

# ACTO3

local public service television directory

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**UK LOCAL TV FORUM**

**22nd MARCH - BOOK TODAY!**

**ACTO** is an advisory committee of local television organisations working alongside the Institute of Local Television. **ACTO**'s initial objective is to share information supporting the introduction of local digital terrestrial television as an independent form of local public service broadcasting.

**ACTO** was established in 2003 by local television members of the Community Media Association to focus on the introduction of local digital terrestrial television services - or 'local DTT'.

Through the Institute of Local Television **ACTO** is represented on **Open Channels for Europe!** the organisation representing European local and open channels in exchanging information on European practice and in negotiation with the European parliament on small-scale TV provision.

Personal and institutional affiliation to **ACTO** is by a small annual subscription (see page 14) entitling subscribers to copies of Institute of Local Television research and reports as well as to **ACTO** directories. Subscribers also receive early announcement of local TV conferences, forums, workshops and are offered networking and support with submissions to regulators and government as well as encouragement with local-tv related activities.

**ACTO - local public service television directory** - encourages local lines of research and documentation and promotes publications which support a wide public engagement with small-scale local TV.

This is the eleventh edition of the **ACTO - local public service television directory**.

**ACTO back issues can be downloaded from [www.maccess.org.uk/members/ilt.html](http://www.maccess.org.uk/members/ilt.html)**

## **WEBSITES**

### **For information:**

on local and community TV in Europe: [www.obs.int/db/persky/eu.html](http://www.obs.int/db/persky/eu.html)

on community TV channels worldwide: [www.openchannel.se/](http://www.openchannel.se/)

UK's Community Media Association: [www.commedia.org.uk/](http://www.commedia.org.uk/)

UK examples of local and community TV programmes:

[www.showcase.commedia.org.uk/](http://www.showcase.commedia.org.uk/)

website of NvTv Belfast's Local TV Channel: [www.nvttv.co.uk](http://www.nvttv.co.uk)

Public Voice is the leading voluntary sector coalition campaigning for citizens' interests in communications policy and regulation:

[www.politics.co.uk/campaignsite/public-voice-\\$3436683.htm](http://www.politics.co.uk/campaignsite/public-voice-$3436683.htm)

Ofcom - the UK's independent regulator and competition authority - site includes sections on codes, guidelines and consultations: [www.ofcom.org.uk/](http://www.ofcom.org.uk/)

..... provides an extensive catalogue of consultations and reports - for background to local TV look out the public service broadcasting consultations Phase 1-3 and you can join the Ofcom email list for updates on future consultations and publications

inter-ACT!#5 media activism in South Korea. You can subscribe to this regular

English language newsletter at <http://lists.riseup.net/www/info/inter-act>

Institute of Local Television [www.localtvonline.com/](http://www.localtvonline.com/) .... shared with The Broadcasting Trust, website lists publications, provides background papers, illustrates local TV DVDs, 2.4 Ghz TV studies ....

Ofcom's new spectrum dividend review consultation

[http://www.ofcom.org.uk/media/news/2005/11/nr\\_20051117](http://www.ofcom.org.uk/media/news/2005/11/nr_20051117)

## Overview

At Ofcom's Digital Dividend Review stakeholder meeting held on 15th February perhaps the most startling announcement came from Steve Holdsworth of ntl speaking from the floor. To roughly paraphrase - *it might not much matter what Ofcom or the consultants Analysys come up with a year hence for the use of spectrum because the engineers will start installing the main digital antenna in Selkirk for Scottish Borders this summer and have already ordered the kit for the remaining Dumfries and Gallo-way and Cumbrian transmitters for installation in 2007.*

A day or two later - in responding to ACTO's umpteenth request to the Department for Culture Media and Sport to formally recognise Local TV as Public Service Broadcasting - we find a senior DCMS civil servant writing - "It is therefore open to you now to get access to a multiplex and take a digital programme licence".

Has the DCMS deliberately engineered another wasted year - during which spectrum costs on the muxes has more than tripled - or is this another case of disjointed Government?

To follow the DCMS thinking on a DIY approach. Somehow miraculously 240 plus Local TV channels must form without a plan for local spectrum in each area to advise where their local channel will reach. A vital plank of any business plan is missing here and Ofcom won't or can't provide this. Moreover, these distinctively local and diverse community, municipal and commercial channels must arise and combine and then bid for spectrum against national channels themselves quite happy to reach an unspecific nondescript 60-70% of the population.

Which planet do staff at the DCMS come from?

The DCMS commissioned Ofcom to look at the 'economics and *sustainability*' of Local TV. They received the *Digital Local Report* in January a little before the rest of us (and some parts of it as long ago as November 2005). *Digital Local* strongly recommends a Public Service role for Local TV with the add/drop solution allowing these channels to reach 98.5% of the population on the PSB muxes.

But there seems to be some reluctance at DCMS to recognise that Local TV is a PSB because - without any doubt at all - Public Service is the vital and important role Local TV will perform and PSB a necessary element to *sustain* it.

