CBS ramps up Asia action
U.S. studio sets up regional office in Singapore

U.S. studio CBS is opening a new regional office in Singapore, shifting its Asia HQ from Australia from this month.

Nicole Sinclair, Asia Pacific sales director, will head up the Singapore operation. She relocates from Sydney as part of the company’s expanded presence in Asia.

The Singapore office follows the recent opening of CBS Studios International’s China office in Beijing.

Speaking about the new Asia presence, CBS Studios International president, Armando Nuñez, said Asia was “fast becoming a world leader in innovative entertainment distribution and consumption”. See page 2

Fashion One steps up
CEO Jordan remodels the genre

The fashion television genre as we know it in Asia is emerging from a radical makeover at the hands of Fashion One’s new boss Ashley Jordan.

Jordan, who took over the Asia-based global channel in April this year, has created a new slate of original shows and a 24-hour schedule based on a core belief: fashion impacts all aspects of life.

The new line-up remodels the TV genre to include everything from eco-fashion to reality series that challenge designers to, for instance, create jewellery inspired by wood and grandfather clocks.

See page 2
Global Agency buys Australia’s World Wide Entertainment

Turkish distributor Global Agency has acquired Australian factual entertainment distributor World Wide Entertainment. The merged company will be controlled by Global Agency founder and CEO Izzet Pinto. Pinto says the company will continue to build its catalogue of light entertainment formats and drama. The new company will be called Switch International.

Japan’s NTV renews Louvre tie up

Japan’s Nippon Television Network Corp (NTV) has renewed its long-running relationship with France’s Louvre Museum. The new agreement involves NTV participation in Louvre renovations as well as large-scale exhibitions in Japan from 2018 to 2034.

NZ film & TV boost

New Zealand’s film and TV industry generated more than NZ$3.2 billion in revenue in 2011, according to new data from PricewaterhouseCoopers. The sector’s total contribution to gross domestic product was NZ$2.78 billion, representing 1.4% of New Zealand’s total GDP.

U.S.’s Singapore ambassador visits CBS on eve of Asia expansion

U.S. studio CBS’s expansion and ongoing commitment to development in Asia was part of the discussion during the recent visit by U.S. Ambassador to Singapore, David Adelman, to CBS Studios International in Los Angeles.

After touring historic CBS Television City, the ambassador met with Armando Nuñez, CBS Studios International president; Barry Chamberlain, CBS Studios International’s executive vice president, sales; and Reed Manville, CBS Studios International’s executive vice president, international channels.

The discussion also covered the U.S. commitment to the region, Singapore as a strategic market, and continuing intellectual property challenges.

Viacom18 launches ‘variety entertainment’ channel

Viacom’s India joint venture, Viacom18, is rolling out a new “variety entertainment” channel, with the U.K. picked as the debut international market.

The new channel, Rishtey, will be distributed by three-month-old distributor, Indiacast, launched in June this year as a JV between Viacom18 and TV18. The Hindi-language channel hasn’t officially announced carriage deals, but local media are talking about an early September roll out on Sky Digital with a schedule of formats, fiction, music and news.

It’s not immediately clear how much of the content is new and how much taps the library of sister service Colors.

In India, Viacom18 operates MTV, Nickelodeon, VH1, Colors, Sonic, Comedy Central and film business, Viacom18 Motion Pictures.

Rishtey comes four years after Viacom18 launched Colors, its massively successful Hindi general entertainment channel.

Viacom18’s group chief executive, Sudhanshu Vats, said Rishtey begins the company’s phase of “strengthening our presence in each vertical” following its entrenched horizontal presence.

Colors’ chief executive, Raj Nayak, said Rishtey would “create a new category within the general entertainment space”.

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China to top global smartphone market
Mainland will have 26.5% of 2012 phones shipped

Strong end-user demand and an appetite for lower-priced smartphones will make mainland China the largest market in the world for smartphones this year, new research shows.

According to the International Data Corporation (IDC) Worldwide Quarterly Mobile Phone Tracker (Q2, 2012), China will account for 26.5% of all smartphone shipments in 2012, compared to 17.8% for the U.S.

Wong Teck-Zhung, IDC Asia/Pacific’s senior market analyst, Client Devices, said the PRC smartphone market would continue to be lifted by the sub-US$200 Android segment.

“Near-term prices in the low-end segment will come down to US$100 and below as competition for market share intensifies among smartphone vendors,” Wong said, adding that carrier-subsidised and customised handsets from domestic vendors will further support the migration to smartphones and boost shipments.

