

ACTO9

local public service television directory

VALUING LOCAL PUBLIC SERVICE TELEVISION: DIARY

- Advertising Effectiveness and the Future Funding of Broadcasting
- TELEVISION FROM THE NATIONS AND REGIONS CONFERENCE 2006
- LOCAL TV FORUM 2006

'LOCAL TV BOOK'

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 17) 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 ninth 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.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/

..... 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 new spectrum dividend review consultation

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

Valuing Local Public Service Television

This paper examines some of the ideas in 'Measuring Public Service Broadcasting' (MPSB) written by Robin Foster (now of Ofcom), Jim Egan and Jonathan Simon. Their paper can be found on the Ofcom website and also as a chapter in From Public Service Broadcasting to Public Service Communication - edited by Damian Tambini and Jamie Cowling at IPPR.

*MPSB is something of an early realisation of Ofcom's attachment to 'opportunity cost' for economic evaluation of broadcasting. As well as quantifying an economic value for programmes 'opportunity cost' is used to identify a hidden value in the electro-magnetic spectrum which includes the frequencies used for broadcasting. **Ofcom's recently announced consultation on the Digital Dividend will engage further with the ideas of opportunity cost and spectrum trading. See http://www.ofcom.org.uk/media/news/2005/11/nr_20051117.***

In the MPSB paper 'opportunity cost' is applied to public service broadcasting (PSB) and in particular to public service programmes. Opportunity cost is introduced in MPSB in a fairly tentative way to attempt economic comparison of different types of social and less social television programmes.

The 'opportunity cost' of a broadcast programme-slot estimates a greater benefit had the *best* alternative programme been shown in a programme's place. MPSB suggests that in terms of numbers of viewers and viewer interest the 'best alternatives' to some little watched public service programmes are national 'light entertainment' or 'acquired programming'.

Identifying this alternative applies 'opportunity cost' aligned with the objectives of the organisation or individual making the assessment. So what then is the wider point of this generalisation?

If many viewers don't watch a particular programme should it be replaced with something they are more likely to watch - something more like what they already watch? 'Opportunity cost' in programming and public service broadcasting begs many questions. (See also Rushton, D, 'Introduction' *Citizen Television: a local dimension to public service broadcasting*, John Libbey, 1993.)

II

Introducing a market in spectrum will curtail future innovations in public service broadcasting - since this public use for spectrum must either be removed from the market before trading or new PSB broadcasters will have to compete for spectrum on commercial terms.

Dr Martin Cave of Warwick University was commissioned to research a better form of communications regulation. The objective was to improve the long standing methodology built around spectrum scarcity. Cave argues in his Report on spectrum regulation by introducing markets that the purpose of spectrum trading was not, definitely not to line the Treasury coffers. This somewhat incongruous but forceful remark rings like a plea for the peaceful use of the atom, if not for the genie to stay entirely in the bottle.

Cave might well be concerned that a government and its regulator might want to construct those markets to maximise the cash injection for the public purse and because this consequence could so easily turn out to become the motivation driving

the change. He was right to be concerned.

Talk to both the Department for Culture, Media and Sport and Ofcom as ACTO regularly does and it is clear very that the Treasury crow sits on the DCMS shoulder is driving aside all regulatory and public service responsibilities. There is no hesitancy among some key figures at DCMS and Ofcom to state clearly and openly that the sale of spectrum is the objective of digital switchover with market regulation and auction the favoured means.

We suggest that this is a blinkered view that will push regulation to maximise market opportunity on current scales at the expense of service objectives, innovations and scale. But then a regulatory device that encourages spectrum to be viewed as providing a windfall benefit will surely encourage the short-sighted to cut to that chase. The strength of Ofcom's commitment to offer regulation and spectrum for benefit of the communications citizen-consumer is about to be tested with spectrum required for local public service television. Ofcom needs to provide a spectrum plan for Local TV - as they have been encouraged to do by DCMS and by the PSB studies. There is now talk at Ofcom that they do not intend to do this but to push the local digital decision beyond the Digital Dividend Review - perhaps better named the 'Digital Divide Implementation' - consultations.

In an earlier ACTO (5) we tested the assumption that spectrum is a national UK asset and therefore whether it is a national or even a tradeable property: both are at best contentious claims. Both Ofcom and the National Statistics Office suggested this should be viewed as a constitutional issue.

In ACTO5 we reproduced arguments for stripping away licences because an unregulated use of spectrum can lead to greater innovation. The example used was WiFi where many economic and social innovations in service resulted from making the 2.4Ghz band licence exempt.