Another day - and another Government announcement. This time from Alan Milburn MP writing in *The Guardian* (21st February) outlining David Miliband's new community-sensitive agenda ....

We have not come to terms with the world of the "me generation", people who are more aspirational than ever and want to exercise control over their lives. They may feel empowered as consumers but not as citizens. The gap between politics and public is growing. People are becoming disengaged because they are disempowered. Empowering citizens is the modern route to social justice. Subsidiarity should be the guiding principle. Central-government bureaucracies should be cut back as power is devolved to councils and local communities. Social, economic and electoral progress depends on grasping the nettle of far-reaching and radical reforms to the relationship between the state and citizen. The reinvention of public service broadcasting will redistribute finance to local Broadcasting Trusts. These largely voluntary organisations will support the introduction of Local Television and Community Radio and bring local communications and citizenship together.

Now to be fair - there's two additional sentences here that help make sense of how this can be achieved with a liberal joining-up of otherwise scattered Milburnesque sentences from his paper).

As well..... the DCMS *Ministerial* line on Local TV is very clear and very positive and fits comfortably with Alan Milburn's communitarian agenda - expansion of a more localised, autonomous and more volunteer-friendly world-view fitting squarely with DCMS Minister Lord Mcintosh requesting Ofcom - 'to see whether Local TV was possible for all'.

In *Digital Local* Ofcom has said Local TV is possible for all and regulators haven't favoured regulating it because it wasn't available for all ... till now ...and Local TV's role as a Public Service makes a great deal of sense.

So what doesn't the DCMS understand about the equation 'Local TV and Public Service'?

To provide this public service Local TV needs a simple statement from the Secretary of State to Parliament to enable Local TV to receive its due portion of the public spectrum - digital spectrum which Channel Five was granted as long ago as 1995 after a similar intervention by Secretary of State Virginia Bottomley.

Does DCMS really believe Channel Five offers better prospects for delivering public service than Local TV? Where does the new communities policy stand on all this?

John Askew, Head of Communications at Scottish Borders, writing to colleagues in a personal capacity:-

There are a number of pressing problems

- 1 Because Scottish law was not brought into line with English law, Scottish local authorities cannot presently hold broadcasting licences (whilst English ones can)
- 2 The DCMS seems to be taking the view that Local TV has no interest in Public Service Broadcasting - whilst the real question is whether the Public Services have any interest in Local TV?
- 3 It seems likely that government will seek to sell off the spectrum dividend from Digital Switchover to the highest commercial bidder without reserving any of it to extend Public Service broadcasting beyond the BBC and C3 regional programmes (or even to reserve some for future use) - despite the fact that OFCOM are actually in favour of extending Local TV capacity through the add/drop box solution to provide low cost broadcasting opportunities at the time of DTT roll-out
- 4 ntl - who are the contractors responsible for upgrading the transmitter network for DTT advise that they are about to order the equipment necessary for the Borders region main transmitters - this means that if there is a window to argue for national carrier channels for local tv and the installation of add/drop boxes at our main transmitters - the window is very small for SBC, D&G and Cumbria whilst other authorities in later phases of switchover have more time.

In my view, we are risking losing what may well be the most important single advance in communications in the public service ever if we do not recognise that we need to look beyond what we already know and take action now to try to persuade DCMS and the Scottish Executive to look again at this issue. This

is an issue which is literally slipping through our fingers.

Across the Borders TV region there is an acute awareness of the danger of being left with a broadband only solution for Local TV - or no solution at all. Alan Stewart of Ofcom Scotland has acknowledged their current Nations and Regions survey won't identify the shortcomings in broadband access area by area.

At an Ofcom meeting in January held in Dumfries one delegate described new houses being built with shared telephone lines - because BT did not think there were sufficient households further up the chain to warrant upgrading the nearest switch. So broadband is a distant horizon - and broadband to deliver HDTV a long way off.

We need to consider how the failure to introduce Local TV as an essential public service will affect social inclusion in a rural area like Dumfries and Galloway with a large percentage of over 65s.

*Changes to Television Broadcasting in Dumfries and Galloway* became Council Policy on 10th January Susan Neal, Communications Officer, wrote in her Report:-

### **Introduction**

Local TV is under-developed in the UK in comparison with other parts of the world, notably Canada and the USA. Now developments in technology are making it possible to create new programmes, such as truly local news, local authority information, health information, arts and community programmes. Future Local TV could be delivered by digital satellite, broadband video on demand, digital terrestrial television and mobile TV. If we want a Local TV service in Dumfries and Galloway, there will be a lot of work ahead to make it happen.

### **Summary**

Broadband Local TV, including services from BBC and ITV, is likely to develop rapidly, but leaves us at the mercy of a new digital divide - a minority of the population could have access to a range of local news and features programmes and interactive services which will be unavailable to most unless the same services are on Freeview digital terrestrial TV. There is a lot of talk about convergence - technologies merging - and this will happen for some very soon, but for the majority, perhaps decades on.

