

9th October 2008



Welcome to IBT's October newsletter with an update on our work and relevant news from the broadcasting industry.

IBT Parliamentary event next week

One of the new Ministers at DFID, Mike Foster, will introduce our event at the House of Commons next week. We'll be asking 'Does public service broadcasting bring the world to the UK?' Held jointly with the CBA-DFID Broadcast Media Scheme, our aim is to lobby MPs, peers, Government and civil servants in the light of Ofcom's review of PSB and the recent DCMS announcement that it will publish its own plans early next year. This means the next few months will be crucial. We want to see a strengthening of international content produced by UK broadcasters. The event will take place at 5pm on Thursday October 16th in one of the rooms off Westminster Hall. Speakers include Alden Habacon from CBC in Canada, Steve Perkins from Ofcom, Brian Woods, producer of China's Stolen Children and Maggie Brown from The Guardian. It will be chaired by Nick Pollard, former Head of Sky News. If you'd like to attend, contact moira.stewart@sky.com

IBT's new strategy

Our new strategy for 2009-12 was approved at the recent IBT AGM. A copy is on our website. Whilst the rapidly changing media environment makes precise planning difficult, we will be continuing to concentrate on four key areas of activity: lobbying, research, dialogue with broadcasters and dialogue with regulators. We will also focus more explicitly on: building a wider coalition in support of public service broadcasting, ensuring greater engagement by our membership in a range of IBT activities and securing IBT's funding base. We will continue to ensure that all our work looks at both broadcasting and online.

New audience research

Given the success of Screening the World, the research which we published in the summer, IBT plans to commission a new piece of research to be published in June 2009. This will be a joint project with the CBA-DFID Broadcast Media Scheme – and we hope that DFID will

also be directly involved. We'll be undertaking a quantitative study of news, with some qualitative analysis. The aim is to explore the range of stories covered and to encourage broadcasters to widen the news agenda. We'll also be doing some audience research to see which types of programme have the greatest impact on audiences. Given that Channel 4 now has, as part of its remit, the ambition to 'inspire change in people's lives' we want to encourage them to broaden this goal to include active global citizenship. If you have access to any of your own research looking at public attitudes to development, please get in touch. We'll be organising a meeting of the IBT Campaign Group in December to share information about audiences and the public. Further details will be included in the next newsletter.

TV viewing is up

New research published by Thinkbox has found that linear tv viewing is on the increase. The average person now spends 3.7 hours a day watching television. It appears that the growth in online viewing services such as the iPlayer and 4OD has fuelled a general rise in viewing rather than diverting potential viewers away from the traditional tv set. Viewing amongst the 16-24 group is an average of 2.53 hours per day. Television remains the main source of information about the wider world for most people in the UK.

New online services launched

Salim Amin and his colleagues have now launched a24media, which they are calling the first online delivery site with material for journalists, African broadcasters and NGOs. The aim is to bring African voices and an African perspective in reporting events across the continent, and to build the capacity of African journalists and photographers www.a24media.com Closer to home, Bob Geldof has launched an online channel devoted to peace and global conflict resolution – it will feature video, picture galleries, debate forums and user-generated content about the world's wars and potential flashpoints www.peacechannel.tv

BBC reviews services for young people

The BBC Trust has launched a review of services targeted at viewers aged 13 and over, focusing on BBC3, Radio 1 and digital initiatives on bbc.co.uk. IBT will be submitting evidence on behalf of our members. We'll be calling for the BBC3 licence to be rewritten to promote a different set of priorities. At the moment, its main goals are to stimulate creativity

and promote education and learning. We'll be arguing that one of its main purposes should be to 'bring the world to the UK' as it's vital that tv channels aimed at young people stimulate their interest in the wider world. BBC3 has made some recent positive steps in this direction with factual entertainment shows like Blood, Sweat and T-shirts.

Save public service broadcasting campaign

Now that the DCMS has announced that it will publish its proposals early next year, IBT will be increasing its lobbying effort. We have already had meetings with DCMS officials and hope to meet Andy Burnham, the Secretary of State, later this year. So far, we have received a good hearing for our arguments. Andy is familiar with IBT, as he worked with us many years ago when he was special adviser at DCMS under Chris Smith. Part of our lobbying effort will focus on MPs and peers. If you have good contacts with any individuals in Parliament who you think may support our campaign, please contact sophie.chalk@btinternet.com

US tv coverage of the rest of the world

If you have a few minutes to spare, take a look at this video which gives an insight into the way in which US broadcasters report international stories!

http://www.ted.com/index.php/talks/alisa_miller_shares_the_news_about_the_news.html

Best wishes

Mark