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## Accelerating the Export of Chinese TV Drama, Advancing The Soft Power of Chinese Culture

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With the rapid development of China's economy, the Chinese government has implemented a policy to reinforce the country's soft power. Visual media occupies a key position in this process by promoting the export of Chinese culture.

China has a long history and a very rich cultural heritage and TV drama is one of the media art forms that can best represent and reflect it. According to a survey conducted by the leading Chinese market research company CMMR, TV drama was the favorite genre in 2009 and 2010 registering an audience of 68.8% and 69.2%, respectively (CMO Newsletter, November 2010). TV drama is shown in 'prime time' (from 7pm to 10pm) on most TV channels; around 12,000-15,000 TV drama episodes are produced every year and 1,764 out of 1,974 TV channels broadcast TV dramas.<sup>1</sup>

Although TV drama in China covers various genres, there are four main ones: costume drama (e.g. *To Sleep on Brushwood and Taste Gall*, *Woxin changdan*, the story of King Yue's revenge in the late Spring and Autumn period<sup>2</sup>); historical drama (e.g. *Breaking through the Eastern Gate*, *Chuang guandong*, the story of the Shan Dong immigrants in Qing dynasty); military drama (e.g. *Soldier Sortie*, *Shibing Tuji*, about the personal development of the ordinary people in the period starting with the reforms); and youth drama (e.g. *Struggling*, *Fendou*, portraying young people's lives and loves).

A number of TV dramas have

1 Development and Research Centre, State Administration of Radio, Film & Television, *Blue Book of Broadcasting and TV: Report of the development of Chinese broadcasting, film and TV 2009* [*Guangdian lanpishu: 2009 nian Zhongguo guangbo dianying dianshi fazhan baogao*], Beijing: Xinhua Publishing, p.72.

2 Between 722 and 481 B.C.E.

received awards at international TV festivals such as the 45-episode TV serial *Qiao's Grand Courtyard* (*Qiaojia dayuan*), produced in 2006 and the 41-episode TV serial *To Sleep on Brushwood and Taste Gall* (*Woxin changdan*), produced in 2007 which won the award for the best long TV dramas at the 2006 and 2007 Seoul International TV festival respectively, while the 36-episode serial *Wives' glorious time* (*Xifu de meihao shidai*), won the award for best foreign TV drama at the Tokyo International TV Festival in 2010. However, in recent years Chinese audiences have shown a growing interest in Chinese drama to the detriment of foreign drama, which was very popular in the past, because the former deals with situations and stories of local people facing everyday life against the backdrop of the social transformations brought about by the fast economic development with which Chinese people can identify.

Despite these excellent results, the export of Chinese TV drama is disappointing. With the rise in popularity of Korean TV dramas, the market for Chinese TV drama has been declining in Hong Kong, Taiwan and the Southeast Asian countries, the major target of Chinese TV drama overseas. Also, it is not easy for Chinese TV drama to penetrate the mainstream TV channels in Japan and Korea, or the major European and American TV channels. Only some cable channels and Chinese overseas channels broadcast Chinese TV dramas. Moreover, Chinese TV drama for export is limited mostly to adaptations of Chinese classical literature such as *The Story of the Stone* (*Hong lou meng*), *Story of a Journey to the West* (*Xiyouji*), costume drama like *Yong Zheng Dynasty* (*Yongzheng*

wangchao) and martial arts drama like *The Legend of Bruce Lee* (Li Xiaolong chuanguqi). Contemporary stories do not seem to attract overseas audiences.

The annual report on the export of Chinese cultural products and services published in 2009 by the Department of Trade in Services of the Ministry of Commerce shows that, in 2008, US culture products accounted for almost 42.6% of the entire international market whereas Chinese cultural products accounted for only 1.5%. The Chinese culture trade is in deficit and the import/export ratio stands at 10:1: the export of Chinese TV drama is certainly not a success story.

Can Chinese TV drama be successfully exported to overseas markets? Could this contribute to the process of enhancing the nation's soft power? We will now discuss the acceleration of the export of Chinese TV drama examining the international strategy on the export of Chinese TV drama.

### **One. The Foundations of the Export of Chinese TV Drama**

#### **1. The Government's Promotion Policy**

In recent years the Chinese government has promoted many policies to encourage the export of culture products. The 2006 'Eleventh Five-Year Plan of cultural development' mainly focused on 'go out', 'integration of resources', 'giving prominence to key areas' and 'expanding cultural coverage and international influence'.<sup>3</sup>

In 2007, during the 17th National Congress of the Communist Party of China, Chairman Hu Jintao made a clear policy decision by stating that the advancement of China's cultural soft power is one of the country's priorities. In early

<sup>3</sup> Xinhua News Agency, "National Eleventh Five-Year Plan period of cultural development" [*Guojia "Shiyiwu"shiqi wenhua fazhan guihua gangyao*], September 13 2006.

veiled the 'Plan to promote and develop the culture industry' (*Wenhua chanye zhengxin guihua*), a new policy for the culture media industry, which expresses the government's determination to strengthen the nation's soft power.

