

# ACTO3

local public service television directory

**The RSLs are public service  
broadcasters - the November  
2006 CMA/ILT Survey**

**CASE HISTORIES:**

**Community TV: Getting There**

**NvTv - Belfast's local channel**

**Chris Booth's introduction to  
Public Access TV in the US**

**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 22) 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 twenty third 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.nvtv.co.uk](http://www.nvtv.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 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)

## RSL SURVEY CMA/ILT NOVEMBER 2006

Strange, in the seven years since the local terrestrial TV channels have been running under the Restricted Service Licences neither the ITC or Ofcom have undertaken a survey of the service provided.<sup>1</sup> The closest a regulator's survey has so far come to Local TV has been in *Pride of Place*, one of the last viewer surveys undertaken by the ITC. This found that Local TV(RSLs) were wanted by viewers - that *local TV should replace regional ITV, if regional services were to be wound down*. Strange, prophetic even.<sup>2</sup>

So this present survey conducted by the Institute of Local Television for the Community Media Association, for publication in *Airflash* and the pdf local TV directory *ACTO* is a 'snapshot' before Ofcom's consultation on the future use of digital spectrum begins next month.

To set the scene, we invited each RSL channel to indicate whether they served a general audience or a particular minority or community of interest in their local area.

### ONE: TELL US ABOUT YOUR CHANNEL

<b>Channel Name</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Audience focus</b>
Capital TV	Cardiff	General
York@54 (York TV)	York	General
NvTv	Belfast	General
Channel M	Manchester	General
Carlisle & Teesside	Carlisle & Teesside	Under test transmission
Solent TV	Isle of Wight	General
MATV Channel 6	Leicester	Local community of South East Asian origin

### TWO: HOW DO YOU ACCESS YOUR VIEWERS?

The problem for the RSLs is reaching their 'local' audience. Domestic TV aerials are directional and can't easily be redirected without affecting reception of other channels. To secure viewers Local TV has to work within the constraints of the long-standing transmitter and reception pattern which digital TV is also trying to fit itself into.

Most of the Local TV channels experience poor reception, a weak signal on an out of band frequency - making reception very difficult. The RSL transmitters have often been too low down on the shared transmitter mast or located in the wrong place. Each RSL is restricted to one transmitter and one relay and this can reduce the number of accessible homes in their area.

However these problems will largely disappear if Local TV is delivered on the digital terrestrial public service multiplexes (the PSB 'muxes'). To achieve this the Local TV service will need to offer a 'public service' reflecting perhaps Ofcom's proposals for local 'public purpose'.

This is what Ofcom had in mind for public purpose in their *Digital Local* report of January 2006.

Ofcom's 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

**PUBLIC PURPOSE**

So do the RSLs fulfill a public purpose? If so, should they be included among the public service broadcasters on the PSB muxes? Ofcom also suggest in *Digital Local* that the regulators have not been be interested in Local TV in the past because it hasn't been widely available. For this Survey we invited the RSLs to estimate the number of viewers in their area able to receive their off-air TV signal and to compare this number with the possible audience for whom their service would have relevance.

AUDIENCE	Estimated terrestrial audience	Estimated relevant audience	% reach
Capital TV	-	290,000*	
York@54	7-10,000	250,000	2.8-4%
NvTv	50,000	250,000	20%
Channel M	388,000	-	-
Solent TV	20,000	136,000	15%
MATV Channel 6	100,000	250-300,000	33-40%

\* potential, but actual figure severely reduced by DTT take up in the area

On their analogue frequencies one RSL can be seen by up to 40% of their relevant audience while the remainder reach much small percentages. To overcome difficulties of access three channels (**Channel M** and **Solent TV** and **MATV Channel 6**) have negotiated access onto cable and satellite.

**Channel M** reaches 167,000 by cable and 255,000 by satellite - figures representing those living in Greater Manchester, although households across the whole north west region can receive Channel M via cable and the whole of the UK and parts of western Europe can receive the channel by satellite.

**Solent TV** reaches 12,500 viewers on cable and by satellite 20 million - although the relevant audience sought by the channel is the 136,000 indicated above.

**MATC Channel 6** reaches 250,000 viewers on cable and 1.4 million by satellite.

**SO, DOES LOCAL TV PROVIDE A PUBLIC AND COMMUNITY SERVICE?**

Ofcom's 'public purpose' could form the cornerstone of a terrestrial Local TV licence.

For this survey we were unable to conduct face to face interviews with viewers so concentrated on a range of local news and information provisions.

News and information are clear avenues through which local channels can engage the various constituencies among each audience. The public agencies identified for our survey determine local policies as well as provide services that are usually distinctive in origin and use. Local news is relevant to an audience most affected, allowing Local TV to offer better coverage and debate than channels serving larger regional or national communities. Of course, Local TV is also well placed to provide news of one-off events, festivals and local activities.

The list is indicative – emphasising the delivery of general local public services which impact upon those living in each area served by a local channel. Since the 2003 Communications Act local authorities have also been able to hold broadcasting licences limited to the local areas for which they provide their services.

## TWO: WHAT IS THE VALUE OF YOUR CHANNEL TO LOCAL COMMUNITIES?

<i>Do you provide news and information about the services from the following:</i>						
	<b>Capital TV</b>	<b>York@54</b>	<b>NvTv</b>	<b>Channel M</b>	<b>Solent TV</b>	<b>MATV</b>
<b>local authority</b>	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
<b>fire service</b>	Yes	Yes	-	Yes	Yes	Yes
<b>police service</b>	Yes	Yes	Yes		Yes	Yes
<b>health board</b>	Yes	Yes	Yes		Yes	Yes
<b>civil and emergency support</b>	Yes	Yes	-	-	Yes	Yes
<b>education authority</b>	Yes	Yes	Yes		Yes	Yes
<b>community education</b>	Yes	-	Yes	-	-	
<b>family and social services</b>	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
<b>local sporting events</b>	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
<b>local festivals</b>	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
<b>local sources of leisure information</b>	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
<i>include participation of local organisations,</i>						
<b>access for charities/ voluntary organisations</b>	Yes	Yes	Yes	-	Yes	Yes
<b>programming by community producers</b>	Yes	Yes	Yes	-	Yes	Yes
<b>programmes for religious and/or ethnic communities</b>	Yes	Yes	Yes	-	-	Big Yes
<b>news service</b>	Yes	-	-	Yes	Yes	Yes*
<b>debates on local civic and cultural issues</b>	Yes	Yes	Yes	-	Yes	Yes
<i>training initiatives,</i>						
<b>programmes by students and/or colleges and universities</b>	Yes**	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes***
<b>training schemes in local or community broadcasting</b>	Yes	Yes	Yes	-	Yes	Yes
<i>and provide programmes for the more vulnerable members in the community</i>						
<b>programmes for local children</b>	Yes	Yes	Yes	-	-	Yes
<b>programmes by young people</b>	Yes	Yes	Yes	-	Yes	Yes
<b>programmes by senior citizens</b>	Not yet	Not yet	Yes	-	Yes	Yes

