

ACTO5

local public service television directory

- **LOCAL TV REVIEW:**
one year on - where
have we got to, where
do we need to be?
(or a **FORUM preview**)

- **UK LOCAL TV FORUM**
Local F
TV

UK LOCAL TV FORUM

22nd MARCH - only two places left
details page 8

• **Public Input** •

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 10) 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 fifteenth edition of the **ACTO - local public service television directory**.

ACTO back issues can be downloaded from www.maccess.org.uk/members/ilt.html

WEBSITES

For information:

on local and community TV in Europe: www.obs.int/db/persky/eu.html

on community TV channels worldwide: www.openchannel.se/

UK's Community Media Association: www.commedia.org.uk/

UK examples of local and community TV programmes:

www.showcase.commedia.org.uk/

website of NvTv Belfast's Local TV Channel: 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/

..... 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/ shared with The Broadcasting Trust, website lists publications, provides background papers, illustrates local TV DVDs, 2.4 Ghz TV studies

Ofcom's spectrum dividend review consultation

http://www.ofcom.org.uk/media/news/2005/11/nr_20051117

Local TV Review: one year on - where have we got to, where do we need to be? or the UK LOCAL TV FORUM preview.

DTT

DTT: Infrastructure

At the Digital Dividend Review meeting on 15th February Steve Holdsworth from Arqiva advised that digital terrestrial antenna equipment was being installed this summer at the Selkirk transmitter with Caldbeck antennae the following Spring/Summer, for which equipment is on order. DTT build was now under way in preparation for the switchover to Digital Terrestrial Television from 2008.

Conclusion: equipment decisions and engineering work are beginning and will soon get in the way or add substantially to the cost of introducing Local TV channels at a later date.

DTT: Redesign of the Service Insertion Point for Service Information (SIPSI)

At a meeting at ngwireless on 1st March ACTO learned that the data that holds together and identifies the digital channels in their multiplexes - known as SIPSI - is to be redesigned in anticipation of the services that will roll out from switchover in 2008. At present this makes no provision for Local TV.

Conclusion: because SIPSI is critical to the distribution of any and all DTT channels - 'Local TV' needs to be accommodated and in turn its SI information responsive to the SIPSI framework. (See also box below)

ACTO VIEW: The DCMS and Ofcom seem to have misled the Local TV sector for several months on the realistically available options for Local DTT, suggesting too that decisions on Local TV solutions might wait till after the Regional Radio Conference in May and the Digital Dividend Review in April 2007. By then it will be too late - **engineering decisions being taken now and architectural constraints in the SIPSI design will preclude the introduction of Local TV on DTT unless decisions are taken soon.**

There has been disingenuousness if not downright dishonesty at the DCMS and - at best - some confused signals from Ofcom combining into their 'three wise monkeys' approach to Local TV on DTT. An almost monastic culture of engineering indifference at DCMS results in entirely unwarranted hostility to pointing this deficit out. One of their number can write in October 2005

Government does not have any stated policy of bringing local television to every single citizen in the country. This would just not be possible.

In spite of what some mandarins in Whitehall might wish - it is possible.

But ... a decision to introduce Local TV in the PSB muxes needs to be made within the next few weeks, not months and certainly not in a year's time - or the above DCMS wish-fulfilment *will* become engineering fact!

This week would be a good time for DCMS Minister James Purnell or Secretary of State Tessa Jowell to recognise in parliament independent Local TV as public service broadcasting to be introduced in the summer under an Order of Licence. These channels will add plurality to the BBC and replace the regional ITV services on public spectrum. Drafts of the Order of Licence have been available since early 2005 and should be published for discussion! Requests (of 5th March 2006) to James Purnell to make the drafts of the Draft available under the Freedom of Information rules have not so much been rejected - they've just been ignored.

The Digital Network (TDN) is concerned at the implications for Service Information SI of the Local DTT options as outlined in Ofcom's proposals for Digital Local TV.

Broadly a Local TV signal would need to duplicate all the SIPSI information (Service Insertion Point for Service Information) as it enters the home's set-top box. Without this data a locally originated signal could cause the set-top box to confuse the other muxed channels or not be recognised on the programme guide.

The add/drop solution replaces a national channel - the Local Network Channel (LNC) - that is combined in a national mux to carry the relevant components of the SI.

On first pass this suggestion seemed to create enormous capacity requirements for Logical Channel Numbers assigned to identify channels.

However, because the three proposed Local Network Channels are ultimately to deliver three Local TV channels to a limited area a unique Logical Channel Number for each Local TV channel would not be necessary. Assigning one Logical Channel Number to each of the three proposed LNCs would ensure correct identification at each local transmission site - for example as Local Channel X1, Local Channel X2, Local Channel X3.