### **The key issues are:**

- Understanding the possibilities for economic regeneration, education and democratic engagement and access to health services which could be stimulated by local TV
- Engaging community planning partners to become involved in responding to DCMS (Dept for Culture, Media and Sport) and OFCOM consultation on Local TV due in 2006
- Ensuring the needs of a rural area are understood and met by DCMS and OFCOM
- Making sure that a new 'digital divide' doesn't happen in Dumfries and Galloway

and further on Susan Neal writes:

### **Local TV at Switchover**

Although broadband take-up is expanding, this is unlikely to be at a rate that

will allow the majority of the population to access any new local broadband channels. The majority of households for some time to come will rely on their TV rather than their PC for getting local TV programmes. In Dumfries and Galloway, cable does not exist and satellite is very expensive to provide for a small population. So digital terrestrial television remains the best hope for widespread local TV. However, no technical solution has yet been put forward by government or regulator - consultations are still to come. The Institute of Local Television is providing regular bulletins on these issues and has suggested one possible technical solution for the transmitters. A decision by government and regulator is needed before the engineers change the transmitters for the start of switchover in 2008. A purely commercial local channel for Dumfries and Galloway might not be an option - models already in existence either say that they need a population reach of 300 to 400,000 to generate interest from advertisers. A model exists in Belfast which uses grant funding and volunteering to provide local programmes - this is very much a community run station and is a more likely model for our rural region. This inability to provide local TV commercially in rural areas is something we need to make clear to DCMS. Perhaps a slice of the Public Service Publishing money should be allocated to helping out Local TV.

## LOCAL DIGITAL TV SIX POINT CHECKLIST

Whatever the digital platform ... there's agreement on these six points .... or is there? Not at DCMS!

- 1 universal - local TV available to all ✓
- 2 'viewer recognisable' scale of service ✓ local authority areas make sense (even if bundled into 'greater' areas) which local muxes might later refine. Much local news tends to be local authority focused
- 3 if DTT, then access down existing digital TV aerial ✓ or it won't be seen
- 4 critical mass of viewers able to receive at launch ✓ biggest minority if not the majority of households in licensed area - may require combination of two platforms to achieve
- 5 if DTT, then signal and SI must access set-top box ✓ and signal be 'seen' while not causing interference with SI of other channels
- 6 be free at the point of reception ✓ as accessible as other PSB channels - vital for the authority of local news

### 'Piped' options -

cable yes, possibly as 'must carry' provision but in areas where not the dominant digital platform cable may feel obliged by viewers to carry  
IPTV - broadband on TV yes, but will it be free at the point of reception and will it be a major TV platform?

### Conclusion:

DTT probably still required in all areas in order to reach viewers not on cable or IPTV - so

universal DTT service

DTT options

Interleaved spectrum

Will it fulfill points 1-6?

What will it cost to provide universal coverage?

Will transmitters and antenna be required as well as locally configured spectrum?

Will it require comprehensive UK wide frequency plan so late-comers can have local TV service too?

Disadvantage

Stuck with be-spoke spectrum fitted out to local configurations - should local TV fail then spectrum could be 'lost' or at least very difficult to reassign.

Add/Drop Solution

Fulfills points 1-6

Advantage

Minimum risk - can be costed readily and simply installed - since it's based on 'reconfigured national spectrum' this can be reassigned to national channels if all goes pear shaped in Local TV land.

October 2005

# Local TV in Continental Europe

John Glover, Ofcom, June 2005

## Background

Local TV has struggled to develop in the UK for reasons that have been very well documented elsewhere. In contrast, most of Europe and North America now has a well developed structure of local TV operations. It is useful, therefore, to gain some understanding of how the sector has developed elsewhere.

Local TV is part of the broadcast ecology throughout Continental Europe, and only Ireland is as under-developed as the UK in terms of having access to such services. But, before examining the factors that have helped Local TV to flourish in Continental Europe, a word of caution: it would be very mistaken to consider "local TV" as a single type of channel. It exists on the Continent in a number of forms; uses a number of transmission platforms; and is used to transmit a wide variety of programming.

There are three distinct business models, although some stations are a combination of one or another. But even within the main categories there are huge variations of scale, audience size, and/or geographical footprint. The three dominant models are:

- commercial (stations relying entirely on advertising and sponsorship);
- community television (stations run on a not-for-profit basis, often funded – and sometimes owned - by public bodies. Some also carry advertising);
- open access TV (stations set up specifically to encourage a "voice of the people" on local television services).

The development of local TV has come about on the Continent for a variety of reasons, but there are three principal factors, which vary from country to country:

- the development of cable platforms (there is a clear correlation in some countries between high cable penetration and the spread of local TV);
- "Ad hoc" analogue development (countries where a laissez faire attitude to spectrum management has encouraged rapid expansion of local TV via terrestrial transmission);
- active intervention (some countries with neither high cable take-up nor any lack of proper licensing have developed local TV as a direct result of active government encouragement).

Many people with experience only of the UK environment may be surprised at just how advanced the local TV sector is on the Continent. Certainly, local TV seems to be an aspect of the broadcasting environment that viewers in Continental Europe automatically expect to see among their available services.