The true test of the benefit of a change in regulation for broadcast spectrum will be the benefit to the viewer in variety and this will mean resisting the '50 channels in' at the expense of channels out or provided to share views among ourselves.

Try as I might I have only found the 'assumption' of UK spectrum sovereignty characterised by analogy with the ownership of land, sea and mineral rights. The concern here is focused on the boundaries of countries and edge of spectrum use. These international agreements are very vague on property and title - clearly assuming an international sovereignty to secure agreement on spectrum boundaries (which themselves don't correspond with territorial limits). Viewing spectrum as property is clumsy but it is not required throughout to be seen as national property - only assumed to be so for international agreement. The internal proprietorial arrangements for spectrum determinations are not of concern at the international scale.

Looking at the variety of legal and administrative frameworks presenting themselves in Europe, there is a Committee of the Regions brokering affairs on a sub-national scale just as many countries have variously independent regions or home nations. The German lande has responsibility for broadcasting and receives a percentage of the TV Licence Fee to run Open Channels or other media thought appropriate by each lande: the Spanish regions have responsibility for regional and local broadcasting.

The assumption that spectrum is HMGs to sell/trade/lease out requires - shall we say - receipts to prove ownership and title. If Government owns it, how did they acquire it. Was the acquisition fair - should it bbe devolved? Where is the documentation evi-

dent (for example) in the US from the 1920s which shows and dates the process of secondment or acquisition. Is there a Spectrum Acquisition Act 1927 somewhere? Until now the key issue has perhaps been that national governments assume responsibility for sovereignty for the purposes of international agreement. Maybe no one's asked before - an Oliver Twist of Spectrum Trading is asking for 'some' (not even more!)

Martin Kellaway, is the author of a comprehensive analysis of relevant spectrum literature and has written on behalf of the UK Treasury's National Statistics Office (CLASSIFICATION OF GOVERNMENT RECEIPTS FROM ALLOWING USE OF SPECTRUM Martin Kellaway – National Statistics). ACTO phoned Martin about his paper and was advised that when writing Martin was 'told' that the UK owned the spectrum - while having no idea where this assumption came from.

When pressed, Peter Bury of the Spectrum Team at Ofcom suggests that spectrum ownership might be a 'constitutional issue', one in which as yet neither the Scottish Parliament nor the Welsh Assembly have shown a great deal of interest. (See ACTO 5 for more on the spectrum ownership issues). Mark Bunting of Ofcom has also suggested this, writing:

You also raise a question about devolving the regulation of spectrum. Our national offices [eg Ofcom Scotland, etc] do carry out valuable work in licensing the use of spectrum, however devolving spectrum policy regulation would raise constitutional issues which are really for Government to consider.

So the process by which spectrum has been assumed to be a national UK asset is an interesting if not an extensively legitimated story. When broadcast spectrum is to be traded as an economic asset - rather more than licenced as a broadcasting asset - this kind of transaction in which the character of the goods is characterised as being tradeable - falls more squarely inside the boundaries of enterprise concerns which are within the remit of the Welsh or Scottish nations.

We are witnessing the slow movement of spectrum from broadcasting into economics or enterprise - especially if the ambitions of the UK Treasury drive the policies of the Department for Culture, Media and Sport as well as those of Ofcom. The interesting question is the extent to which transformation of the public good of spectrum into the private tradeable asset (privatisation by another name) serves to bring those goods into an economic realm which falls within the devolved nation's responsibilities.

If spectrum has become property whose property was it before the invention of devices to use it? When spectrum use is being redefined where might its title best lie?

As we move from analogue to digital spectrum and explore more appropriate forms of regulation - the question becomes for whose purpose is the regulation being made? Is Ofcom's responsibility under the Communications Act 2003 primarily to benefit the citizen-consumer or, to follow Cave's concerns to benefit - as the tail starts to wag the dog - the Treasury, ploughing legitimate and long argued devolved spectrum use ambitions aside to maximise economic gain in the form of national or nationwide assets?

When staff at the DCMS say that Local TV might well have to purchase the spectrum needed in a national market ACTO finds the market as regulator-Treasury-benefactor overtaking the greater public value of the introduction and regulation of a new local public service.

The number of persons employed in 250 local TV channels across the UK might usefully be compared with one national digital channel running repeats or a shopping

channel - both use exactly the same amount of spectrum. Which is the more efficient use? Which offers the greatest public and economic benefit? Looking at the one off sale of spectrum as an objective has clouded the integrity of both the DCMS and Ofcom on this issue - discarding local TV planning to ensure there is no solution provided before the markets get to work. This is a scandal.