The DTT broadcasters and their transmission service providers are soon to start work on the redesign of the SIPSI and after discussion Local TV think it is possible that programme information for each Local TV channel could be added at the SIPSI sites. The maximum number of local programme insertions to be handled at a SIPSI site would be approximately fifteen (SIPSI + number of daughter transmitter sites x 3 Local TV channels).

Andrew Woodcock, Chairman of TDN, has circulated the Institute of Local Television's request to review the SI implications of Ofcom's three Local TV options within TDN and the SI group will be producing a short paper on the pro's and con's of each option.

SATELLITE

Satellite raises a spectre for the supposedly more efficient goal of future spectrum management, an unusual suggestion by Ofcom as an option for Local TV.

The recently launched Digital Dividend Review has to convince the broadcasting policy enlightened, media literate citizen-consumer that digital terrestrial delivery of national television channels is more efficient than satellite delivery.

Terrestrial digital spectrum is more efficient if deployed delivering a multitude of local and regional television signals rather than being eaten up delivering national channels.

In addition, spectrum use locally - for broadcasting and possibly for other services too - encourages local broadcasting and distribution economies to flourish and helps address the monstrous economic legacy and cultural imbalance in analogue broadcasting which favours London over all other parts of the UK.

What if ... the Office of Fair Trading and Competition Commission were to take an interest in broadcasting ??? Imagine ...

As part of the Digital Dividend Review the OfT and CC are investigating the hold over digital broadcasting spectrum by four major TV broadcasters - the BBC, ITV, Channel Four and Five [read here large supermarket chains]. Three of these operators are opening spin off channels to occupy spectrum in the form of variations of their main channels. Local channels [read here corner shops] have argued for fifteen or more years that the monopolisation of broadcast spectrum by national TV has denied access to smaller more localised and bespoke services, that spectrum banking has been going on for decades. It is clear that national TV channels can be more efficiently delivered by satellite - a key feature of the Digital Dividend Review will be to look at this - and the pressure on Local TV to use satellite made at times by both the DCMS and Ofcom is unrealistic if not contrary to the more efficient use of terrestrial digital spectrum. Local TV operators claim that government and regulators collude with the big four broadcasters to monopolise this resource, offering some services public service status without justification in comparison with local proposals and that recently withdrawing public service obligations from some TV companies has allowed them to retain a right of access to so-called PSB muxes. A Commission spokesman added, "there may well be a European dimension to spectrum access and we wish to ensure the UK's approach is even handed and fair to all possible spectrum users".

Broadcasting is more than product making - it is an economy made up of disseminating representations producing its public service broadcasting by picturing Britain through editorial and programme selection, through a centralised choice of authorities and information, through racial and gender balances in staffing, in choosing news priorities as well as in entertainment selection - via a highly centralised and interlocking social process involving production, programme management as well as distribution. Independent production is one thing - but 60% or more is with a handful of companies and even bigger percentage of whom are based within the M25. The next step must be independent distribution: local public service broadcasting.

Taken together the gross national conceit of PSB as being in some genuine way 'national' sustain a fictive Britain which is largely devoid of national and regional distinction and certainly of more local empowerment. A virtual country where English regional difference, local authority and distinction - is for the most part built out into an acceptable central substitute (or left impoverished, marginalised and somewhat tacky in its regional reproduction on TV).

Given the priority of Ofcom's brief towards both regulatory efficiency and citizen-consumers (tempered with addressing their specific needs in the nations and regions) the conclusion of the DDR has to address how terrestrial spectrum for whatever purpose might be more economically and efficiently used if locally 'owned' in the area of its transmission. Locally - in future - some spectrum can be made available to 'national' services under locally beneficial and determined terms of supply.

With public service responsibilities more than amply filled nationally now, future spectrum use and importantly its 'use value' reverts to local decision.

With regional ITV losing its PSB responsibilities in the regions the spectrum and the

The Public Purposes of 'Local TV'

- “• To inform ourselves and others and to increase our understanding of the world through news, information and analysis of current events and ideas, with particular focus on issues relevant to our locality
- To stimulate our interest in and knowledge of arts, science, history and other topics, particularly those relevant to our locality, through content that is accessible and encourage informal learning
- To reflect and strengthen our cultural identity, particularly that based on shared local identities, through original programming at local level, on occasion bringing audiences together for shared experiences
- To make us aware of different cultures and alternative viewpoints, through programmes that reflect the lives of other people and other communities, especially those within our local area
- To support and enhance our access to local services, involvement in community affairs, participation in democratic processes and consumer advice and protection” *Digital Local, Ofcom, Jan 2006*

opportunity cost (£70 million) lost to PSB has to be recovered and reinvested in Local TV.

However, the proposed market in digital spectrum which is expected as an outcome of the DDR is very likely to overlook the gross spectrum inefficiency of national TV channels delivered on terrestrial channels - because the engineering of DTT is already under way.