\* Leicestershire in Focus is MATV's flagship programme  
 \*\* in participation with Media4Communities and Media4Schools  
 \*\*\* only under supervision of the channel training schemes in local or community broadcasting

### **DO OTHER PROGRAMMING STRANDS CONTRIBUTE TO PUBLIC GOODWILL AND UNDERSTANDING?**

**MATV Channel 6** We have given airspace to the new immigrant community of Somali origin. We have also attempted to widen our audience base to the whole of the local Leistershire community by providing a significant amount of programmes in English.

### **THREE: SHOULD LOCAL TV REACH EVERY HOUSEHOLD IN ITS LICENSED AREA?**

<b>Capital TV</b>	Yes
<b>York@54</b>	Yes
<b>NvTv</b>	Yes
<b>Channel M</b>	Yes
<b>Carlise &amp; Teesside</b>	Not possible now with analogue, nor with digital
<b>Solent TV</b>	Yes
<b>MATV Channel 6</b>	Yes

### **WHY SHOULD THEY REACH EVERY HOME?**

**Capital TV** Viewers who cannot receive the service are disadvantaged and miss out on the local content - which is not available on any other channel

**York@54** See the role of local TV to fill gap because York rarely features in regional TV due to Leeds based regional structure

**NvTv** Universal access for Local TV

**Channel M** Because this service should not be restricted by means testing to only those who can afford to pay for it.

**Solent TV** Because we are the only local channel.

**MATV** To assist social cohesion

### **FOUR: WOULD PARTICIPATION IMPROVE IF YOU WERE AWARDED A LOCAL DIGITAL LICENSE AFTER SWITCHOVER?**

**Capital TV** Provided our signal was on the EPG and of equal strength and quality to all other Freeview digital channels receivable locally it would transform the prospects for our station.

**York@54** Ability to reach everyone would transform participation, help station profile and allow more to contribute in a platform for local people

**NvTv** Transform it overnight

**Channel M** By being available to the whole population of Greater Manchester and with plans to move towards user generated content to feed both the broadband service and the TV channel participation would increase greatly.

**Carlisle & Teesside** It would mean we could start to broadcast - without this commitment it is impossible to raise local funding. The key question [here] is the impact that a digital licence would have - it makes it possible to anticipate a future. You ask if local channel should be universal. In theory, under the old analogue model, yes. In practice, today, not possible - so depends on where you are as to how 'multi-platform' the channel might be. In Manchester they can afford to go on satellite, cable, free to air terrestrial, broadband - and probably local digital if it is auctioned. In Carlisle the best you could hope for is local terrestrial and broadband. In Middlesbrough, it might be possible to do terrestrial, broadband and cable. Down to each area to maximise coverage.

**Solent TV** We could continue to exist

**MATV Channel 6** More likely that everyone in catchment area will receive the channel and hence the opportunity for increased participation is available. At the moment only those that can receive want to utilise services of the channel.

**FIVE: SHOULD THE LOCAL LICENSE BE AWARDED BY 'AN OFCOM BEAUTY CONTEST'; 'BY HIGHEST BID'; 'BY LOCAL VALUATION' OR BY SOME OTHER MEANS - IF SO ... SUGGESTIONS?**

**Capital TV** RSL broadcasters operate in the roughest, toughest and riskiest sector of UK broadcasting - bar none. Our original licence was won in a "beauty parade"-type contest in competition with a rival applicant City Television. However it would be inappropriate to hold such a contest for RSL licence renewal as ITV licences have been renewed without competition.

RSL licensees have invested many hundreds of thousands of pounds in developing their businesses, their audiences and their infrastructure from scratch. It would not be right to allow new applicants to cash in on all the development work we have carried out.

We have been operating with analogue licences of indeterminate duration against a background in which our audiences have been cajoled and persuaded by the BBC and the Government to switch to digital.

No RSL broadcaster has yet been able to recoup their original investment and no RSL station has yet had sufficient long-term stability to enable them to reach their full potential. All RSL stations must be given a reasonable period of long-term stability to give them a chance of reaching their full potential and must have a level playing field in terms of resources and access to digital transmission.

We are now about to be challenged by the BBC's licence-subsidised local television operations resourced with budgets far in excess of what we can earn from meager local advertising and staffed by personnel paid way in excess of what RSL broadcasters can possibly afford.

It would be very unhealthy for every community in the country if the BBC was allowed to steamroller and squeeze out fledging local television so as to become the sole community television broadcaster in Britain.

Ofcom and the Government must ensure that there is a viable and healthy counterweight to the BBC in local television.

**York@54** A bit of all these - but highest bid should ensure operator has sufficient to build and sustain service.

**NvTv** Mixture of criteria - including public service

**Channel M** 'Beauty Contest'

**Carlisle & Teesside** 'Beauty Contest'

**Solent TV** 'By local valuation'

**MATV Channel 6** In the first instance a sufficient period say 10 years for the incumbent, then by community benefit test.

**SIX: DO YOU HAVE A GOOD NEWS STORY SHOWING HOW YOUR CHANNEL OR PROGRAMMING HAS HELPED AN INDIVIDUAL OR HIGHLIGHTED AN ISSUE THAT AFFECTS COMMUNITIES IN YOUR AREA?**

**Capital TV** Our station, in association with Media4Schools, broadcasts videos shot and edited by local schools and by groups of socially disadvantaged local unemployed youngsters who have gained totally new confidence by being involved in these projects. The output ranges from video dramas and historic re-creations to contemporary reports by youthful reporters.