## Models for Local TV in Europe

There is no single model for European local TV channels. Some of the smaller stations serve communities of only a few thousand people, while others may reach more than a million viewers across a wide geographical area. Nor is there a single method of delivery – cable, terrestrial and satellite are all used to a greater or lesser extent.

Nevertheless – regardless of size and delivery platform – three types of station dominate the local TV broadcasting environment in Europe. Virtually all stations fall into

one of the three categories listed below (or are some combination of these three models):

- 1 **Commercial local TV:** these stations are run for profit, although some – particularly in western Europe - take some level of public money in return for PSB-type programming. Outside north western Europe they are largely self sufficient. In the former Yugoslavia, and in some other parts of eastern Europe, there are very large numbers of these channels, operating at various levels of success. They are funded chiefly by advertising and/or sponsorship, or through private patronage (it is hard to find any examples of a successful subscription-based local service). Even within some smallish local areas, commercial channels may target particular communities (e.g. religious or ethnic).
- 2 **Community channels:** these stations are generally financed out of public funds (grants/licence/direct subsidy) and most are run on a not-for-profit basis. Some seem to survive on fairly large levels of general public donation. Even so, many also take advertising/sponsorship. Some share their channels with other stations to keep down costs and/or supplement income. A key sub-division of this group is between those channels surviving on grant and subsidy, and those directly owned (but not necessarily run) by municipal authorities. Amsterdam City Council, for example has direct input into Stads TV Amsterdam, which makes a healthy surplus which is ploughed back into the channel. Other Stads TV services in Netherlands also have municipal money. Many of the small-town services in Spain are also council owned and town hall run - as are the Brussels local Flemish and French TV services. The value of municipal input is that stations can be more or less a permanent fixture, and better grounded than those relying on short-term renewable grants.
- 3 **“Open” channels:** these stations are well developed in some countries, notably Germany and in Scandinavia, where Governments have encouraged open public access to the media by funding TV channels specifically for the purpose. Some have regular programming for part of the time, and “open” access at other times. The public are encouraged to make and deliver programmes entirely independently, or are given camera crews, editing facilities, and specialist advice to make programmes. The range of subject matter can be vast: from political rants to short, art-house movies (both factual and fictional). “Open” programmes are generally scheduled four to six weeks in advance, in order for proper programme guides to be produced.

### **Development process for channels in continental Europe**

Three separate – and sometimes conflicting - factors have helped local TV to develop in other European countries. Specific examples are mentioned in more detail later. The three key factors are:

- 1 **A high level of cable TV penetration:** there is a direct correlation in some countries between the percentage of households viewing their television services via cable, and the number of local TV stations (e.g. Germany, the Netherlands and Belgium). But this statement over-simplifies the picture. In reality, cable has developed very differently in most European countries than in the UK. In the UK, the cable market is dominated by two big companies (ntl and Telewest) and entry onto cable platforms is relatively expensive in relation to the limited penetration into the market. By contrast, in most of the rest of Europe separate ca-

***The Government are committed to supporting local television and we very much hope to see an expansion of services in the future. We envisage that local television will play a valuable role in keeping communities informed and in particular, help keep in touch those most socially isolated members of the community who may not have access, or are uneasy about using new technology. Local television will also bring economic benefits to areas in terms of employment and training....” Lord Mcintosh, Minister for the Media and Heritage at DCMS, addressing Scottish Local TV Forum in March 2005.***

**The ‘add/drop solution’ for terrestrial digital Local TV  
“offers the most consistent and convenient solution, and potentially offers the widest reach for Local TV of all the terrestrial options.”  
Ofcom, Digital Local, January 2006.**

ble operations are much smaller, typically serving a locality; a city or even a particular neighbourhood. This makes the structure much more amenable for local TV than in the UK, and access charges very much cheaper. However, it would be too simplistic to suggest that local TV can *only* develop in a suitable cable environment. It is clear that in some countries, it was cable that *first* allowed local TV to become an established part of the broadcast ecology - in Germany, Belgium and the Netherlands for example - but it is now also widely available in those countries via terrestrial broadcasts. This seems to be because a critical mass developed, which meant local TV became an expected part of *all* TV services - and so it seemed natural that terrestrial spectrum should then be made available, as appropriate, for the purpose.

- 2 **Ad Hoc development:** by contrast, some of the countries with the most developed local TV services are those with the *least* developed cable networks, and the least mature TV environments. These are countries that have experienced periods with relatively little regulation or licensing. Here, a *laissez faire* economy developed, with local stations simply transmitting via (usually) terrestrial frequency to their local areas. This was particularly the case in the former Yugoslavia and in other East European countries – but also in Spain, where regulation has been more casually enforced than in the UK. There have been good and bad practices – newly discovered “freedom of expression” has prompted imaginative and popular programming in some locations previously dominated by totalitarian regimes: but programme “piracy” has also been rife in some others. However, even in those countries where regulation is now catching up, this ad hoc development has established a culture where local TV is an automatic part of the landscape. The services are now being regularised, rather than killed off.
- 3 **Active intervention:** Even in some countries where there is both low cable penetration and a high level of regulation, local TV has managed to develop very successfully. In France, for example, local and national government took an active role in establishing and encouraging (financially, in many cases) local terrestrial TV. France has already begun publishing its digital plan, and has indicated that (at the very least) the 112 existing local TV stations will be granted digital frequency. Of course, some countries (Germany and Holland, for exam-

ple) have benefited from both high cable penetration and active intervention, and this is reflected in the large number of stations - the Netherlands has the highest level of Local TV penetration in Europe.

