

Embargoed until Monday 27<sup>th</sup> October

## **MEDIA ANNOUNCEMENT**

### **Title: New Digital Content on Sydney Television Trial**

**Date: 27 October 2008**

Broadcast solutions provider Broadcast Australia has added two new services, NITV and Teachers' TV, to its Sydney datacasting and open narrowcasting trial, **DIGITAL FORTY FOUR**. **DIGITAL FORTY FOUR** is a trial service available to free-to-air digital television enabled households across the Sydney metropolitan area.

NITV (National Indigenous TV) delivers programming and content provided by and for Indigenous people throughout Australia. NITV will be available on the digital channel 40 from 27 October. It will deliver a daily news and weather service created by and for Indigenous people, award-winning sports programs, dramas, documentaries, cultural programming, music events, children's shows, comedy, Indigenous lifestyle and reality series and movies.

Broadcast Australia will also launch Teachers' TV from 3 November. Teachers' TV provides a range of educational content designed to promote good teaching practice, elevate the status of teaching and promote careers in the trades. Teachers' TV can be found on channel 47 and will timeshare this channel with Federal Parliament. It will commence on 3 November and be broadcast on days when Federal Parliament is not sitting.

Two national free-to-air channels were earmarked by the Federal Government several years ago to provide greater choice to television audiences through the delivery of datacasting, open narrowcasting or mobile TV services. **DIGITAL FORTY FOUR** was established by Broadcast Australia to assess the technical and commercial viability of these services.

Broadcast Australia's Managing Director, Graeme Barclay said "The trial has elicited a high degree of interest from content providers and the general community in these services being offered on a permanent basis".

He added "These services complement existing free-to-air services and expand the choice available to viewers. Once these and other innovative services are permanently established, they will also provide an incentive for people to make the change to digital TV, supporting the Federal Government's policy of switching-off analogue services by 2013. There is a very strong case for the allocation of Channels A & B to provide new types of television services to the wider Australian population".

The **DIGITAL FORTY FOUR** trial now provides viewers with a comprehensive range of services including; the latest sport, weather, health and traffic reports, news, job searches, emergency services information, religious content, home shopping and live parliamentary debates. This has now been expanded to include Indigenous television and educational content designed to teach people new skills.

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## **What is DIGITAL FORTY FOUR?**

DIGITAL **FORTY FOUR** is a trial datacasting and open narrowcasting service which has been “on air” across Sydney since 2003. Broadcast Australia has been demonstrating how digital television can deliver alternative video, audio and text services to the mass market, using a Digital Terrestrial Television (DTT) platform.

Changes to the Broadcasting Services Act in 2000 provided for a new category of television service called “datacasting”. Datacasting content is subject to genre conditions and is essentially limited to content which is: information-based, educational, foreign language news or current affairs, parliamentary proceedings and advertising. In 2007, the Act was changed to allow open narrowcasting services as well as datacasting services to be carried on Channels A & B.

DIGITAL **FORTY FOUR** is a free-to-air broadcast service which provides information based, special interest, and educational television services to the public. The Broadcast Australia trial is available to those viewers in the Sydney metropolitan area with a digital television set or Set Top Box (STB). Working with trial partners, Broadcast Australia has developed a range of datacasting and open narrowcasting services providing new and innovative streams of digital content not seen on standard free-to-air channels.

DTT provides broadcasters with a cost effective method for distributing information in an easily accessible format that is receivable through the household digital television. Broadcasting provides a ‘one-to-many’ service without the bandwidth constraints of internet delivered or cellular based services. It also provides an ideal platform to distribute information which can be updated in “real time”. Depending on the information to be communicated, datacasting services can comprise text, images, video or a combination of all of these.

### **Company background**

With over 75 years experience as the owner and operator of one of the most extensive terrestrial broadcast transmission networks in the world, Broadcast Australia provides end-to-end transmission services for radio and television (analogue and digital) broadcasters. The company's core competencies include planning and network design, engineering design and project management, complex systems integration, site development and installation, operations and network management and in-house repairs and maintenance.

Broadcast Australia also develops world-class solutions and applications for new and emerging technologies—such as Datacasting, Digital Radio and Mobile TV—working with strategic partners throughout the Asia Pacific region. Subsidiary companies include Hong Kong-based confined space coverage group Radio Frequency Engineering Limited (RFE), digital media network/infrastructure specialist Singapore Digital, systems integration and product supply specialist The Bridge Networks and critical application and hosting provider, Hostworks.

Broadcast Australia is a 100% owned subsidiary of Macquarie Communications Infrastructure Group, an entity listed on the Australian Stock Exchange (ASX code: MCG).

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