In translating public service programming and public spectrum into quantifiable and tradeable commodities the 'public' - as imprecise and unarmed as it is - is left with an evaporation of their present and future 'public goods', goods which have steadfastly been valued and retained for their distinctively non-material character.

This set of assumptions favouring the market all lead back to allowing 'opportunity cost' as a tool to help recast and reimagine alternatives to be seen as a real and precise instrument. It is not. Certainly, as the MPSB authors suggest one television programme made for all viewers is cheaper to produce than several programmes for many regional viewers. But if the authors had looked at the IBA and ITC research on viewer preferences (since the 1950s) they would have found report after report characterising regional programming's problem as being that it is 'too big', too remote to be relevant to the viewer's needs, poorly able to meet their demands as citizens. That is - regional programming misses an opportunity to supply a smaller more familiar scale of service and to stimulate and engage public debate in a 'lived' realm.

It is simply a leap too far - and in the wrong direction - for regional TV to be able to overcome its failings as 'regional' by being given a 'national' job instead, abandoning its regional role: the role for which it was granted a licence! Why not measure other 'opportunity costs' - there are many by the nature of the process - and one would be to replace regional TV with Local TV, offering services with a more finely tuned public remit.

Why would Ofcom not do this 'opportunity cost' thinking as spectrum becomes available in digital for the first time enabling local TV for all, so that the loss of public service value when quantified might be duly returned to the regions in the form of local channels?

Overall - the question to ask seems obvious - does the viewer actually want more national light entertainment, more acquired US programming and new national repeat channels, when instead (or perhaps, as well) there is an option to introduce more vigorous and locally relevant channels?

'Opportunity cost' when applied in MCPS and later by Ofcom has actually ignored the public service character which distinguishes service role of the regional TV licences - based on an original commitment to deliver regional services. Will ITV lose its PSB status if it concentrates on light entertainment: that is lose its privileged access to spectrum regionally and locally as a result of dropping regional PSB programmes? (A bold two letter answer suffices here.)

An alternative starting point for opportunity cost thinking in MPSB would be based on that evidence accumulated by the IBA and ITC over fifty years which broadly shows that regional ITV has been operating at the expense of a more relevant Local TV: that local TV's opportunity cost has been regional ITV.

If the Institute of Local Television had not been suggesting this for sixteen years it might justifiably be accused of hindsight. But consider the interest ITV is now showing in tackling the smaller scale of TV initially through broadband with their LocalITV brand

in the Meridian area and in purchasing Friends Unlimited. Also the BBC's 'ultra-local' is anything but local - but instead commandeers the 'local' label. You would think that the Government and regulator would see through the 'saying makes it so' approach of the BBC - but far from it. The BBC's 'ultra-local' plan although almost regional in scale permits Catherine Smadje, at the DCMS to write:

we understand that the BBC is proposing to trial local services, which will give local communities access to news and programmes of interest to them.

But the BBC are not introducing local services - they are giving new regional services an 'ultra-local' name.

Does the DCMS simply misunderstand the BBC's branding strategy?

The question is, in the lengthy consultations which Ofcom has conducted on public service broadcasting have their studies really balanced the needs of new stakeholders and old or has a delay in bringing Local TV engineering forward been introduced so that the established broadcasters can devise their own Local TV - to kill the independent initiatives before they can begin?

III

The MPBS methodology has placed a financial value on the contribution lost from the public and civil sphere by withdrawing regional Public Service Broadcasting from ITV's commitments during digital switchover. We see that 'valuation' has benefited ITV but not yet the viewers with relevant new programming.

Using 'opportunity cost' Ofcom has followed the MPBS paper and calculated the 'value' of national and regional PSB to be between £300-400m per year - which is the difference in programming cost lost to the public sphere if ITV replaces the PSB programmes with light entertainment or acquisitions.

The preservation of diversity and idiosyncrasy is also an 'opportunity cost' which neither regional TV let alone a national TV service will adequately address.

For in reality what is lost in withdrawing regional programming is an economic as well as social loss of regional assets, a well grounded and recognised focus of creative expression as well as media representation. In other words a failing regional programme is a lost or poorly performing regional asset - it is not a missed 'national' opportunity!

I sense in MPBS a flattening-out of difference - a regional diversity-smashing quality which the authors don't seem aware of when translating the perceived lost value into an orthodox national currency of pounds sterling.