**Fig 1: Local TV in some other European countries**

Country	Number of local TV channels	Ratio of channels to TV households	Percentage of cable TV households
Belgium	22	1:200,000	92
France	112	1:199,000 (digital plan: 1:22,000)	16
Germany	95 local/community 100+ "open"	1:351,000	80
Italy	120	1:177,000	<5
Latvia	24	1:33,000	25
Netherlands	300 public 226 commercial	1:22,000 1:30,000	80
Norway	29	1:68,000	85
Poland	32	1:384,000	31
Slovakia	75	1:25,000	30
Spain	1,000	1:19,000	16
United Kingdom	10	1:2,480,000	14.5

Source: Presentation to International Conference of Local TV broadcasters

The table above (Fig 1) presents a summary of the number of local TV channels in some European countries. There is far more data available from western European countries than from the former Eastern bloc countries – an indication, perhaps, of the (now changing) “wild west” development of unregulated and unlicensed stations in the latter territories.

The table also shows just how far the UK’s ecology is adrift from other countries. While there are more than 300 public local TV channels in the Netherlands – one for every 22,000 people – there are only 10 local stations in the UK, which represents one for every 2.4 million people.

## Some illustrative European examples

### a) Germany

Local TV in Germany can trace its roots to the founding of the post-war federal state, established by the western Allies after 1945. The former West Germany (FDR) was deliberately set-up with the aim of fostering a strong notion of democratic regional identity, as a counter balance to the former German nationalism. Each of the German *lande* (states) had its own broadcasting authority and, as television developed, local TV was encouraged to grow alongside both the main national networks and more regionally sized stations. Different *lande* chose slightly different routes but, throughout the country, the viewing public developed an expectation that some form of local output would be available.

However, it was the arrival of mass market cable TV that really prompted an explosion in local TV. The system was developed through a large number of smallish cable companies, some serving just a single town or city, or even a neighbourhood. As a result, local TV was able to benefit from easy and cheap access to its local markets. In addition, from 1986 the federal government sanctioned a system of “Open” channels, allowing members of the public to make their own television programmes for transmission on local TV. Again, different *lande* had autonomy to establish different systems, but the network was funded through a one per cent levy on the national TV licence fee – often coupled with “must carry” obligations on the platform operators. There are now around 100 of these stations throughout Germany, benefiting from an 80 per cent cable penetration in the German market.

**Fig 2: Local TV channels available in Berlin**

Available on DTT	Name of Channel	Language	Programming
Yes	Rundfunk Berlin Brandenburg (RBB)	German	News and documentaries, cooking, and travel shows pertaining to Berlin
No	Türkisch Deutscher Kabelfernsehen (TD1)	Turkish	Local cable TV offering Turkish news and relevant public interest shows
Yes	Mitteldeutscher Rundfunk (MDR)	German	News, cultural, sports, and children's shows focused on the central region of Germany (Saxony/Thubingen)
Yes	Fernsehen aus Berlin(FAB)	German	Local Berlin News and general material of local public interest
Yes	TV Berlin	German	Local Berlin programming
Yes	Offener Kanal Berlin	German	Local Berlin programming, specifically culturally oriented
No	Bayerischer Rundfunk (BR)	German	Bavarian news and programming including sports and cultural events
Yes	West Deutscher Rundfunk (WDR)	German	West German news and local events, sports and documentaries
Yes	Norddeutscher Rundfunk (NDR)	German	Northern German local interests, news, and sports
Yes	Phoenix	German	Berlin and Germany oriented political news and documentaries
No	TRT International	Turkish	Turkish channel catering to Germany-wide Turkish speakers

Sources: *Überall Fernsehen* (<http://www.ueberall-tv.de>) and the *Medienanstalt Berlin-Brandenburg* (<http://www.mabb.de/>)

In East Germany (DDR), cable television was actually established by private individuals in order to pirate western television output (especially in Berlin), as an alternative to the state run propaganda of the communist era.

But local TV in Germany is not just on cable. The public expectation that some form of local TV will be available to viewers in all areas means that local services are carried on the terrestrial platforms too, including the new DTT platforms that are being rolled out. The table above (Fig 2) lists the local TV channels available in Berlin via local cable – and, as can be seen, many are also available on the Berlin wide DVB-T digital terrestrial platform. Viewers can see Berlin local TV as well as output from other areas. Of course, these channels sit alongside the usual collection of national

networks – RTL, ZDF, ARD – and a wide range of specialist cable and satellite channels.

