built sound stages equipped with green screen capabilities.

"The completion of Infinite Studios means that Singapore is ready to take on large-scale film and TV productions for a global audience," Ibrahim said, adding: "This strong media ecosystem is critical for the growth of innovation in the country."

He said Infinite Studios supported Singapore "in its journey to becoming the region's premiere media hub. It also heralds the successful collaboration between the government and the private sector, to create a viable, sustainable business environment for our media industry".

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ContentAsia's new 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.

*Game Kampang Za Strike (Crazy Wall Strike Game/Body Bowling)*

Game Kampang Za Strike (the Thai version of Body Bowling) is a game show based on the TV property created by Japan's Fuji Television Network. The series, produced in Thailand by FremantleMedia for Channel 7, features six contestants from two teams every episode. The aim is to strike as many bowling pins as they can by using their bodies and customised props on wheels.

Game Kampang Za Strike airs on Saturdays and Sundays from 6pm to 6.30pm on the mass market general entertainment channel owned and operated by Bangkok Broadcasting & Television (BBTV).

The format, which has been running on Channel 7 since July 2013, is part of the network's robust formats acquisitions, including *Iron Chef*, *Dancing with the Stars* and *Hole in the Wall*.

Game Kampang Za Strike airs in the slot originally filled by the local version of *Hole in the Wall* (aired as *Game Kampang Za*). *Game Kampang Za* was replaced with *Knockout (Game Kampang Za Knockout)* when its run ended. Programming bosses say maintaining similar names means viewers are familiar with the brand.

Palakorn Somsuwan, Channel 7 managing director, is a strong supporter of local adaptations of international formats, including *Body Bowling* and *Iron Chef*, which has surprised programmers with "overwhelming feedback despite its late



Crazy Wall Strike Game/Body Bowling

night 11pm slot on Wednesdays".

"Formats have proved themselves to be one of the successful programmes of our channel. With this success, now we plan to roll out more exciting formats, from both international sources and our own format (local production), to grow the audience base," he said, adding: "In the future, we believe that formats will remain an integral part in our schedule and strategy".

Somsuwan also said that "formats usually carry some foreign elements which can be difficult for Thai audiences to comprehend. Because of these differences, the greatest challenge is to adapt the prototype to suit local preferences".

Pink Pravitra, *Game Kampang Za Strike*'s executive producer, says the biggest chal-

lenge is ensuring safety. "Body Bowling is a physical gameshow, and safety is a crucial component," he says, adding: "Combining a ramp, intentionally unwieldy wheeled contraptions, and oversized bowling pins could easily be a recipe for disaster, and when your contestant pool is sourced entirely from celebrities, one accident could end the entire series."

The Thai version of the show was bigger than any other, Pravitra says, including planes and pirate ships to roll down the bowling alley and super-sized obstacles that made hitting the mark more difficult. In addition, cameras were fixed to the contestants, the vehicles and bowling pins, "allowing the audience to really feel the action".

# PLATFORM GOTV



In the regular section looking at platforms in Asia, *Malena Amzah* speaks to Wayne Lam, tvb.com's senior product manager, about Hong Kong's online service GOTV.

**What is GOTV?** A multi-platform video-on-demand online service offering TVB drama series. GOTV is available to registered users via web browsers and mobile iOS and Android apps.

**Been around since...** 14 January 2014. Launched by tvb.com, the online unit of Hong Kong's dominant terrestrial broadcaster Television Broadcast Limited (TVB)

**Available right now in...** Geo-blocked for Hong Kong, with plans to "extend the service to all the TVB content lovers worldwide."

**Targeting...** Fans of TVB programmes, including drama and non-drama

**Pricing...** Subscribers pay HK\$59/US\$7.60 a month or HK\$499/US\$64 a year. GOTV plans to offer a pay-per-title service by the third quarter of 2014.

**Who's driving the initiative...** Kenneth Wong, chief operating officer, tvb.com

**The offering** The service is based on TVB's 46-year-old drama archive, including 10,000 episodes from more than 300 selected dramas such as *The Bund I*, *Legend of the Condor Heroes* series and *Triumph in the Skies* series, etc. The promise is the opportunity to view mega stars' and actors' past performances. Celebrities include Chow Yun Fat, Dodo Cheng, Lydia Shum, Liza Wang and Adam Cheng.

**How many new titles are added each month?** "For the launch, we selected about 10,000 episodes of drama, which include the all-time-favourite titles, the top five rated titles for the past 15 years, long sequels, as well as titles from the past three years. We will progressively increase the archive size in two phases: first, the current titles after the finale is broadcast; and, second, a quarterly increment of about 1,000 episodes from TVB archives."

**What are you hoping to achieve with GOTV?** "Through GOTV, we hope to bring TV lovers a new experience of watching

TV. In addition to the traditional terrestrial linear broadcast channels, we facilitate users to choose their favourite titles to re-visit, anywhere, anytime on any device."

**What would you like to add to the offering?** "We are focusing on TVB dramas for now. In the short term, we will offer our non-drama titles as well and in the long term, we will seek the opportunity to offer foreign, acquired content."