The move to 4G would be another growth catalyst.

“Regionally, we expect smartphone demand to flow down to lower-tier cities,” said James Yan, senior market analyst for Computing Systems Research at IDC China.

“After going through a period of sustained high growth, top-tier cities are likely to see deaccelerating smartphone growth rates. In contrast, secondary cities are expected to experience accelerated smartphone growth, with strong demand for low-cost models as well as high-end models, which are desired as status symbols,” he said.

At the same time, IDC said China’s rise did not mean the U.S. was “grinding to a halt”.

Growth, albeit slower, will continue, driven by first-time users and “thriving upgrade opportunities”, said Ramon Llamas, senior research analyst with IDC’s Mobile Phone Technology and Trends programme.

New Ninjas race across Asia
Viacom clears the decks for turtle mania

Viacom International Media Networks (VIMN) is clearing its Asia decks for a major turtle takeover later this year around the release of the new Teenage Ninja Mutant Turtle series. The Nickelodeon airdate hasn’t been disclosed, but the licensing effort is in full swing and ninjas were out in force at Nickelodeon’s “green cocktails” in Singapore at the end of August.

HBO takes 20th b’day celebrations to KL, Jakarta

HBO Asia took the Smurfs on tour in Malaysia and Indonesia in August as part of its year-long 20th anniversary celebrations. HBO premiered The Smurfs on its flagship channel at the same time. In addition to hosting children from the Precious Children’s Home at the Kuala Lumpur event, HBO brought in Malaysian celebs such as Aznil Nawawi, Yusri Abdul Halim and Lisa Surihani – who voiced the characters in the Bahasa Malaysia version. The regional network also held a private screening of the movie and gave the Precious Children’s Home a RM15,000/US$4,800 donation.
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*Please contact the Secretariat Office for more details.
TEL. 82-2-3153-1449 / E-mail. hanlee216@bcww.kr
Official Website  www.bcww.kr
**Vietnam tops Asia’s online video reach**  
**comScore ups Asia measurement coverage**

Online measurement agency comScore has rolled out its Video Metrix system in Taiwan, Vietnam, Indonesia and the Philippines. ComScore now measures 12 Asia-Pac markets.

“Online video viewing has become a leading pastime for the majority of today’s online consumers, presenting new opportunities for content providers and advertisers to reach their key audiences,” said Joe Nguyen, comScore’s Asia Pacific senior vice president.

In June 2012, 1.2 billion people worldwide age 15+ watched online video from a home or work computer, representing 83.1% of the world’s online population.

Across the Asia-Pacific region, video viewing penetration ranged from 66.9% in Indonesia to 89.8% in Vietnam. Vietnam, Hong Kong, Singapore, Japan and New Zealand all saw online video penetration exceed the global average.

Among the largest online video markets by audience size, China was a strong leader with 266.2 million unique viewers, followed by Japan with 61.5 million viewers and India with 44.6 million viewers.

Across the four new markets, Google Sites, driven largely by viewership at YouTube.com, led as the top online video destination based on the number of unique viewers.

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**Cinemax Asia gets brazen**  
**New look accentuates male-skewed humour**

HBO Asia’s Cinemax has a whole new brazen approach, unveiled today (3 September) on-air and online.

Post-refresh programming includes higher-calibre movies and more variety from Hollywood and indie studios, exclusive premieres and original series such as Banshee (created by True Blood’s Alan Ball), Hunted and Strike Back.

Strike Back season two premieres on 7 September in a 10pm slot (HK, Singapore).

Hunted is scheduled for December. The show was written/created by Frank Spotnitz, best known for his work on The X-Files. From its Latin American sister, the male-skewed Cinemax is bringing Profugos (aka The Fugitives) into the region.

Magdalene Ew, HBO Asia’s senior vice president of marketing, creative and content, says the “brazen design... accentuates the male skewed humor of the channel with a modernist twist by using a vibrant color theme”.

Coming soon titles include Source Code, The Debt and Killer Elite. Cinemax is also rolling out 31 nights of horror across the October schedule under the Max Screamfest banner.

The Screamfest will be followed in November with a Star Trek movie marathon.

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**Tyra turn on for Ice-TV**

Model turned TV producer Tyra Banks showed up in Singapore to push Asia’s Next Top Model, the local version of the U.S. reality series.

The show by David Searl’s Ice TV airs across Asia later this year.

Details on broadcasters and sponsors have been promised later this month.