Reliable, independent audience figures are hard to obtain, but the German broadcasters themselves maintain that most of the channels are perfectly viable. There is a mixture of commercial and publicly funded channels. As stated, there are three dominant models. Examples include:

- the publicly funded “Offener Kanal Berlin” (Open Channel Berlin) is entirely paid for out of the one per cent licence fee levy mentioned above. It is on air for 24 hours a day, and its own estimate is that it is regularly watched by 1-2 per cent of Berlin’s 1.1 million households. All the programming is open access;
- outside Berlin; “K3 Kulturchannel Rheinland-Pfalz” is funded by a combination of programme sponsorship, state subsidy (of equipment only), and by sub-letting its cable slot to another channel. It is on air for three hours or so every day, and estimates its audience at 50–100,000. It has only two full time employees, but employs up to 40 others on a freelance basis. Even so, 80 per cent of its output is self-generated first-run programming: mainly news, current affairs and discussion.
- “Sachsen Fernsehen TV” (Saxony) is an entirely self funding commercial station reaching 250,000 households, and with an average audience of 40,000. It is broadcast on both cable and terrestrial platforms, serving up a diet of news, discussion and tele-shopping.

## **b) Spain**

Local TV developed in Spain in an entirely different way to Germany. Dozens and dozens of local stations have grown up using small scale transmitters to reach local audiences on “grabbed” terrestrial frequencies. The practice of setting up un-licensed services – particularly in rural areas - became a common practice in the Spanish local TV market. Once established, these channels were usually allowed to continue broadcasting, as long as there were no interference issues with other services. Some local authorities in Spain also took the opportunity to set up local “town hall” TV.

The more relaxed regulatory environment came about because there is no independent national authority specialising in broadcasting matters. Nationally, responsibility is split between two bodies: the Comisión del Mercado de las Telecomunicaciones (Telecommunications Market Commission) – which is concerned mainly with telecoms competition matters; and the Ministerio de Ciencia y Tecnología (Ministry for Science and Technology). Both have taken a fairly relaxed attitude to “pirate” stations. There has been tighter regulation in some of the devolved regions, such as Catalonia (Consell de l’Audiovisual de Catalunya) and in Navarra (Consejo Audiovisual de Navarra). A consultative Council also exists for the Community of Madrid (Consejo Audiovisual de la Comunidad de Madrid).

The result is a country with more than 1,000 local channels. Target audience size ranges from single villages (or a few local villages); through city-wide TV; to regional TV. The range of programming is equally vast – from news of local village events to wide showcases for up and coming film-makers.

However, the “free-for-all” era may be coming to an end. Certainly, the question of “piracy” has now been recognised as an issue for the authorities, as Spain plans for digital switchover. The national authorities recently intensified a fight against un-

licensed television by closing down scores of illegal local TV stations, following a statement about the need to “clarify” the market, and release analogue spectrum. In Madrid alone, the regional Government has closed down 21 illegal local TV channels (and 33 radio stations) and has imposed a 1.5 million Euros fine on one residents’ association for pirating the signal of 14 legitimate TV channels. A further 16 local television stations in the Madrid region will also have to close down, as they do not have a licence to broadcast. As a result of this action, more and more channels have opted to apply for proper licences, hoping this will bring with it the offer of digital spectrum when Spain switches off the analogue signal in 2010. Certainly, an outline digital plan includes provision for a large number of local TV channels. Already, the anti-piracy drive in the capital is being linked to the award of 53 new local TV licences, which will have to be in operation by the beginning of next year. 44 different companies have made 115 bids for those licences.

### **c) Former Yugoslavia, and East European countries**

At the moment, the real explosion in local TV is taking place in eastern Europe and the Balkans. The fall of the Berlin Wall and the collapse of communism brought with it a huge thirst for outlets where new-found “freedom of expression” can be exercised. The most extreme example is the Serbian city of Nis (population 175,000), which at one time had 17 local TV channels, of various sizes. Almost all the channels are terrestrial broadcasters.

As with Spain, there has been an explosion of un-licensed transmission and piracy of other stations’ material. In Serbia, and elsewhere in the Balkans and eastern Europe, the authorities are catching up and are beginning to regularise the broadcast environment. However, there is no move to reduce the number of stations – almost all of which are transmitting on terrestrial frequencies. Accurate data is hard to come by in such an environment, but some examples of *licensed* broadcasters include:

- TV Vranje in Serbia, which transmits on terrestrial frequency to a city of some 245,000 people. It is on air from 9 a.m. to midnight every weekday (and from midday to midnight at weekends). It is funded by the local authority, which uses the station as a conduit for civic and other local news and information. The fifty full time employees transmit an output which is 55 per cent first-run, self-generated programming.
- TV Cacak, also in Serbia, is funded through a combination of advertising and local authority subsidy. It too is transmitted on terrestrial frequency and employs around 50 staff. The station is on air for 17 hours a day, broadcasting a mix of news, current affairs and discussion programmes.
- ATV is another Serbian station – albeit over the border in the Republica Srpska province of Bosnia/Herzegovina. It operates on an entirely self-sufficient, commercial basis (although it is dependent on 15 per cent public donations to keep going – down from around 80 per cent at its inception 8 years ago). Based in Banja Luca it estimates (perhaps generously) that it has a regular audience of around 800,000 and manages to transmit 24 hours a day, seven days a week. The station employs 120 staff and the output includes almost every genre of programming (news, current affairs, pop videos, tele-shopping, sport, movies) – all targeted at the local Serbian population. Unlike the smaller stations, its transmissions are on cable and satellite as well as terrestrial.