As regards the film and TV industry, the 'go out' project developed by the State Administration of Radio, Film & Television (SARFT) was implemented in 2005, while the external publicity (propaganda) activities of radio, film and television were brought under the plan to reinforce China's soft power. In recent years SARFT has supervised and coordinated a number of TV stations and private film and TV companies to prepare them for participation in the French Cannes TV Festival with the aim of exploring and increasing the influence of Chinese TV programs in the international markets. Since 2003 the China International Radio, TV and Film Exhibition, held in Beijing every year, has become the biggest and most prestigious exhibition of the broadcasting, film and TV industry in Asia, according to data published by the promoter China International TV Corporation, a subsidiary of the national-tier broadcaster China Central Television (CCTV). This exhibition includes the screening of Chinese TV and film programs targeted at an international audience, an equipment exhibition, a summit forum, and the national radio and television awards. In 2009 it set a record in terms of space, the number of exhibitors and the amount of trade.<sup>4</sup>

Furthermore, the Shanghai International Television Festival and the Hangzhou International Comic and Animation Festival also invite producers from the major foreign TV enterprises to discuss and exchange ideas. The trade of film and TV products is becoming increasingly significant and the international influence of these festivals is

<sup>4</sup> <http://citv.chnpec.com/citv/cn/xwtg.html>

growing.

The platforms used to broadcast Chinese media are now fully developed. CCTV and China Radio International covers 140 and 160 countries around the world, respectively. The so-called 'Chinese TV Great Wall Platform', an overseas broadcasting platform built by CCTV, local TV companies and related overseas TV channels, has been set up in US, Europe, Canada, and South America while the Australian Great Wall Platform is now under construction.<sup>5</sup>

## 2. Attraction of Chinese culture

The Chinese government is also improving the attraction of Chinese culture. China began to open Confucius Institutes overseas as early as 2004: by August 2009 there were 268 Confucius Institutes and 71 Confucius classrooms in 83 countries which have become an important platform for people all over the world to learn Chinese language and culture. Moreover, TV documentaries such as *The Forbidden City (Gugong)*; *The Rise of a Nation (Daguo jueqi)*; *Rediscovering the Yangtze River (Zaishuo Changji)*, and *Dun Huang (Dun Huang)* have been sold to 100 countries. The export of Chinese films is increasing each year and many of them have won international awards. In this 'post-Olympic era', a growing number of people from all over the world are keen to know more about Chinese culture.

The rise of China's international influence can be measured also in the yearly increase in the overseas market share of Chinese film and TV products. For example, the TV serial *The Legend of Bruce Lee* (2008) was sold to 64 countries even before its debut on CCTV, with the profit of each episode amounting to over US\$100,000 (€76,680). The animation TV serial *Romance*

<sup>5</sup> Interview with Zhu Hong, the spokesperson of the State General Administration for Radio, Film and Television: <http://www.xinhuanet.com/xhft/20090924a/>

*of Three Kingdoms*, co-produced with Japan, has been sold to 25 countries and has made a profit of over RMB90,000 (€10,450). This animation serial has been broadcast in prime time on the Tokyo TV station since April 2010.

## Two. The Major Problems of the Export of Chinese TV Drama and International Strategies

### 1. The Industry Bottleneck

Chinese TV drama was included in the market reforms in the early 1990s. However, although it is one of the first culture products to be marketized, it still faces many problems and obstacles. One of the most serious problems is over-production: every year around 7,000 to 8,000 episodes of TV dramas are made. Supply still exceeds demand and TV drama is of poor quality. The main income for TV drama comes from advertising. Only one third of TV drama production companies make profits while most of TV drama producers lose out. To pursue profit many TV dramas simply copy and imitate previous successful ones regardless of the products' quality and cultural taste.

To sum up, "the problem of Chinese TV drama is our production system. The cost of a high quality US TV drama could reach US\$1 million (€760,600) per episode, while for a Chinese TV drama, half a million RMB (€57,580) per episode is considered high. Again, the annual production of US TV drama is limited but it can make a good economic profit", according to Prof. Miao at the Communication University of China.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>6</sup> Yang, Chenghu, "Comparison and difference: compare Chinese and overseas TV art from the perspective of globalization: interview with Prof. Miao Di, director of the school of literature at the Communication university of China" [*Chayi yu rongtong: quanqiuhua shiyezhong de zhongwai dianshi yishu bijiao - fang Zhongguo chuanmei daxue wenxueyuan yuanzhang Miao Di jiaoshou*], *Modern Communication*, Beijing: Modern Communication Publishing, February 2007, p. 56.

There are around 3,000 TV drama production companies in China but the production capability of most of them is very limited. Some companies spend large amounts on famous directors and stars so the investment in production is reduced and this affects the quality of the products. If poor quality TV dramas can barely gain a share in the domestic market, what chance do they have in the international ones?

It is only by solving these problems and introducing commercialized operating models in each production sector that the 'go out' strategy can be successful. Adjusting and optimizing the industrial structure of Chinese TV drama will be a long process. In the future, the growth of the broadcasting and film industry will depend on market-orientation strategies and on improving the competitiveness of the products.

## 2. The Issue of Perspective

Many Chinese TV drama producers lack an international outlook. First of all, producers neglect overseas markets because the domestic market is large and many TV dramas could demand a better price in the domestic market than in the overseas ones; secondly, the lack of funding, original ideas and marketing experts limit expansion in overseas markets.