With the grad-grinding efficiency of 'cost effectiveness' a limited species of almost endlessly repeated national brand programming provides a quality mark. This Tesco broadcasting serves to drive out local innovation in favour of a limited, unimaginative and commercial form of monopoly organisation under an ever incumbent-compliant regulator.

We are where we are in broadcasting because for a decade or more broadcasting policy has been informed by raising the global threat: UK mergers and growing availability of spectrum encouraged new channels to fill with repeats and acquisitions - more and more and more to the point of expressive vomiting.

Getting sophisticated and innovative with broadcasting, becoming more supple and

subtle seems to have escaped both a conservative government and technophilic regulator almost completely: giving short shrift to local entrepreneurs, failing to see - or if seeing fearing - the potential of local to local broadcasting and exchange initiatives. Ofcom has written of the inequality of local TV in the UK compared with local TV in Europe, highlighting how these expectations are being delivered into digital.

There are 1000s of local channels in Europe, North America, Australia and New Zealand with whom to share and market programming. But broadcasting is viewed through the wrong end of the telescope as becoming only a world of supermarkets - a rebuff to the corner shop or the farmers market. The switch to digital offers capacity for a world with corner shops and a variety of scales upwards.

Small-scale is that distribution market so far largely denied, even stifled: and that is the real 'opportunity lost' with this 'opportunity cost' both in programming and on the plans for trading spectrum.

IV

Indirectly the 'value' calculated by Ofcom of the lost public service programming - if replaced by acquisitions or light entertainment - stands at £300-400m per year. From memory, I think this figure is suggested in Ofcom's PSB Reviews. In calculating the PSB deficit and recommending regional ITV's slow withdrawal from their regional public service duties Ofcom suggests making public recompense - albeit largely in the national currency and on its own terms by establishing a Public Service Publisher fund - or 'PSP' to make and possibly deliver new PSB programming. Without PSP, there is no symmetry to 'opportunity cost'. To date the benefits seem to be flowing only to the the ITV companies who progressively will not provide the more expensive less watched regional and national programming. 'Opportunity cost' empties the regional public service purse by removing £70m or so a year of PSB programming from the regions as digital replaces analogue.

The Communications Act 2003 invites Ofcom to look into spectrum trading from the viewpoint of *spectrum's efficient use and for the benefits to the citizen-consumer*. So how will spectrum trading recover this lost £70m PSB for the citizen-consumer in the regions?

V

Each national TV channel bounces from one regional television transmitter to a relay and sometimes on to further relays before it reaches the home. In each area a different part of the electromagnetic spectrum is used. This is wasteful in the extreme - tying up vast swathes of spectrum to provide the same content. Satellite is the efficient way to deliver national channels.

Yet the spectrum inefficiency of national TV is being ignored, all other forms of use will have to bend around the national TV services, bend and be distorted into markets that preserve the inefficiency of 'national TV'. The lack of honesty in the spectrum debate is quite profound.

As an 'opportunity cost' that inefficiency represents a barrier to the more efficient uses of spectrum at its regional and local scales. This 'cost' to the notional displaced local and regional users will need to be calculated. That is - what is the opportunity cost in *not* being able to use this spectrum regionally and locally, because of the inefficiencies and dominance of national broadcasting. Cave's declared goal in

regulation is the efficient use of spectrum: but all the current uses of broadcast spectrum - except perhaps local advertising avails - are inefficient.

So there is an overwhelmingly strong engineering-efficiency case for being transparent about how national broadcasting services soak up spectrum in an inefficient way to deliver their national TV services: services more efficiently delivered directly by satellite.

So has Ofcom identified the opportunity cost to local and regional use of this wasteful use to add to the opportunity loss of £70m in the withdrawal of regional PSB services?

Significantly too - the former regulation of scarcity with analogue spectrum is being transformed into an arms length restricted management of digital plenty - where national markets will be constructed to deny access to the small scale. If used for TV these national channels will add further to the inefficient use of spectrum in being transmitted nationwide via regional and local transmitters: more inefficiency.

New regional or local entrants will find it difficult or impossible to enter these markets, especially those with a small scale broadcasting agenda to address, because of the dominance of the market and scale of auctions envisaged and also because of the national way spectrum has (to date) been muxed. This approach forces spectrum into a series of single pipes to ensure service information is retained and carried all the way to the home. This multiplexing further adds to the inefficient use of local and regional spectrum embedding signal carriage in national and near national moulds. Again, satellite is more efficient in digital spectrum use in delivering large scale national TV channels.

