Promoting and Protecting the Screen Community

Features

Strong Demand for Quality Digital Content Drives Investment in Online Entertainment in SE Asia

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SINGAPORE – On September 19, 2014, creative industry executives from across Southeast Asia agreed that audience demand for quality film, television and music content was driving the online digital economies across the region, which is currently experiencing an explosion of new and innovative services.

"Fast Track Southeast Asia: How quality content is driving the digital economy", a forum and networking event held in Singapore, assessed the growth of screen content consumption in Southeast Asia markets, and reviewed the environmental factors which allows these types of online services to flourish.

Speaking at the event, Yangbin Wang, founder and CEO of Vobile, the worldwide leading provider of video and audio content identification, analytics and management services, was optimistic about the growth of legitimate digital businesses in Southeast Asia: "The video entertainment business is about USD$400 billion worldwide. Given the size of the potential market, Southeast Asia is primed for exponential growth. Smart phone deployment will drive emerging markets, though one challenge for the monetization of local content will be how effectively rights holders can handle their new licensing agreements."

Tanongkiat (Peter) Budthasaen, Executive Director of Hollywood HDTV, a new OTT service in Thailand delivering fast, high quality streaming of blockbuster and local movie content to local audiences, said that they are reviewing all possible options in technology, pricing and marketing in order to attract a growing audience: "We need to offer quality content and a good user experience. Hollywood content is often the big draw-card but we match that with familiar local content for 'stickiness' – to keep them coming back. We also need to promote the fact that we are a legitimate service, that we're here to stay and won't be going away anytime soon."

Several factors indicate that there is huge potential for Southeast Asian markets to develop various platforms for audiences to enjoy films and television shows. Many of these markets have a large young population who are tech savvy and desire a wide range of local and international product. In correlation with audience demand, improved regulatory measures, the development of broadband infrastructure and adoption of new technology is providing the conditions necessary for new businesses to thrive. Local screen industries are looking to fulfill this demand with an expansion of modern cinemas, more television channels and a vast array of content available on Internet connected smartphones.

The forum was opened by Mike Ellis, President and Managing Director, Motion Picture Association (MPA), who pointed to an upward trend in the Southeast Asian box office as one of the key factors influencing the growing online market: "The theatrical box office in this region acts like the locomotive engine that powers other ancillary businesses and raises the profile of popular quality movie entertainment. Audiences appear hungry for quality content, and we are seeing a great deal

of creativity and innovation in the way this content is being delivered to people online and through their handheld devices."

The first panel Developing the Market was moderated by Edwin Yeo, SPRG, and featured Norman Halim, KRU Studios, Malaysia, Rahul Pushkarna, 20th Century Fox Home Entertainment International, Hong Kong, and Do Hoang Viet, Nam Giao, Vietnam.

The second panel, Evolving and Marketing the Offer was moderated by Krishnan Rajagopalan, SingTel, and featured Steven Frank, Deezer, Singapore, Tanongkiat Budthasaen, Hollywood HDTV, Thailand and Wang Yangbin, Vobile, Singapore.

The forums and networking occasion was held at Cathay Cineleisure Orchard in Singapore. The event was organized by the Centre for Content Protection, and was supported by 21st Century Fox, CASBAA, Cathay Cineplex, IFPI, MPA and Vobile.

Images from the event are available here.

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