Other productions have been made by long-term, unemployed people who have - with the professional support of Media4 - made excellent short documentaries about job-seeking, drugs, ASBOs and other social issues. We have also screened short films made by media students in Newport and Cardiff universities and by freelance local filmmakers who have produced high-quality videos on such topics as the Tsunami. This talent would never have come to light and these videos would never have been seen by a wider audience had it not been for Capital TV. We were proud to be sponsors of the recent "Local Oscars Ceremony" in which young people - and many adults too - involved in the winning productions were publicly recognized.

**York@54** York@54 raised £10,000 to help support York football club.

**NvTv** Many examples. Recently the Families against Car Crime were able to hand over a DVD of a programme which they were involved in making with one of our filmmakers and which had previously been broadcast to High Court judges deliberating on sentencing of offenders.

**Channel M** Channel M news produces one and a half hours of live news programming each day that is exclusively for and about Greater Manchester, the news is reported from the perspective of the people it affects and therefore every day is informing the population of Greater Manchester about issues that affect them. In addition the sports and entertainment strands provide content for the communities of Greater Manchester defined by not only geography but interest type, with content that cannot be sourced elsewhere.

**Solent TV** Take a look at the power of Local TV....

<http://www.solent.tv/pageviewer.aspx?page=S632956361122429983>

<http://www.solent.tv/pageviewer.aspx?page=S632988572704410000>

<http://www.solent.tv/pageviewer.aspx?page=S632991195870816250>

<http://www.solent.tv/newstoppers.aspx?topic=50>

<http://www.solent.tv/pageviewer.aspx?page=S632998205808906250>

**MATV Channel 6** The recent series entitled Kaleidoscope encouraged people of different faith to interact and learn about each other's culture so as to aid community cohesion. This resulted in Visitors from the EU to find out how Leicester is using local media for such purposes and to try and replicate in the continent.

**NOTES**

1. So far as Alan Stewart of Ofcom Scotland (and formerly with the ITC) is aware the ITC produced no reports on the RSLs/Local TV services or impact on viewers.

2. *Pride of Place: what viewers want from regional television*, An ITC Research Publication Report, Jane Sancho, July 2002 which sets out to survey Local TV demand but stops with one region and changes the question asked to look instead at young people's expectations of cable. (see also next section).

## CASE HISTORIES:

### Community Television: Getting There

#### Northern Visions and NvTv

Officially, this year is the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Northern Visions, Belfast's access media centre, though our history spans more than thirty years with the organisation itself evolving from a number of loose associations which grew out of the film, video and arts collective movement of the seventies. Over those years, every combination of media arts and literacy has been embarked upon including documentaries, shorts, experimental and fiction films made with the community, children's and young people's videos, animation, radio broadcasting, artists' and music videos, all of which included access to media resources and a myriad of 'training on production' opportunities.

During this chequered history, which included a stretch as a Channel 4 franchised workshop - working as independent producers for national television, and an Access Radio station - one of a number of pilots which paved the way for community radio in the 2003 Communications Act, the distribution of independently made films was ineffective, disappointing and patchy. When the opportunity arose to become a local television broadcaster, we viewed this as a natural progression to our work.

When we bid for the RSL (restricted service licence), in 2002, our centre and resources supported over two hundred community and cultural groups and a growing number of independent filmmakers each year, all producing a wide range of work. Everyone viewed television as the most powerful means of communication ever devised.....so why couldn't this amazing tool be at the disposal of those who wanted to make their own programmes? Why couldn't it be a genuine two way communication and as accessible as using pen and paper?

Up until we became a local broadcaster, some films made at the centre were broadcast on regional and national television, some were shown at film festivals but the majority were still being exhibited at community and youth centres to small audiences. There had to be an easier way to reach communities (in Belfast everyone was conscious of the need to reach ALL communities), and contribute to broadening the diversity of local voices that were being heard and the stories that were told.

National and regional television is a crowded environment with tight schedules and agendas. Their need to appeal to mass audiences to justify the licence fee or uphold shareholder profits had not proved a favourable environment for 'community' type programming. Despite cable and satellite offering numerous channels and greater choice there was little or no provision for local community broadcasting there either. Organisations charged with supporting the film and video sector were not offering innovative solutions and the onus of distribution was often left to the individual filmmaker or group relying on the 'strength of the work produced' to market itself.

Whilst Northern Visions understood the process of producing programmes, complicated and time-consuming as it was, starting a television station was uncharted territory and the information on how to do it was exceptionally hard to come by. Nevertheless, we made a bid in the second round of ITC applications for a licence.

At that point, the road to local television was littered with the first round of applicants who had failed in their attempt to become local broadcasters and had lost considerable monies in the process. Allocated frequencies were proving difficult for the public to receive, set-up costs were high, an inability to identify potential audience numbers was a shaky premise to attract financial investment, as was the provision that the licence, issued for four years, could be withdrawn during that time if the frequency was needed by the then ITC.

Not surprisingly, when millions of pounds are lost, it became the stuff of conspiracy. Why were groups being issued with such poor frequencies resulting in local television collapsing? Would local television be a threat to those who owned and operated U.K. television transmission? Being issued with an 'in group' frequency was a rarity but meant that the local population had a good chance of receiving a local station; an 'out of group' frequency would prove problematic. We were warned that our frequency was 'out of group' and could prove useless. No one knew for sure. The only real way to find out was to begin transmitting. That would require a heavy financial investment in the hardware that would risk everything Northern Visions owned.

In the event the transmission site we were allocated was fraught with problems. It was a non starter. Unexpected help came from the community that lived further down the mountain from the allocated site - an area falling within the worst socially deprived areas of the city. Locating on a site further down the mountain weakened reception but it had an unexpected advantage. In return for premises and 24-hour security, Northern Visions would work with the community and the wider district to deliver a series of documentaries about their culture and heritage, the social issues they faced and their achievements. This was to prove a highly fruitful partnership, resulting in some of the station's most insightful programmes from a community, which was both discontented and wary of how they were portrayed by national and regional television.