Experts in the TV drama industry suggest that, to enter overseas markets, film and TV programs need to meet some basic requirements: e.g. the master copy should contain a separate international language soundtrack without Chinese subtitles and the scripts should be in both Chinese and the local language prepared for overseas market. Sometimes a dubbed version of a master copy or master copy with English subtitles is better. Promotion brochures with the introduction in different languages and sample prints are appreciated by customers.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>7</sup> Fu, Huimin. "The strategy of

Without an international outlook, a new TV drama will miss a good opportunity to access the international market.

Chinese TV drama producers should have an international perspective in the age of globalization; they also need to increase investments, and strengthen their marketing, communication and cooperation with overseas TV companies.

## 3. Cultural Differences

Due to the close relationship between the cultural characteristics and content of TV dramas, the main obstacle to the acceleration of the export of Chinese TV drama is the culture gap. The import and export of TV drama should not be seen simply as a result of cultural hierarchy. Chinese audiences do not always appreciate US TV dramas: for example, while popular in the States, *Desperate Housewives* (*Juewang de zhufu*) had a very low audience rating in China.<sup>8</sup> How to overcome cultural differences is a problem that cannot be avoided in cross-cultural communication.

Professor Zhang Ziyang, associate director of the China TV Series Production Center (CTPC) at the China Communication University, claims that Chinese culture has been marginalized, ignored and misunderstood by the international community for a long time. The dif-

"gatekeeper" in the cross-culture communication of Chinese TV drama" [*Zhongguo dianshiju kua wenhua chuanbo de baguanren celue*], *Media Studies*, first issue, 2007.

<sup>8</sup> The first season for a total of 21 episodes of the US TV serial *Desperate Housewives* (*Juewang de zhufu*) was broadcast in 2005 on CCTV TV drama channel CCTV-8. It was aired after 10 pm for one week, three episodes consecutively per evening. Although related data have not been made public, according to comparative analysis it had very low ratings compared to Korean TV series broadcast in the same period. The main explanation for this are cultural differences and audiences' tastes: first, in China, the main audience of TV drama series are middle-aged and older women who find it difficult to accept certain content vehicled by this US TV serial; second, young people can watch this US TV serial on Internet at any time and see the uncut version.

fusion of Chinese TV drama is encountering considerable difficulties in overseas markets also because of the differences between the overseas and domestic TV media system.

So, should we give up trying to export Chinese TV drama? Many authors believe that while Korean TV dramas are able to penetrate overseas market and benefit both economically and culturally, Chinese TV drama can 'go out' courageously. Leaving aside the government's policy of supporting culture, TV drama producers need to understand both the domestic and overseas markets and improve their international communication skills. On one hand, TV drama should deliver Chinese traditional culture to audiences, on the other, the cultural traditions and customs of the target audiences should also be considered. China should learn about the world and at the same time the world also needs to understand China, and this mutual cultural communication has to be strengthened. The ability to communicate decides the international influence. To improve international communication skills, Chinese and international viewpoints are important in the cultural exchange of the Chinese film and TV industry.

In order to improve the ability to communicate China's culture, four possible solutions can be considered:

1) Market Research and Market Segmentation

Before selling Chinese TV drama to overseas markets, it is necessary to investigate the target market, to learn the overseas audiences' cultural contexts, aesthetic expectations, and to understand the different screening systems.

Costume drama and martial arts drama are normally welcomed in overseas markets; consequently, more costume dramas and martial arts dramas should be produced for export.

China, South East Asian and East Asian countries are in the same cultural context, therefore it is easy for Chinese TV programs to penetrate these regions; this is favored by the fact that China also has a long history of cultural communication with these countries. The Asian market should be the main target for Chinese TV drama. However, TV drama producers should also consider western audiences by opening up their minds and investigating the interests of the target audiences. For example, as TV documentaries about traditional Chinese culture are a popular genre in western markets, producers could cooperate with western TV stations to produce documentaries that introduce Chinese history and contemporary Chinese society. The five-episode documentary 'One Year in Tibet' produced by Chinese-British Ms. Shu Yun, presented a true picture of the daily life of the Tibetan people and was broadcast on major TV channels in over 40 countries including the BBC. The government could also sponsor qualified production studios to produce and export high quality TV dramas that satisfy the aesthetic expectations of western audiences and at the same time represent the essence of Chinese culture.

Another barrier to export lies in Chinese TV drama's narrative style and broadcasting method which is very different to that of its foreign counterparts. One series of Chinese TV dramas normally contains dozens of episodes, and several episodes are usually shown everyday on many different TV channels during prime time. However, European and North American TV channels do not broadcast as many TV dramas as Chinese TV channels do and documentaries and talk shows are more popular in foreign countries. 'In Japan only seven channels in the whole country broadcast TV dramas, and only one episode

is shown each week'.<sup>9</sup> It might be impossible for foreigners who have little understanding of Chinese history and culture to enjoy saga TV drama. To deal with this distributors should prepare different versions of TV drama with different lengths for individual markets. At the same time short TV dramas and films for TV distribution could be considered.

To improve international communication, new talents who are familiar with both the domestic and overseas markets and have good foresight and innovative ideas are needed. Cultivating new talent is another way of improving TV drama export. Currently, China's new culture industry is still in its early days. As professor Miao Di from the Communication University of China said, 'the Chinese culture industry not only lacks sufficient financial support, it also needs an efficient return on investment system.' Chinese TV drama should focus on content, encourage innovation and establish efficient benefit and return systems.