Unfortunately - in Scotland (for example) - there are few who have begun to consider the economic let alone social implications of what we will call 'asset stripping' spectrum before - at least - a more comprehensive range of national television and communications services based on national markets make it all unavailable once more. There is perhaps a year to get this right, a few months to set a new spectrum agenda for the Regional Radio Conference in May 2006. Unless Ofcom wakes to the fact that one super-size no longer fits all - nor should fit all - this change of path will require a constitutional debate.

Currently Ofcom say that spectrum trading will benefit the citizen through the Treasury. So we have to ask Ofcom and the DCMS whether this benefit best represents the primary duty of Ofcom. Because if all conceptions of citizen-consumer benefit from broadcasting or communications can be absorbed by filling the Treasuries coffers then surely 'asset stripping' should appear explicitly in both Ofcom's and DCMS's brief.

This willful collapse of citizen-consumer into a 'national citizen' and 'global consumer' benefiting only from choice rather than engagement presents a further problem for a reasonable application of the 'opportunity cost' principle.

V

Our starting point is local: which occupies an obscure poorly imagined recess in the regulatory mind. But from this vantage point these rather awkward questions ask how local public agencies might recover the local and regional PSB deficit that will otherwise be lost through 'opportunity cost'? How might we set about replenishing the social and democratic pot of public service broadcasting - for the benefit of

regional and local citizen-consumers?

In other papers ACTO has argued that part of Ofcom's duty under Section 11 of the 2003 Communications Act translates as establishing local regulation: we've suggested calling these local regulators Broadcasting Trusts, bodies with the regulatory powers to administer for public benefit spectrum in their areas. The justification for this follows the duty upon Ofcom in the 2003 Communications Act to involve the citizen in broadcasting policy - not after the assets are sold but, we suggest, so that the citizen-consumer might have an intelligent and informed say about the disposal of the family silver.

Ofcom has yet to undertake this work - although recommendations on Broadcasting Trusts were submitted to Ofcom in November 2004 as part of the PSB II review, there's been no word at all from the regulator on a timetable or even a methodology for implementing this aspect of their Media Literacy obligations.

Yet Section 11 of the Communications Act is quite explicit in requiring this dialogue - for all citizens to be better involved in broadcasting/communications policy and to understand in this case the magnitude of what will be lost if some of these assets are not available for regional and local use. It is Ofcom's duty to ensure that citizen-consumers understand the potential significance - loss of public service and common good - of economically quantifying for state benefit a qualitative value like public service reproduced through local and regional spectrum assets. That is, there are options and choices ahead that need to be understood as the citizen becomes informed and encouraged to participate in making broadcasting policy.

There is absolutely no question: national broadcasting services have to 'borrow' regional and local spectrum to deliver their channels. Should they use this spectrum without charge? If the electromagnetic spectrum is owned by HMG - so that it can be sold or traded - where is this process of acquisition described?

Terrestrial television is transmitted from regional and local transmitters: there are no national transmitters. Government and regulator can both argue that the PSB services were created by acquiring these regional and local spectrum assets in order to establish a national public-good equally available for all. But so far as broadcasting goes the state does not use or 'own' spectrum itself, merely directing its use through the arms-length independent regulators while characterising the ownership role as custodial so as to maintain the citizens' (or citizen-consumers') best interests by the good order of regulation.

In the transition from analogue to digital carriage the citizen-consumer has still to be invited to comment on how the local and regional spectrum bringing all terrestrial broadcast signals to them might be used in future.

Without such a debate taking place we should not assume that the public service broadcasting 'citizenship account' can be represented as assets owing to the Treasury: Ofcom has yet to engage the citizen with the broadcasting policy options.

And of course of special relevance here is the question that bounces between these paragraphs - how do those interested in establishing Local TV recover that element of the public service deficit which is 'quantified' as being regional/local in character: or some £70m per annum of 'lost' regional PSB programming after switchover.

The new Local TV broadcasters want to use this sum to help deliver local public broadcasting services. A possible solution would be through reinvestment into the local realm via the PSP - but if there is no PSP, how then?

In reading 'Measuring Public Service Broadcasting' I'm struck by how important it is to have underlying assumptions disclosed - even if these might seem self-evident and perhaps especially if they seem common-sensical.

This reading of MPSB is from a local point of view - not with any particular local in mind in presenting that point of view; but with 'local' as a common site which all viewers as citizen-consumers occupy in varying small numbers and from where they might each react as well as enjoy the products of television.