**The biggest challenge...** "To generalise our service to all age groups, particularly the elderly demographic. We believe that the older our customers are, the more content they are likely to revisit. So the key challenge was to consider the best user interface that is manageable (by all age demographics) and can easily be extended to cover various screens."

**Why did you call it GOTV?** "Simple, easy to memorise, and with the key element 'TV'."

**What are your take-up expectations for 2014?** "As the service is new, we are closely monitoring the market in order to adjust our expectation on take up."

**The social media angle...** "tvb.com already has a very strong online presence and we plan to be on Facebook by this quarter. We also rely on the different marketing platforms TVB is on (TV commercials, online, Facebook) to draw attention."

**Most-watched titles...** "As expected, our all-time-favourites titles, including *Triumph in the Skies* series and *The Greed of Man*."

**The biggest surprise...** "That our past titles are still high in demand."

**Priorities for the next six months...** "Collect market feedback, expectations and enhance our service to make it a perfect one!"

# interview **W**CREATIVE

Mike Wiluan, Chief Executive Officer, Infinite Studios (Singapore)

**You've spoken about building a media ecosystem through the launch of Infinite Studios at Mediapolis@onenorth. How do you see this ecosystem evolving domestically and also regionally over the next 12 months?** "Reaching capacity is one objective while the other is to encourage a number of intermingling activities within the ecosystem from cross-collaboration and resource sharing to direct service offerings... Overall, Infinite Studios as an ecosystem will interact with similar ecosystems around the world."

**How important is regional production collaboration, such as the one you have with Indonesia's Screenplay Productions? What are the biggest benefits and what are the biggest challenges?** "Cross collaboration on local, regional and international levels has always been a priority for us... What we are trying to do more in the future is to look at long-term collaborations as opposed to ad-hoc ones. The relationship with Screenplay is ambitious as we aim to produce four to six titles a year, year on year. This creates a pipeline that will leverage the economies of scale our studio can offer as well as the partnerships we form with third-party companies. A slate of projects will create a churn factor that will evolve the industry further in terms of experience and depth. Singapore needs more of that, so why not leverage producing content for neighbouring countries with a potentially more lucrative market? There are obvious challenges. I think the main one is really to find partners who believe in a long-term vision."

**“What we are trying to do more in the future is to look at long-term collaborations as opposed to ad-hoc ones...”**

**And some of the other challenges?** "The very nature of our business sometimes doesn't allow us the liberty of having six perfectly aligned projects to green-light as the developmental process is always hard to predict. But these issues can be circumvented by putting in more resources at the start. That investment will pay off."

**Many countries in Asia are boosting location services with, among other things, production rebates. How important are these incentives?** "Rebates and incentives are key. They are usually the first questions from visiting producers. The film and television industry today is driven, or sometimes survives off, incentives. Those countries offering them know the benefits that media production brings them, namely economic flow through as well as country branding on a global level. Singapore has an incentive programme based on qualifying Singapore spend. That was one of the deciding factors for us to build the studio here... Our Indonesian stages have the benefit of larger/deeper and more economical resources. Singapore itself naturally has much to offer, but the incentive has put us on par with global competitiveness. We need to ensure that incentives remain in place for the longer term."



**What's the best way for Infinite to remain competitive?** "We need to ensure we provide strong value-for-money services that many are seeking. We need a little more time to develop the experience and expertise in some aspects of production, but that can be overcome with more projects. So the three things that will keep us in business are: 1. incentives, 2. values, 3. experience/expertise. A longer term view would also include content development. The ability to export home-grown or managed projects will be extremely valuable."

**What is the one thing you would, if you could, do to elevate content production in Singapore?** "... budgets here are limited. But again, with content that has more creative applications, the market would widen too, so we don't need to keep thinking that Singapore content only resides in Singapore."

*Wiluan will be speaking at this year's Creative Content Production Conference (CCPC), which runs in Singapore from 18-19 June alongside BroadcastAsia and CommunicAsia.*

# UPDATE THAILAND

Thailand entered 2014 with 24 shiny new and raring-to-go commercial digital terrestrial (DTT) licensees; a market with a renewed interest in “free” and advertising supported; a brand new satellite in space; widespread political demonstrations in which a slew of local celebrities who want to see an end to the current political dynasty participated, and a Bangkok shut-down.

If politics was a worry, it wasn't apparent in the amount of money would-be DTT players threw at licence bids. DTT demand was apparent in the THB50.9 billion/US\$1.55 billion the auction raised. Local observers say this was more than double the starting prices, and speculation is rampant about the hunt for equity partners to share the burden of getting up and running.

The big unknown going into the Year of the Horse is the real impact of the new DTT stations – including 14 new variety channels and three children's channels and a host of public service channels – on the content and production environment, including indie production.

For content creators, there's every reason to be hopeful. “With another HD channel to add to our business, we now have an opportunity to consider more international content and are open to all interesting programmes, including formats,” said Palakorn Somsuwan, managing director of Bangkok Broadcasting & Television (BBTV), which operates free TV service Channel 7.