## 2) Search for Common Values

Although cultural differences exist, there are still some universal values shared by all. Both easterners and westerners adhere to common values such as truth, honesty, and beauty, and they appreciate strength, encouragement, and endeavor (that's why the Olympic Games attract people from all over the world). China's 5,000 years of civilization and its unique traditional culture and historical material provide rich resources for the production of Chinese TV drama. The core values of Chinese culture, which are also accepted by foreigners such as charity, harmony and continuing self-improvement, should be represented in Chinese TV dramas.

Children's programs contain the most common value in terms

<sup>9</sup> Yu, Shu, "Three shackles" restrict the overseas market of Chinese TV drama ["*San da zhigu*" *daozhi guchan dianshiju hai wai shichang buleguan*], *Yangcheng Daily*, October 30 2005.

of both content and expressive style so animation series have priority in the 'go out'. Since 2004 the output of Chinese animation TV series has continued its historical record of productivity to become the second biggest in the world after Japan. The export of Chinese animation series is increasing: for example, after its resounding success in China, the animation TV serial *Pleasant Goat and Big Big Wolf* (*Xiyangyang yu huitailang*) is now also being applauded by Malaysian, Indonesian, and Singapore audiences. Broadcasting rights of the animation serial *The Adventures of the Little Carp* (*Xiao liyu lixianji*) have been sold to over 50 countries. The international content of this serial has been crucial for its success: the star, Little Carp, is a lovable little animal that audiences throughout the world would take to. This animation serial is adapted from a Chinese traditional folktale known as *Little Carp Jumps over the Dragon Gate* (*Xiao liyu tiao longmeng*), therefore the Chinese aesthetic style is used in the character, color and set design. Moreover, globally accepted values such as self-improvement and self-development also ensure the success of this animation serial.<sup>10</sup>

## 3) Popularizing New Media Forms

Many countries and regions have implemented a sort of regional cultural protectionism. How to lift trade barriers and open channels for culture communication are the major problems the Chinese TV drama industry is now facing. Some TV production units are looking for opportunities to cooperate with foreign media, and are exchanging TV programs to broadcast on each other's channels; this has seemingly achieved some good results.

Popularizing the use of new media forms and building the platform for interactive communica-

<sup>10</sup> Yang, Zilan, "The adventures of Little Carp" swam abroad ["*You*" *chuguomen de <Xiaoliyu lixianji>*], *China TV*, Issue 10, 2009, p. 49.

tion is another way of exporting TV dramas. In the future, TV dramas will not only be broadcast by TV stations but also by new media. Selected Chinese TV dramas could be posted on the Internet and downloaded by overseas audiences for free in order to cultivate overseas audiences' aesthetic habits and enhance international communication.

The use of new media is a crucial step in achieving a breakthrough in international media communication in the new era of communication technology.

#### 4) Cultivating Overseas Audiences' Familiarity with Chinese Culture

China should exchange culture worldwide openly and equally. Interesting overseas audiences in Chinese culture and improving their familiarity with Chinese culture are pivotal in further exploring overseas markets.

China's culture is immense. With its 5,000 years of civilization and 30 years of reform and openness, China has a real 'cultural self-awareness' in the age of globalization. Chinese sociologist Fei Xiaotong believes that every country should have cultural self-awareness: in the era of globalization, this does not mean that China should stick to its traditional culture and refuse to accept western culture, but implies combining tradition with the new, because 'only continuous innovation can give new life to tradition'.<sup>11</sup> This "inclusiveness" of Chinese culture is one of the main reasons why China's culture stays alive. In the context of globalization, cultural inclusiveness could also be a new characteristic of international culture.

The export of Chinese TV drama not only regards the TV drama industry; it also relies on the growth of China's soft power. The good news is the great effort and

<sup>11</sup> Fei, Zonghui & Zhang, Ronghua, *Fei Xiaotong's culture awareness [Fei Xiaotong lunwenhua zijue]*. Huhe Haote: Inner Mongolia People's Publishing, March 2009.

progress made by the Chinese media industry. The 'going global' of Chinese TV drama is a long-term undertaking. It is believed that as one of the most important sectors in Chinese TV culture, Chinese TV drama could contribute to spreading Chinese culture to the world, shaping the image of the nation and strengthening the nation's soft power.

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## The Growth of Cable Television in China: A Historical Perspective

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Television signals can be received using terrestrial, satellite or cable technology. Cable television usually aims to solve the problem of poor terrestrial signal reception in geographically remote and mountainous areas by providing a more widespread signal reception. In the case of China, because of the historical path and state organization of this country, the cable television system was used for propaganda purposes by the Communist Party of China (CPC): as television was – and is still, although to a lesser extent – the party-government’s mouthpiece, it was a system which could best support a propaganda system reaching every public structure and place of social aggregation.