The total of all local sites for viewing national TV is clearly the sum of those individual sites - but that combination is not to be straightforwardly equated with a national whole. (This and other points that follow are explored in more depth in the books *Don Quixote's Art & Television: seeing things in art and television*, School Press (1998) and in *Local Television Renewed: essays on local television 1994-2005*, School Press (2005).)

A distinction between the citizen and the consumer can be made in suggesting the citizen places some value in social spaces in which they interact. The consumer facet of 'citizen-consumer' might focus less on a sense of a tangible local, regional or national space or even a shared local identity at all. The identity and identification of consumption in television terms might well have as its end the viewing of a programme, whereas for the citizen the programme is a form of mediation, exchange or stimulus of ideas upon which they might themselves act or otherwise engage.

In a global market the world is ever more readily accessible to the consumer - as it is for the consumer-viewer. But what has been overlooked in criticisms of the citizen-consumer is that we still mostly consume 'somewhere', no matter where the goods come from, whether 'viewable', 'listenable' or corporeal goods - consumption takes place 'locally', and this is often at the same site occupied by the consumer as citizen. The consumer is often no less located by the same moments and places of consumption than the citizen is by their particular responsibilities and duties in mostly occupying one particular place and not another. The division between citizen and consumer is therefore never a complete separation and the site of 'viewing' is one of the elements in which the two are linked.

I hope this does not seem a trivial point: it is important that the citizen-consumer is not confused or conflated into a national abstraction pictured and exhausted of meaning by (Ofcom on behalf of) the Treasury. If we had no local government, no nations, no regions then we might only be citizens of the next tier up - the UK: but we are not 'just UK citizens' and there is a cascade of citizen expectations and responsibilities, some of which regional TV was best placed to reflect upon (often if poorly able to achieve these reflections due to range, execution and viewer engagement).

There is an assumption that as markets get bigger the consumer too goes global. But for the most part this is not so, the consumer is not an abstract figure but one engaged in consuming somewhere and often that's where they are also citizens.

My point is that scaling every 'local' into a single 'national' misses - or rather denies - the interface at which we all as individuals, as Ofcom's citizen-consumers, interact and usefully engage in many of both our citizen and consumer roles.

Without some conviction behind the Public Service Publisher to support the opportunity lost to the public sphere of some £70m per annum from the regions after switchover it will be necessary to find other ways to recover and assign this sum in support of Local TV.

Sale of some of the regional and local spectrum could directly benefit the introduction of local TV as would a levy at local and regional levels be applied on national broadcasters for use of their spectrum - assuming the asset is a property and able to be sold.

LOCAL TV NEWS

The Scottish Parliament's Enterprise Committee meeting on 29th November invited Ofcom to explain why the Scottish local authorities would not benefit from the Communications Act 2003. Ofcom agreed to provide an explanation in writing. Vicki Nash, Director Ofcom Scotland went on to describe Ofcom Scotland as representing Scotland to Ofcom and Ofcom to Scotland.

Tim Suter, from Ofcom in London suggested Ofcom were looking at 'local digital content'. Ofcom has recently shifted the focus of its Local TV Report - standing down John Glover who had been Ofcom's single point of contact for its work-stream on Local TV.

The shift away from local channels was first noticed when the title of the Manchester Local TV Meeting mysteriously changed from the '**Ofcom Local TV Seminar**' as billed on the 16th September to the more ambiguous title as billed on the 27th September '**Ofcom Seminar on local TV and interactive content**' to its final incarnation on the day itself (1st November) as the '**Ofcom seminar on local content and interactive service**'. Notice here - even television has gone, freeing Ofcom to drift its Report to focus on more or less anything ...

This is an important shift with Ofcom's work focused on the 'means of delivery' (a long overdue issue affecting most in the Local TV sector and aspirant Local TV sector) to look instead at 'content' or programming. The transformation was consolidated further in Scotland on 29th November when Tim answered the Enterprise and Culture Committee's question on whether spectrum would be made available across Scotland for Local TV. Tim's answer was that Ofcom were exploring possible ways to deliver 'local digital content'.

This shift may mean nothing but don't bank on it! Other correspondence confirms Ofcom do not propose to provide a comparison of the most effective ways of delivering local DTT across the UK in their Local TV (oops - Local Content) Report.