The suggestion that has been made by Ofcom and the DCMS that Local TV might themselves use satellite underlines the intellectual and political poverty of the DDR as an exercise - compromised beyond belief before its inception.

Conclusion: Satellite is not suited for delivery of local, regional or for that matter sub-regional Gaelic TV - since even where apparently confined to localised postal code area reception by set-top receivers the satellite signal is still UK or North European in its reach. Satellite is efficient for television services aimed at UK wide and bigger undifferentiated audiences.

Satellite is expensive for Local TV at £500k per year per channel including up-link and most of the reach of its signal is not used. Ofcom has yet to justify its claim (in Digital Local) that satellite may be a less expensive option for Local TV compared with DTT - when 243 Local TV channels on satellite would involve transponder and uplink rental of £120m per year. This number of Local satellite channels may be to handle - and would almost certainly push competition for satellite spectrum up further.

ACTO VIEW: The add/drop solution with local network channels requires three single national channels running on PSB muxes to provide 243 Local TV channels. In comparison, 243 Local TV channels on satellite - all reaching most of Northern Europe - would require 30 or so dedicated satellite muxes.

IPTV (Broadband on TV)

BT

BT plan to conduct two levels of staff trials on IPTV during the summer of 2006, a pilot

launch of their broadband on TV service in the Autumn with a view to a full commercial launch later in the year. BT's option will piggyback reception of the DTT channels with a combined Freeview-IPTV server. BT will offer a variety of channels/services which can be sourced through the broadband phone line. BT are currently pulling together key content suppliers and consequently the backbone of their proposition will cover 'mainstream content genres'.

BT has been discussing the opportunities for local video content and interactive services and it is possible they will decide to offer local news, information and entertainment media targeted at specific geographic communities, but this decision will be taken further down the line - possibly not until later in 2007.

"Whilst there could well be future prospects for regionalised programming on the BT services, at the current time we need to focus on the key elements of the service and its functionality"

Local functionality will however be by area postcode and possibly Local or neighbourhood TV news, debate and other services could be downloaded in future from as close-by as the local switch. If this were to materialise this would offer a valuable way of localising further the Local TV channels proposed for DTT at a city or county.

Homechoice

The plans for this IPTV or Broadband on TV operator are known to include expansion to other parts of the UK from London and Stevenage. Roll out details of these plans are not known.

KIT (Kingston Interactive TV)

Recently the Kingston upon Hull IPTV service announced it was to close with 4000 homes connected. Further details when available.

ACTO VIEW: BT's plans remain interesting although still evolving and tied to Freeview households. The Homechoice option is more comprehensive because it delivers all its TV services down the ADSL phone line - but UK roll out is likely to be slower than for BT's option. The timetable and lack of roll-out and 'localness' of both BT's and Homechoice's plans make reliance on these platforms unrealistic for Local TV since the uncertainties of reach and scale will not be resolved till well after the point of no return on Local DTT access (see above).

BORDERS LOCAL TV BRIEFING

Monday 24th April 10.30am to 4.00pm, Council Hall, English Street, Dumfries

Meeting organised by the Institute of Local Television for councillors and staff, MPs, MSPs, local business, Health Board, HE & FE education, economic development agencies, local community organisations, newspaper groups and interested parties living or working in Cumbria, Scottish Borders, Dumfries & Galloway and Isle of Man.

Draft Agenda

- **Economic Profile of Local TV**
- **Technical proposition using the Caldbeck & Selkirk Transmitters**
- **Future Representation of Local TV interests**
- **Elements of a Local TV Business Plan**

to book: local.tv@virgin.net

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 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

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

UK Local TV Forum

10.00

Registration and Exhibition

10.30

Local Freeview & Broadband on TV

Add/Drop & Engineering Local Digital Terrestrial

Serge Francois, Terayon, Belgium

Keith Hayler, ngwireless TBC

Broadband TV

Iolo Jones, Narrowstep

Question & Answer

11.45

COFFEE

12.00

Council Channels & Economic Development

County TV

Peter Williams, PWTV

South Lanarkshire TV

Drew King, South Lanarkshire Council

Question & Answer

1.00

LUNCH

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

3.45

TEA

4.00

Investment Enterprise and Partnership

Regional Enterprise

Philip Reeve, North West Vision Digital Platform

Regional Newspapers & Local News

Robert Freeman, Press Association


Question & Answer

5.00

FINISH

SCHOOL
PRESS

triangulum
consulting

Local 

Campaign for Local TV

MAPS
media access projects scotland



Institute of Local Television

ACTO



The Broadcasting Trust

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.

Orders or further enquiries can be addressed to **Institute of Local Television 13 Bellevue Place Edinburgh EH7 4BS** or by email to local.tv@virgin.net.



Sale of books and your voluntary subscriptions of £30.00 per year help keep ACTO afloat. To support send cheques made out to Institute of Local Television marked ACTO on the back. With thanks.

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