Cable television started to develop in China in the mid 1960s in the form of the Community Antenna Television (CATV) system. This system was first set up in Beijing’s newly built large hotels and restaurants and, later, in the preexisting structures. By the mid 1970s other public structures in Beijing such as hospitals, factories and large state-owned enterprises were equipped with a CATV system to receive TV programs. In 1976 the Beijing-based Dongfanghong refinery, renamed Sinopec three years later and now one of China’s largest oil company, installed a cable system in the residential complexes for its workers eliminating the antenna reception system: this was the first state-owned enterprise to undertake this type of project which, in the intentions of its leaders, aimed to solve the problem of the reception of TV programs and to satisfy the workers’ entertainment needs (Liu, 2007). The cable system, which was initially limited to air the then national broadcaster Beijing Television’s programs - and from 1978, those of China Central

Television (CCTV) - in the early days served 2,700 households and reached 6,000 four years later. In 1979 Sinopec started to self-produce TV programs and, at the same time, set up a system to run the network, developing the first cable television owned and run by a state-owned enterprise. In the years following China’s opening-up, large state-owned enterprises operating in other industries, from the railway to energy, started their own cable television stations and gradually gained increasing independence as regards investments and network management.

Being considered an integral part of the national television system, cable television was viewed by the Chinese leaders as another propaganda tool to be used in large state-owned enterprises and it was consequently subject to the control and management of the propaganda departments operating in those enterprises. Moreover, to ensure better reception of programs aired by the televisions at every administrative level – national, provincial, city and county, according to the reorganization of China’s television system from 1983 to the mid 1990s into four tiers -, cable television run by state-owned enterprises was considered to be functional to the promotion of greater corporate spirit and the improvement of the workers’ social life. These cable televisions, other than self-producing information programs related to the enterprise, provided thematic programs and editorials and aired programs edited by the workers themselves; they were even allowed to purchase foreign programs with the central government’s authorization.

By the end of the 1980s, as a result of the success of cable television started by state-owned enterprises, local administrations began

to start up their own cable television stations too. At the beginning, they were cable television stations at city and county level that developed in the small and medium sized cities in the most economically developed regions, such as Jinhua city in Zhejiang province, Hengyang in Hunan province, Foshan in Guangdong, Quanzhou in Fujian province and Shashi in Hubei. In the same period, the People's Liberation Army (PLA) also set up cable television stations at its structures and units.

In the large cities, as the administrative districts within a large city were not allowed by regulation to run their own terrestrial television stations, cable television was set up with a view to pursuing the propaganda objectives of the local party committees. For instance, thanks to government investments, in 1985 Qingshan, an administrative district in Wunan, the main city of Hubei province, set up a cable television station on the land of a preexisting terrestrial radio station. One year later, this small cable television station started to air local information programs about the administrative district itself. Following the Qingshan model, some administrative districts in Beijing, Shanghai and Guangzhou also started their own cable stations in this same period (Liu 2007; Di & Liu 2007).

Cable television of local administrations began to spread again in 1990 following the release of the government's new policies: according to the new regulation, state-owned enterprises and public institutions were allowed to apply to start cable television stations while individuals were prohibited from running cable television stations. The new rules also made it mandatory for cable television stations to directly broadcast and retransmit information and other important TV programs of CCTV and other regional televisions but forbade the units (*danwei*) to use the

cable television stations to broadcast self-produced programs.

The growth of cable television in China saw an unexpected acceleration just three years later as Chinese leaders began to promote cable TV, making services available at such low cost that satellite dishes – satellite television was starting to develop throughout the world in that same period – no longer seemed worth the bother, banned private ownership of satellite dishes, and prohibited newspaper advertising of foreign satellite services. This move was a swift and calculated response to Murdoch's speech in London after buying the Hong Kong-based Star TV in 1993. On that occasion, indeed, Murdoch enthused that satellite television was breaking down borders and said that "satellite broadcasting makes it possible for information-hungry residents of many closed societies to by-pass state-controlled television channels". As Curtin (2007) points out, "paradoxically, Chinese leaders chose to proliferate access to government cable systems in order to limit signal flow, reasoning that cable would be easier to regulate than satellite signals from afar".

By the end of 1995 China had far more than 1,200 cable television stations and 39.8 million users (Liu 2007; Di & Liu 2007). Almost 90% of cable broadcasters in this period linked up with local administrations at city and county level, the state-owned enterprises, the factories, the mines and PLA's residential and non-residential structures and facilities. Between 1996 and 1999<sup>12</sup> the Chinese government restructured the national television system, also in view of its membership of the World Trade Organization in

<sup>12</sup> The reference regulations are as follows: Document n. 37 jointly issued in 1996 by CPC's Central Committee and the State Council; Regulation on the administration of radio and television (*Guangbo dianshi guanli tiaoli*) issued in 1997 by the State Council and Document n. 82 issued in 1999 by the State Council.

2001. As regards cable television, the reforms envisaged the unification of terrestrial and cable radio and television stations in a single broadcasting entity. This implied that 1) local governments at a given administrative level could start only one cable radio and television station linked to that administrative level and 2) cable television stations would develop according to the general plan of development and within the framework of the coverage and transmission of the reference administrative level. Cable television stations owned and run by state-owned enterprises and other public institutions also stopped operating independently. The reforms also established that the national television system be reorganized from a four-tier system – national, provincial, city and county – to a three-tier system, in which county-tier television stations were allowed only to broadcast programs of higher-tier stations. This process was about to end by regulation before July 2001 with each city keeping the signal of only one television station. After the wave of these regulation-driven mergers, the number of television stations decreased from approximately 3,000 to approximately 300, while the number of the channels remained unchanged at 2,124 (Chen 2007).