We took the plunge and bought the transmitter and antennae but still had to find a cost effective way of getting the signal to the transmitter from the studios. Done conventionally the cost for this was proving inordinate. We decided the easiest and cheapest way was a looped play-out system using a domestic DVD player changed daily in conjunction with a domestic Panasonic DVD/hard Disc player/recorder for longer broadcasts.

On February 9th 2004, the city's local television station, NvTv, began broadcasting to greater Belfast. Initially, NvTv began by broadcasting at least one hour of original local programming each day, repeated throughout the day, with a compilation of the week's broadcasts at the weekend. Given our experience as programme makers and of facilitating others, we knew how many hours were capable of being produced. In our submission to the ITC for the licence, we had been careful not to be over ambitious. Nevertheless, this was an enormous step in the dark, given that we had never produced one hour of television a day! In traditional terms, a one hour documentary for mainstream television costs around and over £80,000. We would never have those resources so how would community television work?

Northern Visions' aim was to enable community groups and individuals in the city to be seen and heard through making and broadcasting programmes that directly reflected their lives and views. In keeping with a community media ethos, we began developing our own processes for producing programmes. During the preceding eighteen months we had operated the Access Radio pilot, NVR100.6FM and a number of volunteer radio programme makers made the leap to local television, learning the new skills required and adapting their radio programmes to the visual medium. We continued to build on this. A volunteering scheme was established which proved so popular that it had to be suspended after a couple of weeks when over 100 people signed up. Encouraging volunteers to focus on ideas for programming was found to be the most productive way forward. It brought volunteers within the sphere of creativity, gave purpose to their training and often, given that those who volunteer are socially aware and feel a civic responsibility, supported others who were working to better society whether through the arts and culture, charities, urban regeneration or social and community development. NvTv was to become a 'real' creative and working environment for everyone. Programmes were produced, broadcast and began to receive feedback from the public.

We set about creating a team of community television journalists, all trained to do everything from research, through camera and sound to post production. Being multi skilled meant that the journalists could both work as a team or, when the occasion demanded, they could be relied upon to work independently. These journalists work with groups in the community. Allied to this were a number of week long schools throughout the year in video journalism which members of the public signed up for. These schools were intensive training courses, taught by the journalists themselves and designed around the production of a local television programme. Several initiatives grew from this process including an ethnic minority programme series which was eventually funded by the local authority and continues to be produced. A similar process to the community television schools, and partnered by the local authority, was initiated for young people in disadvantaged areas, making programming which explored diverse subjects including Chinese medicine, skateboarding, allotments in the city, recycling, conservation and the Second World War. This proved successful with a number of the young people going on to set up their own business, find employment in the industry or move on to further education.

The emerging digital technologies played an important part in programme production. Useful technical information was gleaned not from industry trade publications but from camcorder consumer magazines sold at the local newsagents. We had always experimented with new technologies. Our seventies' predecessors had established the first ever video project in Ireland, advancing community video using the video Portapak introduced by Sony, a piece of equipment which became a milestone in video technology. By today's standards, the equipment was heavy, unreliable, cumbersome, expensive and basic but it was enough to excite and unleash people's creative potential. In the eighties, as a franchised Channel 4 workshop, we pioneered the use of cheaper 3 chip camera technology allied to a high band recorder in the programmes we produced for national broadcasters, moving on to Hi8, and later MiniDV, having identified DV technology as the way forward with its revolutionary integration of fire wire technology to the inexpensive desktop computer, (up to that point Northern Visions filmmakers competed for the use of one expensive Avid edit suite). The timely introduction of the Apple Mac with Final Cut Pro edit software combined with the Sony PD150 enabled us to equip with several self contained production units capable of producing high quality programmes. Another spin off was that the new cheaper technologies began to allow artists, filmmakers and the general public to work more regularly and intensively on programme production which, in turn, gave them more opportunity to be creative and produce innovative work. At the moment we are building on this experience, intent on enabling schools, colleges, learning centres, arts and community centres, youth clubs, press centres at local authorities to have their own production centre producing programming for local television. Everyone now sees the potential of the new technologies for education and creative expression. What is needed is the training and know-how.

Over a period of five months in 2005, we surveyed 96 local groups, organisations and networks in its local area to ascertain how people felt about their representation in the media. 79% believed that their local community or constituency and the issues it faced were not well represented on television. 11% were unsure. Asked further as to why a local television forum might be useful, 70% mentioned issues to do with breaking the isolation they felt, 74% felt it would be beneficial to bring their work into the mainstream, 74% change perceptions about their work and 55% believed it would break down sectarian barriers. 88% said they would be interested in contributing to making the programming, with 12% being unsure, citing time, money and lack of experience. A massive finance raising exercise, still underway, was put into operation to support the groups surveyed. It's still the tip of the iceberg!

From 2006 onwards, Northern Visions hopes to really get to grips with developing a hub which connects groups and individuals who face discrimination, disadvantage, and social

exclusion. The media literacy support and free access to digital media resources, expertise and local television distribution remains as standard, what will be new is the attempt to bring business whether commercial or social entrepreneurs, government, politicians and other stakeholders together with the poorest in society and through the medium of television showcase positive ideas, projects, good practice and highlight the agenda of those working in communities which are most at need.

The survey documented how community groups' experience of television had been aloof, mediated, and unreliable. Some had managed to achieve a two-minute public announcement, most relied on a sound bite in a news report or faced the prospect of paying for an advertisement. By the same token, it has taken time and patience to re-educate hard pressed community groups that local television is a forum for their use and they should make the time and resources available to learn how to use it, that communities don't have to be isolated and marginalised anymore because a powerful collective forum exists, which actively seeks their involvement and wants to connect local communities. Once people engage in programme making they realise the skills needed are useful. They realise how exciting it is to know that the programmes they make are seen by thousands of people, that their work is recognised and commented on. This is especially so of those who have little presence on television – people with disabilities and those from ethnic minorities who make and present their own programmes.

Other developments are gradually taking place. Alerting the statutory and voluntary sector to the potential and benefits of community television, a new concept in the U.K. is slowly gathering speed. Belfast City Council, recognising the wealth of arts and cultural programming, commissioned a series of short films showcasing the cultural activities of the city. This was a perfect complement to the station and the council used the films in other contexts to promote the city. After a two year lobby involving MEPs, MPs, local councillors of all political persuasions, the Irish speaking community and the public, local television became eligible to apply to the Irish Language Broadcast Fund, a British government fund set up to support Irish language programme making. This led to a twelve month training and production scheme to support Irish language film and television production, utilising the unique training environment that local television could provide. The scheme is about to go into its second year.