This comes on top of the free-TV formats goldrush of the past few years, with everything from *Body Bowling/Crazy Wall Strike Game*, *Take Me Out*, *Boxing Gloves*, *Hole in the Wall*, *Step Right Up* and *Money Drop* to *MasterChef*, three seasons of *Thailand's Got Talent*, *Dance Your Fat Off* and *The Voice of Thailand* in 2013.

The biggest appetite is for high-impact lower-cost shows such as *Boxing Glove*, based on a format from Japanese broadcaster Fuji TV. This demand is also evident

in other Southeast Asian markets, such as Vietnam and Indonesia.

The increasing activity has prompted changes in the way international players and brands approach the market. FremantleMedia Asia, for example, has added an in-market production model to its straight licensing model for Thailand.

Meanwhile, a close eye is being kept on the possibility of more regulatory involvement in content production as DTT rolls out. Indications last year were that the National Broadcasting and Telecommunications Commission (NBTC) would set guidelines for local companies producing for DTT stations, and perhaps even issue licenses and ask for a percentage of revenue.

For the meanwhile though, there is a lot of frantic scrambling for everything from programmes to people to make all the new magic happen.

The DTT kick off date is supposed to be February this year, but no one is betting anything on strict adherence across the board to this timetable.

About 50% of Thailand's homes will be covered in the first three phases of the infrastructure roll out in 2014.

Players in the DTT space include existing broadcasters, such as BEC World/Channel 3 (HD variety and children's channel licenses), Nation Group (news), Bangkok Broadcasting & Television (BBTV), MCOT and Bangkok Media and Broadcasting.

Enthusiasm for Thailand's broader digital content market also abounds, with double-digit growth forecasts.

Thailand's Software Industry Promotion Agency (Sipa) points out the rising appetite for mobile devices and has said that companies across the board are using digital media in bigger ways. Sipa said towards the end of 2013 that digital animation and gaming would be worth THB18 billion/US\$547 million for full year 2013 and forecast growth of 12% to 15%.

## In numbers...

Population (July 2013)	67.4m
0-14 years	19.2%
15-24 years	15.1%
25-54 years	45.6%
55-64 years	10.4%
>65 years	9.8%
Ethnic groups:	
Thai	75%
Chinese	14%
Others	11%
Households	22.6m
TV households	22m
Multichannel households	14.3m
Multichannel TV penetration	65%
Free TV stations (Oct 2013)	6
DTT licences (commercial)	24
Internet penetration (2012)	26.5%
Fixed b/band subs (Q2 2013)	4.5m
Fixed b/band HH penetration	22.7%
Fixed tel. line	6.661 million
Mobile phone users (Q3, 2013)	90 million
Mobile phone penetration	131.8%
GDP per capita (PPP) (2012 est.)	US\$10,300
GDP (2012 est.)	US\$365.6 billion
GDP (PPP) (2012 est.)	US\$662.6 billion

Source: Company reports, channels, platforms, CIA's The World Factbook, Internet World Stats, National Broadcasting and Telecommunications Commission (NBTC), Thailand's National Statistic Office (NSO)

## New Asia lifestyle channel picks up Cisneros shows *Latin Angels Special and Inside Football head for Lifestyle TV*

Cisneros Media Distribution (CMD) has announced an agreement with Playboy Plus Entertainment for the broadcast rights in Asia of travel and beauty series, *Latin Angels Special*, and sports magazine show *Inside Football*. Both will air on new male-focused lifestyle channel, LifeStyle TV (LSTV). LSTV is a venture between Hong Kong's MATV and Playboy Plus Entertainment. The schedule features travel, cuisine, adventure and fashion.



From left: Lanny Huang, Playboy Plus; Miguel Somoza, Cisneros Media Distribution; Fiona Chu, Antares

**from page one: Philippines** tainment Network as country head for the Philippines. Turner International's new Philippines' head is ABS-CBN veteran Julie Alfaro-Santiago.

Further fuelling suspicions of a more strategic campaign rather than mischief making is that the reports were published on the eve of Casbaa's one-day Philippines in View event in Manila on 21 January. The event was supported by the PCTA, which has close ties with regional groups such as FIC.

PCTA board chairman, Allan Dungao, responded strongly against the media reports, which, among other things, said local operators were preparing to file charges with the Department of Justice for "unfair competition".

"There is absolutely no basis for these reports," Dungao

### *Denials all round of assertions that "foreign giants have been able to marginalise local industries with impunity for the longest time".*

told *ContentAsia*, adding that the issue had never come up for discussion and that the PCTA had a good relationship with FIC, AXN and other regional broadcasters. He described the newspaper allegations as "shocking".

*PhilStar* quoted PCTA president Leo Wong as saying that Fox and AXN had "somehow been able to provide programming content locally while engaging in advertising activities – both expressly prohibited by



Allan Dungao

Philippines laws". Wong, who was president four years ago, has denied saying anything of the sort, and has put his denial in writing in a letter to the PCTA and current president, Cedric Sazon.

Wong also denied saying that "foreign giants have been able to marginalise local industries with impunity for the longest time" and that the situation "begs for appropriate government intervention".

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