Parallel to the merger of terrestrial and cable television, in 2000 the Chinese government undertook a concentration and consolidation process in the radio, film and television industry by administratively creating radio, film and television conglomerates at national, provincial and city levels. In the mind of the Chinese leaders, these conglomerates should be 'multimedia', 'trans-regional' and be 'large and strong' to compete against foreign groups that would enter the Chinese market in the following years (Chen 2007). To complete this wave of reforms, from 2002 TV channels were reor-

ganized: provincial-tier and satellite TV channels were required to provide their programs to county-tier cable television channels so both cable and terrestrial channels at county-tier were no longer allowed to self-produce information and thematic programs.

Despite these reforms, many county-tier television stations did not stop broadcasting until 2004: these television stations, indeed, had been the mouthpiece of the local party committees for many years and have received investments from them: they were therefore very important for the local party officials. Although the State Administration of Radio, Film and Television (SARFT) was responsible for the administration of the national television system, these television stations continued to operate for a few years under the control of the local party committees (Chen 2007).

China's cable television industry has seen a steady expansion in recent years: indeed, cable TV households increased from 114.70 million in 2004 to 173.98 million in 2009 (+51.68%), while cable TV subscription revenues accounted for RMB26.9 billion (€2.82 billion) in 2009, a 96.35% increase from 2004.

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### SARFT Issues Suggestions on Radio and TV Intellectual Property Strategy

November 12 saw the State Administration of Radio, Film and TV (SARFT) issue a circular titled *Suggestions on Implementation of Radio, Film and TV Intellectual Property Strategy* (*Guangbo dianying dianshi zhishi chanquan zhanlüe shishi yijian*) to its provincial broadcasting administrations. The circular emphasizes that provincial-level broadcasting administrations should work closely with law enforcement authorities, such as commerce and publishing administrations, customs, public security bureaus and courts, to launch special actions against intellectual property right infringements, especially online copyright infringements. TV shopping programs will also be strictly supervised and sales of counterfeit and shoddy goods will be banned.

SARFT also urges provincial broadcasting administrations to communicate and cooperate with intellectual property organizations at home and abroad, including the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), Asian Broadcast Union (ABU), China Film Copyright Association (CFCA), China Radio and TV Association (CRTA), etc.

Source: [www.china.com.cn](http://www.china.com.cn) (*Zhongguowang*) – November 18, 2010.

### SARFT: New Suggestions to Promote Domestic Docs

The State Administration of Radio, Film and TV (SARFT) recently issued *Suggestions on Accelerating the Development of the Documentary Industry* (*Guanyu jiakuai jilupian chanye fazhan de ruogan yijian*) to its local administrations and TV stations at all levels. The news was given by Jin Delong, deputy

chief editor at the 2010 Guangzhou International Documentary Film Festival held from December 6 to 10. He said that, according to statistics, China's TV stations broadcast as many as 15-20,000 hours of overseas documentaries and only 1,000 hours of domestic titles every year.

The *Suggestions* order all TV stations to keep their ratio of domestic documentaries to overseas ones above 7:3. At the same time, policies will be implemented to encourage the screening of excellent domestic documentary films in mainstream cinemas.

China currently has 3 free-to-air documentary channels and 3 pay-documentary channels at provincial-level and above.

Source: *Xinhua* – December 8, 2010.

### China and Japan to Jointly Expand Copyright Exchange

November 19 saw the Sino-Japan Copyright Forum held at the 3rd China International Copyright Expo from November 18 to 21. The forum aims to promote mutual exchange of copyright policies and culture industry cooperation. In actual fact, Japan's Culture Hall and China's National Copyright Administration signed a copyright agreement as early as 2002. Both parties also signed a memo in March 2010 under which China and Japan will hold talks on copyright protection, copyright forums, talent exchange and training.

A Fuji TV representative introduced a series of cooperation initiatives with Chinese partners. In July 2010, Fuji TV signed a business commission contract with a Chinese agency. Over the past years, it also co-produced TV drama *101st Marriage Proposal* (*Yibai lingyi ci qiuhun*) with its Chinese partner.

Its original entertainment format *Hole In The Wall* was also sold to Shanghai TV and China Central TV-1 (CCTV-1) and reproduced in Chinese versions.

*Source: China Press and Publication Journal (Zhongguo xinwen chubanbao, [www.chinaxwcb.com](http://www.chinaxwcb.com)) - November 25, 2010.*

### **China Opens National DTV Lab**

China has opened a national laboratory for digital television (DTV). At the opening ceremony, a senior official of the National Development and Reform Commission (NDCR), Xu Jianping, said the lab would boost the digital television industry by integrating resources.

The Beijing-based National Engineering Lab for DTV was approved by the NDRC in December 2009.

"We actually started the preparations as far back as August 2007, when China implemented its DTV standard," said the lab's chief, Yang Zhixing, one of the drafters of the country's DTV standard.

This mandatory standard, formerly known as Digital Terrestrial Multimedia Broadcast (DTMB), was first adopted in August 2006 in China, the world's fourth major standard after Europe's DVB-T, the United State's ATSC, and Japan's ISDB-T.