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**FORMATS ASIA**  
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What kinds of sales pitches do you respond best to? “I receive a great number and a variety of programme pitches every day. The pitches that draw my attention are of programmes with non-traditional storytelling. I look out for both contemporary stories that contain strong characters, as well as programmes related to Asia.”

How much of a show do you watch before you decide? “I always try to watch as many episodes as possible, but often I can tell immediately after only the first episode if the programme is right for my channel.”

Do you remember the first programme you bought? “I acquired my very first programme, Animal Farm, when I was working at National Geographic Channel Korea. This show stood out to me because it did not follow the stereotype of the traditional ‘classic documentary’. In fact, it was the opposite. Animal Farm fit more into the genre of ‘factual entertainment’, and the show attempted a fresh story-telling approach.”

What is your best buy? “Buying a show that becomes a hit is always a thrill...The first time I watched Dog Whisperer I knew it would work well for Asia audiences...Bruce Lee: The Legend is another success story. We saw a desire for more Asian-related documentaries and acquired the show to fill this gap. It turned out to be a hit so we will be looking for more of these Asian stories in the future.”

What do you see as the most significant viewing trend? “The rising popularity of entertainment and reality shows. This may seem like a trend that would not have a big impact on the factual genre, when in fact it does. This rising trend has created a point of convergence between factual, reality and entertainment and has pushed the genre to evolve into ‘factual entertainment’. This is the new era of the factual genre and is exactly the direction in which NGC is heading, as it sheds its stereotype image of the dusty, academic channel delivering only traditional documentaries with a deep-voice narrator...NGC’s evolution into factual entertainment is driving viewers into a new spirit of exploration and reinforces something we’ve always believed – that we can educate as well as entertain”.

If money was no object, which programmes would you buy? “I think we’re lucky in the factual space. Unlike general entertainment programmes, often the gems of documentaries and specials are not widely known, so recognition and marketing has not inflated prices outrageously. It allows us to focus on quality and subject versus solely on costs when considering programmes.”

How likely are you to buy a show if multi-platform rights are not available? “NGC owns majority of its programming so we have the luxury of having full control of rights. It’s a great position to be in.”

What do you find most difficult about the programming/acquisition process? “Because I oversee a pan-regional feed, I acquire programmes that air in countries from Southeast Asia all the way to North Africa. The most difficult part of the process is choosing programmes that work across markets...The key is to find stories that are universally appealing and at the same time complement programmes being commissioned locally. We are more and more acquiring and commissioning specifically for this region. For example, we aired Hong Kong to the World, Every Singaporean Son and Highway Runway, all of which received record ratings in Hong Kong, Singapore and Taiwan respectively. We are really taking this notion of local productions further and investing heavily.”

What do you think the most important part of your job is? “We get a lot of great shows from our international programming team, but there may still be gaps in terms of programmes that would resonate specifically for a particular market. It is important for me then to identify where these gaps are and find content that suit the tastes of our different Asian audience to round out our whole lineup.”

Q&A has been edited for space. The full interview, including what Sun dislikes about the acquisition process, what she finds most challenging and what she watches when she’s not working, is at www.contentasia.tv

Sun Young Moon
Director of Programming, National Geographic Channel (NGC)
**SES ramps up Asia exposure**

Luxembourg-based satellite giant SES has its eye firmly on expansion in Asia.

On track to launch new satellite SES-8 early in 2013, the company already carries almost 650 direct-to-home channels and reaches 20 million pay-TV homes in the region via DTH.

SES is also boosting on-ground activity to secure what it sees as valuable playout and facility-based business as the region embraces digital TV, HDTV and in readiness for ‘next generation’ Ultra-HDTV transmissions.

With North American revenues flat, and European growth dependent on HDTV expansion, it is Asia, the Middle East, Africa and Latin America that CEO Romain Bausch is looking to to drive revenue.

These four regions fuelled an 8% revenue growth (and an overall 5.3% rise in gross profits) for the half-year to end June.

SES’ prime orbital locations at 108.2 degrees East and 95 degrees East serve DTH operators such as DishTV and Bharti Airtel in India, and MediaScape in the Philippines.

SES currently operates five satellites (NSS-12, NSS-6, NSS-11, SES-7 and NSS-9) serving Asia-Pacific.

SES-8 will deliver additional capacity to thriving Asian video neighbourhoods in South Asia and Indochina.

Wilfred Urner, SES Platform Services CEO, says the industry faces two challenges: the first is the migration from analogue to digital and the second is positioning and perception as consumer behaviour changes and media consumption habits shift.