# UK Local TV Forum

"The Government are committed to supporting local television and we very much hope to see an expansion of services in the future. We envisage that local television will play a valuable role in keeping communities informed and in particular, help keep in touch those most socially isolated members of the community who may not have access, or are uneasy about using new technology. Local television will also bring economic benefits to areas in terms of employment and training...." LORD McINTOSH, Minister for the Media and Heritage at DCMS, addressing Scottish Local TV Forum 2005.

The 'add/drop solution' was initially proposed at the Scottish Local TV Forum. It "offers the most consistent and convenient solution, and potentially offers the widest reach for Local TV of all the terrestrial options." OFCOM, Digital Local, January 2006

digital local television  
**22nd March 2006**

10.00-5.00pm  
**CoSLA**

Rosebery House  
Haymarket Terrace  
Edinburgh  
EH12 5XZ

to register, email names of delegates and organisation to  
**tana@talktalk.net**

**£75.00** (concessions available)

## UK Local TV Forum

Registration and Exhibition

10.00

10.30

### Local Freeview & Broadband on TV

Add/Drop & Engineering Local Digital Terrestrial

Serge Francois, Terayon, Belgium

Andy Woodcock, ngwireless TBC

Prospects for Broadband on TV

TBC, Homechoice

Broadband

Iolo Jones, Narrowstep

Question & Answer

COFFEE

11.45

12.00

### Council Channels & Economic Development

County TV

Peter Williams, PWTv

South Lanarkshire TV

Drew King, South Lanarkshire Council

Question & Answer

LUNCH

1.00

2.00

### A sense of proportion?

City TV Kosice - city & satellite

Eva Dekanovska, City TV Kosice

Community Production opportunities with BBC Local

Nic Millington, Rural Media Company

Question & Answer

TEA

3.45

4.00

### Investment Enterprise and Partnership

Regional Enterprise

Philip Reevell, North West Vision Digital Platform

Regional Newspapers & Local News

Robert Freeman, Press Association


Question & Answer

FINISH

5.00

SCHOOL  
PRESS

triangulum  
consulting

Local 

Campaign for Local TV

ACTO



The Broadcasting Trust

MAPS  
media access projects scotland



Institute of Local Television

# Local e • PETITION

AT DIGITAL SWITCHOVER, we call upon the UK government to make provision for a Local TV channel in ALL LOCAL AUTHORITY AREAS to ensure a majority of households are able to receive a Local TV channel alongside the other public service channels.

Vote **LOCAL TV** Today

<http://www.commentonline.co.uk/survey/>

to assist local TV organisation in your area and across the UK email [local.tv@virgin.net](mailto:local.tv@virgin.net) for copies of the paper version of the **CAMPAIGN for LOCAL TV PETITION**, some **LOCAL ✓ BADGES** and copies of the **LOCAL TV PARLOUR GAME**. Otherwise, do you really want more Quiz, Shopping Channels and Lifestyle channels *instead of Local TV?*

## CAMPAIGN for LOCAL TV

*Local TV and digital switchover provide a major opportunity to redistribute the social and economic benefits of broadcasting across the UK in creating upwards of 240 local scale TV channels. These will provide employment closer to the centres of media and journalism training, local news where it is relevant and local programmes that address community needs and aspirations.* Dave Rushton, Director, Institute of Local Television, at Television from the Nations and Regions: The Promised Land, the future of television outside London, January 2006.

**LOCAL TELEVISION PUBLICATIONS from the Institute of Local Television**  
*The Pocket LOCAL CHANNEL ATLAS (Scotland)* ISBN: 1 899405 05 4. The 'add/drop solution' explained. The terrestrial Local TV option proposed by ACTO and described in Ofcom's Digital Local as "the most consistent and convenient solution and potentially offers the widest reach for Local TV of all the terrestrial options." Add/drop explained and applied to delivering Local TV throughout Scotland (2005), £9.00 inc p&p 40pgs.

**ACTO - local public service television directories.** Is the pdf directory circulated as an information resource and discussion forum on Local TV. FOC and distributed by email to over 800 readers. To 'subscribe' forward you email address. Papers from the first ten editions of ACTO have been compiled into LOCAL television REPORT.