The move was driven by the government's aim of integrating its telecommunications networks, cable TV networks and the Internet.

*Source: Asia-Pacific Broadcasting Union (ABU) - November 26, 2010.*

### **Shanghai Launches Pilot Network Convergence Project**

Shanghai launched the pilot network convergence project on November 30 under which TV broadcasting, telecommunications and Internet network operators will shift their relations from com-

petition to collaboration. TV broadcasting and telecommunications firms will jointly offer a package of services including cable broadband access, mobile phone, WLAN internet connection and interactive TV. Telecommunications firms will cooperate with content providers to launch video programs covering movies, TV, entertainment, animation and finance.

Related firms' businesses will be diversified. Operators will then launch a package of services, including broadband access, fixed-line telephone, mobile phone and IPTV.

Users can enjoy interactive services. Telecommunications firms plan to launch an interactive business of TVs, computers, mobile phones and household information terminals. Related operators will make efforts to provide plenty of interactive services covering video on demand, entertainment, education and financial management; they plan to launch intelligent household applications for household security, housekeeping, TV fee payment and others.

*Source: People's Daily Online - December 1, 2010.*

### **SCIO and Discovery to Jointly Produce China-focused Docs**

November 16 saw China's State Council Information Office (SCIO) and Discovery Channel sign a memorandum on a cooperation project called China Imagica (*Shenqi de Zhongguo*), a three-year co-investment and joint production initiative aimed at producing documentaries that showcase unique aspects of China. The documentaries will launch on Discovery Channel's TV networks in over 180 countries and regions.

Within China Imagica, the first two documentaries *China's Man Made Marvels: Ancient Beijing* and *Man Made Marvels: Building Sichuan* will go into production soon.

The former will showcase Beijing's historical urban development and the latter will describe the post-disaster reconstruction in China's Sichuan Province. Both documentaries are scheduled to premiere in Q2 2011. Meanwhile, the world's first China-focused 3D documentary series will also start shooting and is also expected to debut on Discovery Channel in 2011.

Discovery Channel has broadcast more than 20 hours of China-focused documentaries in co-production with China's State Council Information Office since 2004.

Under the memorandum, the two sides will also develop plans on training and media forums in order to create more training and exchange opportunities for Chinese documentary producers and nurture talent with experience in producing international TV programs.

Source: [www.scio.gov.cn](http://www.scio.gov.cn) - November 18, 2010.

### **CCTV Establishes Reporters' Headquarter in Africa**

China's national broadcaster China Central Television (CCTV) opened its Africa reporters' head office in Nairobi, Kenya on November 25. To date, CCTV has established 20 reporters' stations overseas, including the European headquarters in London, American headquarters in Washington DC and Russian headquarters in Moscow. CCTV plans to increase its number of overseas reporters' stations to 80 by 2016.

Source: *People's Daily (Renmin ribao)* - November 26, 2010.

### **CNTV to Introduce Strategic Investors and List**

China's state-owned internet TV operator CNTV (China Network Television, Zhongguo wangluo dianshitai) affiliated to China Central TV (CCTV), is reforming its shareholding system and will transform into a new joint-stock company

soon, said the general manager Wang Wenbin, at a symposium to mark the one year anniversary of CNTV's launch. Additionally, the new company will introduce strategic investors and start preparing the listing, he announced.

As a national web-based TV broadcaster, CNTV provides users with a globalized, multilingual and multi-terminal public webcast service platform, according to the broadcaster itself. CNTV currently owns 100 live TV channels and 200,000 hours of video programs. It has established 30 mirror sites at home and abroad.

Source: [tech.qq.com](http://tech.qq.com) (*tengxun keji*) - January 4, 2011.

### **Xinhua TV and NBC Sign News Memo**

November 23 saw China Xinhua News Network Corp (CNC), an international TV network affiliated to Xinhua News Agency, sign a memo with US National Broadcasting Company (NBC) in New York. Under the memo, CNC and NBC will cooperate on news content collection, production, broadcasting, talent training, etc. The former now tops all international TV news broadcasters with 800 minutes of news content collected on average every day, according to Xinhua.

Source: [www.sarft.net](http://www.sarft.net) - November 26, 2010.

### **Xinhua's TV CNC to Cover Africa from Jan. 1, 2011**

January 1, 2011 saw CNC World, the English-language channel of Xinhua News Agency's TV division, reach 4 million cable TV households in Africa via set-top boxes, according to an agreement signed on December 10 between CNC and South Africa-based MIH Group.

Xinhua signed an agreement on December 9 with Eutelsat Communications to extend the coverage of CNC to all of Europe, the Middle

East and North Africa from Jan 1, 2011, through Eutelsat Communications' Eurobird, Hotbird and W7 satellites.

Launched in 2009, CNC has developed into a television network with satellite services in Asia-Pacific, North America, Europe and Africa.

*Source: Xinhua – December 10, 2010.*

### **Anhui TV International Covers Europe**

Anhui TV International, a comprehensive, round-the-clock Chinese TV channel targeting overseas viewers, has completed coverage of European countries such as UK, Germany, Spain, Netherlands, Italy, Switzerland and Austria through the Great Wall TV Platform operated by China International TV Corporation (CITVC), a subsidiary of the national level broadcaster China Central Television (CCTV). The channel has been available to 100,000 viewers in US and Canada since March 2009.