DIARY

Advertising Effectiveness and the Future Funding of Broadcasting

14th December 2005 Lewis Media Centre, Millbank Tower, Millbank, London SW1

The seminar is made possible through support from Channel 4 and ITV

09.00 - 9.30	Registration
09.30 - 9.35	<u>Chairman's opening remarks</u> Lord Lipsey
9.35 - 9.45	<u>Background to the consultation</u> Martin Hart, Head of Commercial Policy, Content & Standards, Ofcom
	Questions and comments from the floor
9.45 - 10.10	<u>The story so far: Analysis of trends in the advertising market</u> Senior analyst

Questions and comments from the floor

10.10 – 11.00

Advertising effectiveness: What's 'wrong' with spot advertising?

Professor Patrick Barwise, Professor of Management and Marketing, London Business School

Senior representative, TV advertising platform/sales

Senior representative, advertisers

Senior representative, marketing

Questions and comments from the floor

11.00 – 11.20

Coffee

11.20 – 12.10

On the horizon: new forms of revenue generation and their role in the future funding of television

David Charlesworth, Head of Sponsorship, Channel 4

Senior representative, marketing planning

Senior representative, production company

Senior representative, commercial TV network

Senior analyst

Questions and comments from the floor

12.10 – 12.55

Where's the consumer in all of this?

Simon Terrington, founding director, Human Capital

Simon Andrews, co-founder, Big Picture

Senior representative, commercial TV network

Senior representative, Voice of the Listener and Viewer

Questions and comments from the floor

12.55 - 13.00

Chairman's closing remarks

Lord Lipsey

13.00 – 14.00

Lunch

14.00 – 14.05

Chairman's opening remarks

Senior parliamentarian

14.05 – 14.50

Distraction and competition: PVRs, broadband TV, mobile, games and the future commercial TV as an advertising platform

Senior representative, PVR service provider

Senior representative, games

Senior representative, mobile

Analyst

Questions and comments from the floor

14.50 – 15.00

Tea

15.00 – 15.45

Living with the future: how to make best use of new advertising forms, examples of best practice

Tess Alps, Chairman, PHD Group

Mike Parker, Head of Strategic Sales and Commercial Marketing, Channel 4

Senior representative, cable and satellite sales

Questions and comments from the floor

15.45 – 16.30

Future funding of TV: challenges and ways forward for public policy

Michael Ridley, Partner, DLA Piper Rudnick Gray Cary UK LLP

European Commission representative

Senior representative, DCMS

Senior representative, Which?

Senior representative, sponsorship and advertiser relationships
 Senior representative, terrestrial network
 Questions and comments from the floor
 16.30 – 16.40 Closing thoughts from Ofcom
 Martin Hart, Head of Commercial Policy, Content & Standards,
 Ofcom
 16.45 – 16.50 Chairman's and Westminster Media Forum closing remarks
 Senior parliamentarian
 For further information and bookings contact Peter van Gelder,
 Director, Westminster Media Forum
 pvg@westminsterforumprojects.co.uk

TELEVISION FROM THE NATIONS AND REGIONS CONFERENCE 2006

11TH JANUARY 2006 THE LOWRY, SALFORD QUAYS

Chaired by Steve Hewlett, Writer and Broadcast Consultant

The Promised Land:

The future of television outside London

This year the Conference will focus on the future of network television production outside the M25 and new opportunities for the Nations and Regions. It will look at policy and practice. It's a great chance to make contacts, to question and to learn more. Apart from the main sessions there are breakout sessions where experts share their special knowledge.

The 2006 Conference will follow the publication of Ofcom's Television Production Sector Review, which focuses on how and where television is made, examining the future of the independent and out of London quotas. It will be an opportunity to find out how the Government and the major broadcasters will respond, and to have your say. The conference also look at the alternatives to London Centric Commissioning - Local TV, Commissioning and how to crack it, New Markets from New Technology, and the role of the Indies and Super Indies in the regions. And finally Paul Abbott, the creator of Shameless and Clocking Off, takes a sideways look at the day's events.

KEYNOTE SPEECH James Purnell, MP Minister for Creative Industries and Tourism gives his vision of the future of television outside London.

FAIR SHARES FOR ALL How will the major channels react to Ofcom? Find out from the people in charge of the nations and regions from the BBC, ITV and Channel 4.

THE FUTURE IS HERE: THE FUTURE IS LOCAL Local television is taking off. The BBC and ITV are joining in. Can it fill the gap left by the retreat from regional TV? How good is it? How viable? See it for yourself and question the new station-masters.

THE RISE OF THE SUPER-INDIES What they can offer the regions. Super-Indies with massive clout and resources are gobbling up companies in the regions. Is this a massive new opportunity? Meet some of the people who run these new big beasts.