Urner also talks about upgrading teleport and infrastructure, including fibre links, to increase service flexibility and connectivity for clients.

---

**Sherlock 3 heads for Sony’s beTV**

The third season of BBC drama Sherlock is headed for Sony Pictures Television Networks Asia’s beTV channel.

The acquisition follows stellar ratings for the season 2 finale on 6 August, which put beTV (the former Beyond) in top spot for its slot (10.55pm-12.35am) among English-language general entertainment channels in Singapore (source: Kantar Media Singapore).

Season three of the contemporary take on the British classic begins filming in 2013.

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**Fast and furious in Singapore**

**Challenges & grumbling plague next-gen network roll out**

It may be fast, but not everything about Singapore’s shiny new ultra-speed broadband network is as bright and shining as it might be.

Players on this fibre field spent much of the summer locked in conflict over a host of technical, service and regulatory issues and..... a spat over branded stickers on fibre termination points.

In the latest outcry, some of the country’s internet service providers – including SingTel’s biggest rival StarHub – are griping about SingTel stickers on OpenNet points. This, they say, gives the giant telco an even bigger advantage than it already has in hooking up local subscribers.

StarHub told local media that they expected the activity to be rectified immediately.

The irony is that SingTel’s use of the new national broadband network is more limited than it might be. For one, it doesn’t extend to business users.

Insiders say the reason SingTel isn’t offering business/commercial subscribers access to the next-gen network is that the rental costs are too high and the telco prefers to use its own fibre network for biz subscribers. SingTel has declined to comment.

OpenNet says the sticker incident is isolated and while it did happen in the early days, all mistakes were corrected so that consumers were clear that the fibre termination points belonged to OpenNet.

A round up of ISP’s by local daily The Straits Times roundly condemned the SingTel stickers, saying it made it seem as though SingTel was the only provider on high speed connections.

SingTel says the stickers date back to 2009, before the OpenNet logo was finalised.

The two-year old OpenNet, which is about to get its third chief executive, made local headlines only a few days earlier when it was told by a Singapore judge to exhaust all other avenues in its ownership/control claims before going the legal route and seeking a judicial review. OpenNet is appealing, which means the fight will go into next year.

Current chief executive Khoo Chin Hean steps down at the end of September. He will be replaced by chief operating officer Mark Blake from 1 October. Khoo replaced Tan Kah Rhu in November 2010.

Khoo’s resignation comes a month after the Infocomm Development Authority (IDA) imposed new minimum service standards on OpenNet from January 2013. Under the new standards, OpenNet has to complete 98% of residential installations within three days of an order being placed by a service provider. The other 2% have to be completed in seven days.

OpenNet has objected to the changes, and says the new quality framework rewrites the original contract and should have been done through previously agreed process.

OpenNet, established in 2008, is a joint venture among four partners – Asia NetMedia, Singapore Telecommunications, Singapore Press Holdings and SP Telecommunications.

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SCM

Action/adventure movies dominated Chinese movie channel SCM’s weekly schedule (31 August-6 September 2012). The action/adventure genre filled about 74.3 hours (44%) of the weekly schedule. Titles include The Great Magician, House of Fury and Kung Fu Mahjong.

The rest of the weekly schedule is made up of horror/thriller movie titles (30.8 hours/18%), comedy (28 hours/17%), romance (17.6 hours/11%) and family/drama (17.2 hours/10%).

SCM (formerly known in English as Star Chinese Movies), revamped and relaunched in Hong Kong in May and in Singapore in July, has also adjusted its offering to include live events, concerts and Asian documentaries in Cantonese or Mandarin with Chinese and English subtitles (excludes SCM Taiwan, which offers only Chinese subtitles).

Two concerts – Leon Lai Xu Concert and Beautiful Day 2011 Concert – are scheduled on 7 and 30 September 2012 at 7.20pm and 9.30pm.

The new SCM promises one premiere title every Saturday (9.30pm) and at least one concert a month and one documentary per quarter.

SCM’s latest incarnation is as the “emperor of Chinese entertainment content”.

The revamped schedule is available at www.asiacontentwatch.com.

Source: SCM, Singapore/Philippines

The full schedule along with more than 70 others is available at www.asiacontentwatch.com
The Great Magician pushes prime time back by a half hour, from 9pm to 9.30pm. The change in viewing habits has made the later prime time necessary, says SCM’s programming vice president, Cora Yim. The new slot also brings SCM into line with rival movie channels, which have theatrical slots at 9.30pm.