The Arts Council of Northern Ireland supported a programme of media arts which was broadcast and which, it is hoped, will eventually deliver more experimentation in content and approach to filmmaking. It is acknowledged that this will take some time. The arts in Northern Ireland struggle to survive with per capita levels of funding half that of Scotland, for example, a disparity which continues to grow. Keen on nurturing emerging talent, Northern Visions sees itself helping to develop and sustain the work of artists and attempting to impact positively on their careers. Recently an artist with Northern Visions was successful in gaining funding from the Film Lottery for a six month commission to provide weekly arts programming for NvTv, the first artist to do so, and ground breaking in its recognition that a television series could be produced outside of traditional industry practice.

Identifying finance for community media per se is difficult. Northern Visions survives from finance raised from corporate projects together with a cocktail of public and philanthropic funds, the majority of which are not directly related to film and television production but to media literacy, training and urban regeneration. The incessant prattle from government about the Third Sector and the social economy has failed to deliver adequate resources for community and social development and even less for community communications. Similarly, National Lottery finance for film has failed to consider community filmmaking except on an ad hoc and highly restricted basis. This despite the Lottery Act of 1998 which assured us that

film-making would be for 'public good not for private gain' and the funding strategy would 'ensure that all parts of the country have access to funding', with 'access to film for people from all sections of society' generating 'scope for reducing economic and social deprivation'. There is no policy for community media yet there should be.

Contrast all of this with the South of Ireland, which will soon have three local television channels for the Dublin area with more planned throughout Ireland, serving a total population of just over four million. Financial assistance for community filmmaking is provided from a broadcasting fund of £12 million designed to increase public access at national, local and community level to television programmes which explore themes of Irish culture, heritage and experience.

There is still so much more that could be achieved. The battle is no longer to capture the public's imagination for any mention of community television triggers immediate excitement. People see the benefits and want to know how they can become involved. The battle is with government decision makers, those who hold the purse strings, those who constantly demand innovative ideas to unlock creativity but don't always possess the means to recognise them.

The future from 2008 is digital. Northern Visions believes that the best way to realise the broadcasting regulator's (OFCOM) intentions of preserving and enhancing public service broadcasting, one which gives genuine choice to the consumer, is to make provision for local television. Every community in the U.K. should be able to choose to have a local television service. These services would be delivered to them via DTT, through a local network channel across the country allied to add/drop technology. Once that infrastructure is in place, at a cost of what amounts to a couple of low budget British feature films, communities throughout the UK would have the ability to network locally and with others regionally and nationally. Those who now struggle to present their work in film, video and new media would have the opportunity to sustain their audience development activities. Local schools, universities and colleges engaged in media literacy and training would have an outlet for their productions. The local music industry would be given a boost as it premiered young talent. Local arts, culture and heritage, a low priority for regional and national television, easily sustains a weekly programme. Local government initiatives would begin to speak directly to the people they affect as would local industry and commerce. Most important of all, local voices would begin to discuss and debate the issues which affect their daily lives.

In a digital age, local television has the potential to become the modern two way communication that speaks to us all, raising the public's sense of the possibilities which media can become as people are challenged to respond, participate and contribute to making their community a better place to live in and enjoy.

Northern Visions August 2006

[www.nvtv.co.uk](http://www.nvtv.co.uk)

## **Public Access Television in the United States**

Chris Booth

*Chris worked for over five years for CCTV/Channel 17 in Burlington, Vermont as a producer, editor, cameraman and anything else. He loved every minute of it and returned to the UK over four years ago inspired to push for some form of local access television in Britain, which he has been doing sporadically ever since as a member of ACTO and the CMA.*

*Chris was encouraged me to write an article about the history of public access and*

*where it stands today after returning from a recent visit to Channel 17 which reminded Chris of how this noble institution, continentwide yet intrinsically local, evolved from disparate sources and inspirations. His visit to Channel 17 gave him hope that this could still happen in some way in this country.*

Public Access Television in the US should not be confused with Public Television. The latter is funded largely by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, set up in the 1960s, and since the 1980s increasingly reliant on corporate underwriting for its programming. Public Television in the US, though a supplement to and sometimes improvement on commercial television, shares many of its corporate values and is by and large “safe”, uncontroversial and unwilling to provide challenges to the status quo. Somewhat like the BBC without the light entertainment, sport and soap operas, a resemblance enhanced by its heavy importation of costume dramas and classic serials from Britain.

Public Access Television has a longer, more controversial history. Public access in the US depends for its transmission on the cable medium, for its intellectual inspiration on Canadian and, to a lesser extent, British pioneers, and for its vitality and openness on the US First Amendment. The First Amendment guarantees the right of free speech to the inhabitants of the US, and this constitutional right to free speech finds its last real bastion in Public Access Television. With increasing media concentration since the 1980s and thus corporate control over what it is allowable to say, Public Access, which as we shall see is beyond corporate control, offers the only outlet for genuinely free public discourse. With sometimes alarming and distasteful results, but that’s freedom for you.

