

African TV seeks out local content

Digital migration will allow a broader spread of television content throughout Africa, the NexTV CEO conference held mid-May in Mauritius, heard.



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Boris Bachorz, director of Africa at AFP global news agency, elaborates further on the digital migration process and implementation in this Q&A:

Q: The digital migration process is still on going in Africa, how is AFP taking advantage of this opportunity?

A: The on going digital migration process will boost our activities as we provide content in various form such as text, audio and video which is our biggest asset. The digital migration will allow a wide spread of the content as TV represents one quarter of our turnover in Africa and we are eager for the migration to be completed. Nowadays, African TV is looking for local content such as hard news and stories and that is what we are providing them with.

Q: We have seen that local content is gaining more and more momentum in Africa, what is AFP doing in term of investment in local content?

A: We are currently investing in local content via two channels. First, we hired local reporters and journalists to get closer to the sources of the news. We are investigating a different type of environment such as new African entrepreneurs; African slums to get a global picture of Africa in all its diversity. Secondly, we are teaming up with local producers, to share our resources with them to promote their original content internationally and this helps to create a positive image of Africa.

Q: What are the major setbacks you have encountered on the African continent?

A: We have two major problems and the first is from an editorial standpoint. We cover all countries in Africa including Somalia, Burundi, South Soudan. These countries present a real danger for our reporters who must travel in these countries to get news. That is why we need to have experienced people for these jobs. The second setback is from a commercial point of view, we need to find reliable customers. Before, the only clients we could hope for were the states and they were not that reliable, but nowadays it is much easier to work with the private sector.

Q: In some African countries, freedom of the press is not always allowed, how do you tackle this problem?

A: It's true, for instance, in Burundi, it was impossible to get any news since the country was not willing to have a safe working environment for the journalists. We had to get the reporters to France and Kenya to keep them out of danger. South Sudan is also a big problem, tragedies are going on and visas are extremely difficult to get as the government does not want to expose the real situation that prevails and travelling in these countries is also very difficult.

Full interview:

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