BREAKOUT SESSIONS

Commissioning and how to crack it – your chance to ask how to get noticed
The Hit Machine – Make that idea into a hit with help from the Head of Entertainment Development ITV
New Technology, New Markets – why pitch to the major channels when you could stream direct to the internet, the mobile or...meet the pioneers and see their equipment.

Confirmed speakers so far:

James Purnell MP, Minister for Creative Industries and Tourism
Tim Suter, Ofcom, with responsibility for Content and Standards
Pat Loughrey, Director, Nations and Regions BBC
Stuart Cosgrove, Director of Nations and Regions Channel 4
Clare Thompson, Head of Entertainment Development, ITV
Jana Bennett, Director of Television, BBC
Janey Walker, Managing Editor Commissioning, Channel 4
Steve Morrison Chief Executive, All 3 Media
Henry Normal, Baby Cow, Manchester
Andy Griffie, Controller, English Regions BBC
Dave Rushton, Director, Institute of Local Television
Mark Dodson, Chief Executive, Channel M
Kevin Gooding, ITV, Director of Product Development
Marilyn Hyndman, Coordinator, NvTv
Clive Jones, Chief Executive, Regions and News ITV
Chris Shaw, Senior Programme Controller, Channel 5
Paul Abbott, Creator of Shameless and Clocking Off

There will also be a pre-conference event on the evening of the 10th January.

For further information or to register see our website at www.salford.tv
or contact us by e-mail: r.heritage@salford.ac.uk l.nandy@salford.ac.uk
or telephone the Conference Office: 0161 295 2667 Delegate fees are: £150 corporate, £50 freelance and £20 student.

LOCAL TV FORUM 2006 (preliminary announcement)

Friday 17th March and Saturday 18th March

European local tv and citizenship conference including with screenings

10.30 **Local Digital Television for the UK**

The DCMS Consultation on Local TV
tbc

11.00 Q&A

11.15 **Local Television in Europe**

Community Television

Pieter de Wit, OLON, Netherlands

Open Channels: Active Citizenship & Freedom of Expression

Jurgen Linke, Offener Kanal, Germany

City Television & Sustaining Services

Eva Dekanovska, TV Nasa, Slovakia

Municipal and Rural Television

Comba Compoy (tbc), University of Santiago de Compostela, Spain

The Migrant Experience in Sweden

	Johannes Moubis, Open Channel Gothenburg, Sweden
12.30	Q&A
1.00	Lunch
2.00	Local DTT crown castle/argiva
	Local Broadband on TV BT/Homechoice
3.0	Q&A
3.15	Break
3.30	Workshops Commercial Municipal Community
4.30	Q&A - feedback
4.45	Licence Proposals & Consultation discussion/panel - DCMS
5.10	The Public Service Publisher or top-sliced Licence Fee discussion/panel - Ofcom
5.30	Q&A Plenary - where next?
6.00	Finish

OPEN CHANNELS FOR EUROPE

7.30-8.30	Local Television: Identity and Democracy Introduction, Ed Baumeister, City TV Foundation, France Four Short Films (Saturday 18th March provisional)
10.00am	Coffee/tea new delegates register
10.30	Citizen Activism & European Citizenship Introduction: (tbc) & Jurgen Linke, Germany Four Short Films
11.30	Workshops – Exchanging Citizen TV Three workshops <i>chaired by Peter de Wit, Jurgen Linke and Eva Dekanovska.</i>
12.30	Q&A Plenary - where next?
1.00	Finish

This is a provisional programme. For further details contact Tana Macphee at local.tv@virgin.net

BOOKS, REPORTS & PUBLICATIONS

LOCAL TELEVISION RENEWED: essays on local television 1994-2005 published by School Press for the Institute of Local Television, August 2005. 112 pages, available in pdf format at £7.00 from 5th August or as a softback book at £13.50 inc p&p from 30th August 2005.

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 under way 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.

Personal cheques for books and/or the pdf version of Local Television Renewed should be made payable to 'Institute of Local Television' and sent to

Institute of Local Television 13 Bellevue Place Edinburgh EH7 4BS Official orders and further enquiries can be sent to the address above or to local.tv@virgin.net.

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AND FINALLY

request a copy of the local TV logo - will be sent to you as a small jpg file and pdf file to cut and paste into newsletters, letters, emails and publicity

Local 



To contribute to ACTO - offering further reasons for local TV in your area, examples of local TV activity, expressions of interest in local TV, forums, research, events etc - email to local.tv@virgin.net

To be removed from the ACTO electronic mailing list please advise local.tv@virgin.net