Community Antenna Television began in Astoria, Oregon, when L. E. Parsons erected an antenna atop the hotel in which he lived to receive the broadcasts of KRSC-TV in Seattle, Washington. The story which I heard from the late, great Dirk Koning, founder of the Grand Rapids Media Centre, and which I haven’t been able to verify for this article, was that Parsons was unable to get television reception so hooked up a wire to an antenna; if true, then public access was thus born out of an illegal intervention into the broadcasting network that was eventually legalised, something worth remembering. Whilst this was the first technical intervention that led to local television, Bill Olson in his article on the History of Public Access claims Robert Flaherty’s “Nanook of the North” in 1922 as the first public access film. It was certainly an inspiration for National Film Board of Canada founded by John Grierson, who had made several excellent verité-type films in Britain in the 1930s including “Night Mail”, after the Second World War. Would that Grierson had stayed and that this country had had its own NFB. If you ever visit Montreal spend a day at their shop and theatre on St. Denis and see the amazing work produced over the decades documenting aspects of Canadian life that mainstream Canadian cinema and television didn’t touch. Olson cites an NFB project “Challenge for Change” in the 1960s as the first truly public access project in North America. The purpose of Challenge for Change was “to create in Canadians an awareness of the need for change in order that [people] may achieve a better quality of life. The film medium permits people not only to become aware of problems facing them in their society, but of government programs that can offer real solutions to these problems”. It sent filmmakers to various parts of Canada to work with local people to allow them to create films themselves about their lives instead of having films made about them. Various people worked on the Challenge for Change project, including Canadian filmmaker Red Burns and American media activist George Stoney. At this point I wish to digress briefly to honour the life’s work of George Stoney, who at 89 still teaches at New York University and worked a few years ago in Brazil with Amazonian Indians on media projects in his 80s. George has spent his working life promoting the development of an engaged citizenry by using the power of TV to connect constituents with elected representatives and encouraging people to make their own

media instead of passively consuming it. His enthusiasm is undiminished and he remains a practicing pioneer of public access today almost 30 years after his first interventions into opening up media to and for the people.

The first public access centre in the US was apparently in Dale City, Virginia and was operated by the local Chamber of Commerce. The local cable operator gave them a channel but financial and logistical problems led to the closing of the centre two years later. At the same time as this initiative, however, a groundswell of interest was growing across many cities for public access to the airwaves. Cable television was taking off and cable companies were using the public highways and byways to make a profit for themselves. Surely, it was argued, they should give something back to society for the use of public infrastructure (they dug up the road like any utility). Cable companies by and large agreed to do this and under franchising agreements with local municipalities set aside channels on their systems for public use. Red Burns and George Stoney co-founded the Alternative Media Center (AMC) at New York University in 1971. The AMC started the National Federation of Local Cable Programmers, a public access advocacy organization with interns that helped establish access centres throughout America. In 1972 Burns and Stoney worked with FCC commissioner Nicholas Johnson to make FCC cable access requirements.

The Federal Communications Commission (FCC), the equivalent of Ofcom in Britain, mandated that “beginning in 1972, new cable systems [and after 1977, all cable systems] in the 100 largest television markets be required to provide channels for government, for educational purposes, and most importantly, for public access.” Each cable company was mandated to charge a small fee to each subscriber set aside solely for funding Public, Educational and Government access channels (PEG). Douglas Kelner comments:

*“Public access” was construed to mean that the cable company should make available equipment and air time so that literally anybody could make noncommercial use of the access channel, and say and do anything they wished on a first-come, first-served basis, subject only to obscenity and libel laws. The result was an entirely different sort of programming, reflecting the interests of groups and individuals usually excluded from mainstream television.*

According to Ralph Engelman’s *Origins of Public Access Cable Television 1966-1972*, New York’s public access was begun in 1968 by CBS veteran newsman Fred Friendly, who wrote a report recommending that cable companies set aside two channels the public could lease for a minor fee. The fee was later dropped and in July 1971 public access started. It has continued for each borough ever since. Other US cities have not been so fortunate. In Philadelphia cable companies set aside PEG money which then was swallowed up into the city’s general operating fund with no PEG stations being founded. A few years ago a lawsuit was initiated to force the city to use that money, which it has got used to spending on other social projects, to establish public access channels as it had been intended to do, but I don’t know what the result of this action was. In New York, once access channels were operational, programming help was professionally provided. The Open Channel was established to produce programmes and to promote access use by others in the community. The Markle Foundation and the Stern Fund awarded grants to Open Channel to provide production facilities and to hire personnel who would help groups produce shows. Theadora Sklover, Open Channel’s founder, identified constituencies, organized local cable committees and trained citizens to use video equipment. She brought in over 200 professional TV and film producers, directors, writers, camera operators, audio specialists, and lighting technicians to volunteer their expertise for public access programming. Open Channel arranged air-time for groups “ranging from the Boy Scouts to black militants, from the Museum of Modern Art to church choirs.” In 1972, Sklover articulated the free speech mission of community television: “We’re not here to editorialize or make decisions about what people can say over the air”. What I find unusual

about this is not the range of groups using the station and producing programmes, but the fact that professionals came in to help make programming. In the early 70s Sklover said “our biggest problem lies in informing the public that they can go on television.... People are used to thinking of TV as something someone else does, not as something they do.” Over the years I can attest that this has ceased to be so much of a barrier and people are more inclined to have a go and make their own programmes. A 1979 Supreme Court decision struck down the 1972 FCC ruling on the grounds that the FCC had no authority to mandate access; nonetheless, cable was expanding so rapidly and becoming such a high-growth competitive industry that by the 1980s city governments considering cable systems were besieged by companies making lucrative offers and were able to demand access channels and financial support for public access systems as part of their contract negotiations. Consequently, public access grew significantly during the 1980s and 1990s. The 1984 Cable Franchise Policy and Communications Act written by Senator Barry Goldwater allowed local governments to require PEG channels, barred cable operators from exercising editorial control over content of programs carried on PEG channels, and absolved them from liability for that content. This ushered in a golden age for public access; from the late 1990s, as we shall see, storm clouds have started to loom.

So how does public access work in practice? Though PEG access is a government mandate that provides the television production equipment, training and airtime on a local cable system so members of the public (including those who don't have cable), educational system, and the government can produce their own shows and televise them, municipalities must take the initiative and petition the cable operator to release the funding for PEG access as laid out by law (see the remarks about Philadelphia above which did not exercise its right). A municipality may also choose to allow Governmental access but not Public access or may replace it with Governmental access or may take away Public access altogether, depending on the disposition of the local government or its voters. Public Access is the most controversial aspect of PEG local access. Government and Educational Access, the EG in PEG, tend to have government or educational figures or more stolid, safe forms of speech from public officials who don't wish to wreck their careers by saying anything offensive or controversial. But public access is open to the public to do and say what they want so long as they obey libel laws. In the 1980s Ugly George in New York walked the streets asking women to expose their breasts on camera; that was the entire show, week after week. Sexual advice shows in New York, often run by escorts, had nude hosts (or hostesses to be exact). The KKK, where it exists, is a frequent user of public access since this is the only way they can get their message out. I worked in Burlington Vermont for five years where homeless John Long has a notorious show. Ken Picard of the local weekly Seven Days described the beginning of one show thus:

*It's 11 p.m. on Monday — time for the new episode of “How Do You Like Me Now?” on cable channel 15, also known as Vermont Community Access Media (VCAM). After the requisite warning about adult content and graphic imagery, a written message appears: “Dedicated to all the Feminazi pigs who run Burlington.”*

*The show begins with a videotape of a large hog lying on the floor of a warehouse. Moments later, a man enters the room with a chainsaw and slowly cuts the pig's head off. The animal squeals and writhes in agony. When the grisly task is complete, the man approaches the camera, blood-splattered chainsaw still in hand, and flashes a menacing, self-satisfied grin. The picture fades to black. What follows is an assortment of cartoons, most of which appear to have been lifted from the Internet. There's a Santa Claus urinating on a Chanukah menorah — “Santa hates Jewish kids,” it reads — and another displaying the Koran being used as toilet paper. Still another shows the infamous, hooded Abu Ghraib prisoner, only this time he's covered with holiday ornaments. The caption reads, “It's not torture, it's Christmas!” Next, a short video celebrates the assassination of John Lennon. The credits say, “Thank you, Mark David Chapman.”*

Though there is a constitutional right to free speech, effectively in practice local communities decide what is acceptable to broadcast. In a liberal city like Burlington a ferocious racist and bigot like Long is allowed to say what he wants, and he spends his time attacking the very people who support his right to free speech in the first place, a truly Voltairean vignette. Another VCAM access producer, a self-confessed television addict on welfare called Ken Millett with lots of free time on his hands, used it to produce several shows. One of them called "Watching the World Go By" focused the camera on a parking meter. He put enough money for an hour's parking in the meter and left the camera rolling as the meter clock ran down whilst in the background passers-by strolled. That was the hour's show. From this one can see that public access is often boring, self-indulgent and trivial, but it means something to someone and it isn't ratings-driven, so people can use it as they see fit to produce something of interest to them. This to me is one of its great achievements and values to be cherished, despite the self-indulgence it encourages. After all, one doesn't have to watch this stuff. Another of Ken's shows featured him swearing a lot and exposing intimate parts of his anatomy. The Channel Director Rob Chapman directed that this show be shown after 11pm when children theoretically weren't watching, an entirely reasonable position one would think, but Ken furiously complained his First Amendment rights were being shredded and refused to work on Channel 15 any longer. Rob had a weekly show "Access Matters" onto which he invited Mr. Millett who proceeded to abuse and attack him for the best part of half an hour but both sides stuck to their positions. I thought it courageous and an act of integrity on the part of Rob to air the debate in public and allow a critic of his policies onto the air to say his piece. This sort of openness and integrity is only found on media unfettered by governmental or commercial constraints; the media in this country, as they are everywhere, are unaccountable and don't allow us to talk back, which is why we need public access (to) media.

I have focused above on public access but want to turn to government access since I worked for a government access station in Burlington, Channel 17, for five years from 1997 to 2002. We served seven towns in Chittenden County whose population ranged from 38,000 to 800. We videotaped and aired unedited municipal meetings, press conferences, speeches, parades, events, teach-ins, live call-ins by city councillors and the Mayor, pre-election debates and all manner of things, provided they had a governmental or public policy focus. Funding came from subscribers to the cable company which collected the federally mandated fee which was split three ways equally amongst the PEG channels. Because the city with 38,000 people had the most subscribers it received the most attention with coverage of several local boards and committees. As well as local coverage we provided a limited amount of statewide coverage from the state capital 40 miles away. We ran all meetings gavel-to-gavel, no matter how long each one was (they could be 7 hours or more). This was to avoid possible bias in editorial decisions as to what would be broadcast and said. The programming was very technical and dry, but municipal officials always told us they were amazed at how many people watched. The positive impact on local democracy was palpable and direct; people are more informed about local issues and local democracy in the US generally than they are in Britain and local access has a big part to play in that since the local press in the US is owned by national chains and is usually feeble in its coverage of local political issues. The electoral candidate debates we staged were crucially important as well. Nowhere else were candidates for local councils or selectboards going to have an opportunity to face the public in debates or forums that were repeated several times at different times of the day and night. Incidentally our station ran 24 hours a day and feedback was often generated from shows after midnight. Our station operated on the principle of informing people about local government by offering forums to local officials or the public. We were an entity independent of the local administration, but this wasn't true of all government access stations which in

other states were often in-house organs of the administrations in power. Again one notes that though there are federal laws governing public access broadcasting they are interpreted differently according to local taste. Our station was overseen by a board of directors who were usually elected officials from the municipalities we served. There was a core staff, some part timers hired to film meetings, some full time, but we depended on a large number of volunteers, most of whom staffed our thirty minute weekday live show. The live show occurred at the same time every weekday and allowed listeners to ask questions of the Mayor, local councillors, state representatives, etc. The station offered a forum for others to use; it did not have a position on any of the issues discussed, and we as staff resolutely kept our opinions to ourselves (or to one another) because the station was praised for its independence and openness to all. A feature of our pre-election forums was that we invited all candidates to attend; this was often the only time minor party candidates had a forum to reach the public in debate with “major” party candidates. National elections in the US are image-driven monstrosities, but locally in states like Vermont where money doesn’t control the government, elections are a wholesome process and renew one’s faith in democracy.

To return to the broader history of public access and the storm clouds I mentioned earlier, cable television is still the main way of receiving broadcast signals in the US, but for 15 years or so now satellite TV has been eating into cable companies’ profits. Cable works best in cities where a large number of people can be hooked up for a lower initial investment, but cable isn’t offered in rural areas where it is uneconomic to install and satellite is more popular. Cable companies are mandated to offer public access but no such burden is placed on satellite operators, so it has become increasingly common for cable companies to argue that public access places them at a competitive disadvantage. Especially since the Telecommunications Act of 1996 cable companies have become behemoths buying out local operators and losing any local contact. Big cable operators, who have clout in Congress, are arguing that their federal obligation to provide public access must cease or be reduced; if they get their way public access is effectively over. The rise of the internet has been a boon for those access stations with enough funding to take advantage of it because they can now be seen by those without cable television. The internet with its openness and lack of regulation is thus an ally of access television and many community media advocates have been involving themselves in the fight against the Communications Act of 2006 and for so-called net neutrality which would guarantee equal access to the internet and not allow a two-tiered system where those with most money get better internet access and service from their ISPs. As a result of the recent elections there is some hope that Congress will lean on the FCC to be less favourable to media conglomerates, though it was the Democrats who passed the woeful Telecommunications Act of 1996 which has quickened the pace of media concentration in the States into the hands of a few, massively powerful players. Further telecommunications legislation almost certainly won’t happen in this session.