**LOCAL television REPORT - ACTO local public service television papers**, ISBN: 1 899405 04 6, published by School Press/ACTO/Institute of Local Television, (December 2005), £13.50 inc p&p 144 pgs. Softback. CONTENTS I Preamble. ii Introduction. ONE Questions & Answers: Natalie White's: Questions on the Future of Local Television; Ofcom's: Assessing the Future of Local Television and Interactive Services: A Survey for Stakeholders. TWO European Background: Assessing Opportunities for Local TV Across Europe; THREE Case Histories: Triangle TV Auckland; Open Channels Germany; Open Channel Berlin; Teveline: Reality Show vs Real People; Channel Six Dundee plus Audience Research; 'e-tv' in Aberfeldy. FOUR Local Spectrum & Costs: The Add/drop Solution and Local Network Channel; How Big or Small is Local TV?; A Stab at Local TV Costs. FIVE Shifting Policies: Media Literacy, Local Licences and Local Government; God's Own Spectrum: Local TV and the Public Good; Regional Variations in Production Spend; Bigger Picture on the Smaller Screen; Valuing Local Public Service Television. SIX Nutshell: ACTO Checklist to Ofcom, April 2005.

**LOCAL TELEVISION RENEWED: essays on local television 1994-2005** published by School Press for the Institute of Local Television, (August 2005). £13.50 inc p&p 112 pgs, Softback LOCAL TELEVISION RENEWED provides a vigorous critique of the political impact of public service broadcasting since 1990 and argues for two hundred plus independent local, community and municipal television channels in line with developments underway across Europe. LOCAL TELEVISION RENEWED outlines how these proposals for local TV channels can be introduced as part of digital switchover from 2008 and expanded via broadband.

LOCAL TELEVISION RENEWED is the fifth volume on local television to be published by the Institute of Local Television - published either with John Libbey, the Community Radio Association (CRA, now the Community Media Association) or on the ILT imprint: School Press.

LOCAL TELEVISION RENEWED: essays on local television 1994-2005, ISBN:1 899405 03 8, Dave Rushton, published by School Press (2005) £13.50 inc p&p 112 pgs Softback CONTENTS Preamble; Introduction; Technical Background; Virtual Reality; Vicarious and Experiential TV News; A General Theory of Spectrum; Defining the Social Geography of Local News Identity; Assessing opportunities for local digital TV across Europe; Add/Drop and the Local Network Channel. APPENDICES: A Local Television Reader; Scottish Local TV Forum Report; Some pointers for filming local TV news and short documentaries

**CITIZEN TELEVISION: a local dimension to Public Service Broadcasting**, ISBN: 0 86196 433 0 edited by Dave Rushton, published by John Libbey & Institute of Local Television (1993) £19.50 inc p&p 232 pgs Hardback CONTENTS PART ONE - Research & Analysis: Citizens and the Local Choice. Edinburgh Television Study, Peter Kitchenman; Cable Company Franchise Commitments, Adrian Friedli; Highways Authority Experience of UK Cable Build, Inken Schindler; Local Authority Cable Briefing, Lyndsey Bowditch; Reading the ITC's Mapping Regional Views, Dave Rushton; Survey of Local Channels on UK Cable, 1992, Julie White; A Local Future on Cable?, Dave Rushton PART TWO - Commentary & Critique, Local Public Service Television. Making Local Work, Dave Rushton; Amendments to the ITC's Draft Invitation to Apply for Channel 5, Amanda Gibbs & Dave Rushton; Channel 5 and Local Television, Dave Rushton; 'Star Rating'

Channel 5 Transmitters, Dave Rushton; The European Meeting of Local Television, Dave Rushton. APPENDICES, Section 7 Cable and Broadcasting Act, 1984; Local Channel Survey, 1989, Peter Kitchenman; Tables 9-14, 16, 19 & 21, Peter Kitchenman; Cable Growth, 1983-1992; Pilot Local C5 Survey Edinburgh, 1990, Lyndsey Bowditch; C3 Regional Populations and C5 Transmitter Populations

**LOCAL TELEVISION REVIEWED: essays on local television 1982-1993**, ISBN: 1 899405 003 Dave Rushton, published by John Libbey & Institute of Local Television (1994) £9.50 inc p&p 48 pgs Softback CONTENTS Introduction; Cable, Cable TV and Video; Work! Work!!; Cultural, Racial, Economic, Political, Social & Class Bias (etc) ... on TV; Swindon Viewpoint, Aberdeen Cable, Cable Authority and the Grapevine Channel; Origins of UK Cable; Cable, Channel 4 and Tape Distribution.

**CREATING LOCAL TELEVISION: local and community television under the Restricted Services Licence**, 1 899405 01 1 Dave Rushton, published by John Libbey, Institute of Local Television & CMA (1997) £10.50 inc p&p 78 pgs Softback CONTENTS PART ONE - Policy and Intervention. Policy and intervention; PART TWO - Preparing a TV RSL; Locating frequency channels for TV RSLs; Blueprint for a TV RSL; Organising a TV RSL; APPENDICES.

**DON QUIXOTE'S ART & TELEVISION: seeing things in art and television**, ISBN: 1 899405 02 X Dave Rushton with an introduction by Terry Atkinson, published by School Press (1998) £8.50 inc p&p 48 pgs Softback. CONTENTS Introduction, Terry Atkinson; Noisy Channel; Art & Artifice: or designs on the past; Open Channels and Media Literacy.

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