The new SCM schedule features premieres on Saturdays at 9.30pm. Yim says the priority for 2012-2013 is a focus on original productions in various formats, including tele-features and films. These will be co-produced in Hong Kong and Southeast Asia, with exclusive premieres on SCM.

SCM’s first co-pro—The Wedding Diary II—is with Singapore’s Clover Films. The film, a sequel to The Wedding Diary, will be released theatrically during Chinese New Year next year. SCM has in the past collaborated with Hong Kong’s celebrity/producer Andy Lau’s Focus Films to finance project Focus First Cuts, which produced six high-definition features.

SCM has rights to titles from major Chinese and Asian producers and studios, including Emperor Motion Pictures, Media Asia and Fortune Star. Its library houses more than 1,000 titles.

Yim says the main challenges include the increasingly crowded channel and entertainment environment. Operated by Fox International Channels (FIC), SCM is available in 5.6 million homes in Singapore, Hong Kong, Taiwan and the Philippines. There are four SCM feeds—SCM Taiwan, SCM Hong Kong, SCM Singapore (Singapore/Philippines) and SCM HD (Singapore/Taiwan).

FIC also runs a SCM VOD service, including an online player, SCM Play.

From page 11: SCM

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From page 1: Fashion One

The extreme make-over, which has already started rolling out, will continue with a stream of new shows out of Fashion One’s studio on the Philippines’ island of Cebu. Language versioning is also being expanded beyond the current Korean and Chinese subtitles.

About 30% of all programming for the global network of five feeds comes out of Asia. Production is based in Cebu with production houses and partners across the region and around the world. One of the biggest productions so far is Design Genius, a global reality contest involving designers from India, the Philippines, and five European countries, and hosted by quirky designer Indashio.

A second flagship title is the Fashion Correspondent Search reality series being produced in Hong Kong, London and Benelux.

Fashion One owns all rights to its content, a prerequisite Jordan says gives it the edge in the multi-screen environment. Jordan believes fashion is “sports for women” and resists attempts to classify the channel as “niche”.

“I wonder if there was a point that sports was once considered ‘niche’ until they realised how to produce it properly and make the element of watching from the home as entertaining as watching from the arena. We plan to do that here with fashion,” she says.

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Tanoesoedibjo and India’s Ronnie Screwwala—will highlight opportunities in Indonesia and India and look at the role of television as well as online and games.

Local and regional brands and agencies including Facebook, Group M, Samsung, Hilton, Omnicom, Unilever will talk about placing their bets on online, mobile, pay-TV and social media.

Among others on the day’s agenda, Emtek (Indonesia) and Media Prima (Malaysia) will showcase their latest investments in local production, DTT, pay-TV and online.

From page 11: SCM

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www.contentasia.tv
Some of the 1001 reasons we’re loving online video right now

Mark Rober worked on Nasa JPL’s Curiosity rover for seven years – almost his entire professional career “and a quarter of my life”. In that time, he had a son and his mother died. Rober describes himself as a “spaceship engineer. Purveyor of random ideas. Lawn bowler... in reverse order”. And here he is on touchdown day... The link is www.youtube.com/user/onermeeliondollars (P.S. Rober’s channel, “The Undiscovered Space”, had 12,915 subscribers and 4,320,588 million video views on 3 September 2012).

Comedians in Cars Getting Coffee is Jerry Seinfeld’s show about... nothing. And with it he becomes a poster child for traditional media stars who don’t need the money and want to see what happens if they do this or that online. Plus he’s got a celeb black book from heaven. Who isn’t going to be drawn to Alex Baldwin (“just a lazy shiftless bastard”) and Ricky Gervais? The facebook page is as entertaining, with extra stuff like how he picks the cars. The videos are about 12 mins long. The link is here http://comediansincarsgettingcoffee.com/ 88+ million views and about a zillion versions... there’s definitely something in Korean rapper Psy’s Gangnam Style video, in which he sends up all the pretensions and flash of the country’s ultra-high-end Gangnam district. Social commentators have weighed in with opinion on the video reflecting the delusion of materialism. Have a look... youtube.com/watch?v=9bZkp7q19f0

Even for those of us where were around when Neil Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin landed on the moon 40+ years ago... Neil Armstrong’s death on 25 August opened a moon fest of video accessible to everyone with an internet connection. Spectacular.

www.facebook.com/contentasia

*weird & wonderful stuff, things we like & don’t, and bits & pieces that don’t fit anywhere else