When that legislation is considered a strong public interest group will be scrutinising and, one hopes, affecting it. The Alliance for Community Media was originally set up to represent public access stations but now deals with internet freedom as well. The Alliance is a national membership organization representing 3,000 PEG cable television access centres across the nation. It claims those centres include 1.2 million volunteers and 250,000 community organizations that provide PEG Access television programming locally across the United States. Local PEG programmers produce 20,000 hours of new programmes per week — that’s more new programming than all of the broadcast networks combined. Loss of public access would be the loss of 20,000 hours of new programmes a week from schools and schoolchildren, immigrant groups speaking in their own languages, Chambers of Commerce, local elected officials, Rotarians, Veterans of Foreign Wars, the KKK, religious groups of all persuasions, atheists, conservatives, radicals, and who knows who else. Bill Olson’s *History of Public*

*Access Television ends hopefully:*

*Through history, the common man has struggled for equal expression in the face of greater advantage flowing to the wealthy elite. This trend has left the common man with no forum but a soapbox on a dying street corner. Today, political will and new technologies, like portable video and cable television, have combined to give the common man a new soapbox - one which, despite attempts to control it, is spreading round the world.*

Let's hope he is right, and that it will survive in the US and some version of it will occur here. Because Britain has no constitutional right to free speech and so-called anti-hate laws, access television in this country is unlikely to descend to the lurid depths that I have given examples of above. Because the media in this country are so closed, because local democracy is so desiccated and knowledge of it so limited, because apathy and disillusion with our political processes and government is so rightly widespread, we need a new soapbox to stimulate our creativity and public discourse. Reviewing the history of access television in the US I was struck by the forward thinking of municipalities in the 60s and 70s and how a group of activists were able to cajole the FCC into doing the right thing and mandating public involvement in the media. Looking at the suits and management consultants who dominate Ofcom's thinking, at the small-mindedness of most local governments in this country and the philistinism of the Treasury, always saying "there's no money for anything" except when it comes to killing and torturing Iraqis, it's hard to imagine that the argument for local television made by and for local people can be won. But we should give it a try.

*As those ACTO readers assiduous enough to follow up the cited sources will see, this article is in part a "cut and paste" job, for which I make no apologies since the material concerned is posted on the internet without copyright. There are plenty of my thoughts and observations throughout to spice or leaden the piece, according to your point of view - so I can justly claim it is based on research as well as personal experience. - Chris Booth*

Some sources:

<http://www.geocities.com/iconostar/history-public-access-TV.html>

<http://www.museum.tv/archives/etv/P/htmlP/publicaccess/publicaccess.htm>

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Public\\_access\\_tv](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Public_access_tv)

## **LOCAL TELEVISION PUBLICATIONS and DVDs** from the Institute of Local Television

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LOCAL television REPORT - ACTO local public service television papers, VOLUME TWO ISBN: 1 899405 08 9, published by School Press/ACTO/Institute of Local Television, (September 2006). Softback. CONTENTS Introduction, ONE Review & Analysis: Ofcom's Digital Local: Options for the future of local video content and interactive services, Ofcom's Digital Local: Response and Further Review. TWO Local Public Service Television Broadcasting: What is not clear about Public Service?, European Local Public Service Television, Delivering Ofcom's Digital Local with Public Purpose. THREE European Background: Assessing Opportunities for Local TV Across Europe, John Glover, Ofcom. FOUR: MORI's Local TV Study for Ofcom, Speed Reading MORI's 'Programmes in the Nations'. FIVE: Local TV: Who's interested? Scottish Local TV Forum Peter Williams, Kent; Eva Dekanovska, Slovakia; Nic Millington, Herefordshire; Brendan Murphy,

Perthshire. *Borders Local TV Briefing* Scottish Borders Council, John Askew; Fife, MiMAC, Fife, Graeme Campbell; *Belfast NvTv*, Northern Visions. *SIX Digital Frontline: Technical Overview, Programming Introduction, Grant & Production Funded Local TV*. SEVEN Switchover and the Consumer: Trisha McAuley, Scottish Consumer Council. SEVEN Local DTT Engineering: Achilles' Heel or Fall Guy?, Add/Drop, Serge Francois, Terayon. £28.50 inc p&p 200pgs with DVD.

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**COMMUNITY TELEVISION 'KEY TEXTS' VOLUME TWO:** *CAPITAL NEWS* (1995) Supported by The Scotsman, Capital News was a broadcasting project involving students from local universities and colleges in setting up and running a local TV news studio. Held to coincide with the Edinburgh International Television Festival, the Government's Department of National Heritage stopped the broadcast just moments before it was due on air. The project continued - 'broadcasting to tape' - providing evidence to help convince regulators that local television offered a real alternative to regional television news. *TOUBIE JACK'S CHANNEL SIX SHOWREEL* (2001-2002) On small budgets the local TV services, Edinburgh Television and Channel Six Dundee differentiated themselves very clearly in their short-form programming, commercials, TV graphics and logos. Toubie Jack's showreel demonstrates that high production values can be achieved from basic desktop computers and software. *e-tv ABERFELDY* (2002-3) A field trial of a low-cost licence-exempt neighbourhood TV technology which ran from September 2002-October 2003. Here, King Alfreds College filmed interviews and presentations from the Community TV Forum held in Aberfeldy in September 2002.

**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 40gs.

**The 2nd Pocket LOCAL CHANNEL ATLAS (Scottish Borders, Cumbria, Kent, Northern Ireland, North West)** ISBN: 1 899405 06 2 £8.00 inc p&p 32 pgs.

**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

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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

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