*Sources: Anhui Television – November 9, 2010.*

### **China Radio International to Cover 5 Cities in Pakistan**

Pakistan Broadcasting Corporation (PBC) and China Radio International (CRI) have signed a collaboration contract under which CRI will rent FM93 airtime from PBC and launch one-hour programs in English and one-hour programs in Urdu, covering Islamabad, Karachi, Lahore, Multan and Kohat. Airing is scheduled to start on January 17, 2011. The contract will be valid for one year and is renewable.

*Source: CRI Online – December 18, 2010.*

### **CTR: Public Transport TV Covers 70% of Urban Inhabitants**

China's public transport TV

networks reach 47.62 million urban inhabitants. The figures suggest that the 'public transport population' accounts for 70.9% of the total urban population. Each passenger spends about 24 minutes viewing transport TV on average every day. The prime times are rush hours: 7:00-8:00 and 17:00-18:00.

*Source: CTR – December 9, 2010.*

### **Animation Output Reaches 1,833.33 Hours**

China's animation output reached 1,833.33 hours in the first 10 months of 2010, 333.33 hours more than the same period last year, according to data released by the 5th China Beijing International Cultural & Creative Industry Expo held from November 17-21.

China's animation output exceeded 2,833.33 hours in 2009, up from 70 hours in 2003 and tripling the market in six years, said Jin Delong, director of the publicity division of the State Administration of Radio, Film and TV (SARFT). In 2009, China exported 1,490 hours of animation with 79 animation titles and an export value of US\$30.57 million (€23.44 million), up 150% year over year (YOY). Animation exports exceeded other genres for the first time.

The Chinese government has formulated policies to support the animation industry at national and local levels. For example, the Beijing municipal government invests RMB100 million (€11.61 million) in the local animation industry every year. SARFT and the Ministry of Finance (MOF) also give funds to the 'best' domestic series and encourage talent.

*Source: [www.china.com.cn](http://www.china.com.cn) (Zhongguowang) – November 22, 2010.*

### **China Telecom Sets up Animation Center in Fujian**

November 17 saw China Telecom set up an animation center in Xiamen, Fujian Province. The cen-

ter will deliver content for its mobile and internet services. On the same day it also signed a strategic cooperation framework agreement with 35 content providers and related organizations, including the Copyright Protection Center of China, Shanghai Animation Film Studio, Shanda Interactive Entertainment and Taiwan's Tomorrow Technology.

With the animation center operating commercially, China Telecom will provide a series of interactive animation services targeting animation fans, including comic online reading, video animation, animation DIY (Do-It-Yourself), animation uploading and release, mobile phone animation magazine subscriptions, and animation multimedia messaging service (MMS).  
*Source: [tech.163.com](http://tech.163.com) (Wangyi keji) – November 20, 2010.*

### **China Film Group to Go Public on China's Stock Market**

China Film Group Corporation (CFG) will regroup and establish a joint-stock limited company, with the approval of the Publicity Department of the CPC Central Committee, Ministry of Finance and the State Administration of Radio, Film and TV (SARFT). The subscribed capital of the new company is RMB1.4 billion (€162.55 million) and CFG will have absolute equity control of the new company with a 93% shareholding. The other seven strategic investors, including Beijing Gehua CATV, Hunan TV & Broadcast Intermediary, Jiangsu Broadcasting Corporation, China International Television Corporation (CITVC), Changchun Film Studio, China Unicom and China National Radio's Yangguang Media, will each have a 1% stake. CFG will submit the application for listing on the Shenzhen Stock Exchange within 2011.

CFG currently owns 14 fully owned subsidiaries and 34 holding and shareholding companies work-

ing in the film industry chain, with activities ranging from equipment rental, film production, printing, import and export, distribution, cinemas to satellite television. In 2010, CFG made a profit of almost RMB400 million (€46.08 million), mainly from film investment and production, distribution and cinema operation.

*Source: [www.chinafilm.com](http://www.chinafilm.com) (Zhongguo dianyingwang) – January 10-13, 2011.*

### **Shanghai Film Group Plans to Acquire American Cinema**

Ren Zhonglun, president of Shanghai Film Group Corporation recently disclosed that Shanghai Film Group Corporation (SFG) plans to buy some cinemas in the eastern United States and that price negotiations are now underway.

However, Ren Zhonglun did not give a clear answer when asked if SFG would be participating in the purchase of Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer. It was on November 4 that Zhou Tiedong, general manager of China Film Promotion International, announced that a Chinese film enterprise was negotiating to buy stakes in Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer. To date, China Film Group, Polybona Film Distribution and Huayi Bros have all denied their interest.

*Source: Beijing Business Today (Beijing shangbao) – December 8, 2010.*

### **Wuxi Digital Film Industry Park Set Up**

The State Administration of Radio, Film and TV (SARFT) has approved the establishment of China Wuxi Digital Film Industry Park. When completed the park will host 500 TV, film and related companies, attracting 30,000-50,000 professionals. It plans to provide post production and special effect services for 10-15 international films and 30-40 domestic TV and films every year. The framework of the park is to be completed at the end of 2011.

To date, the Chinese government has approved the establishment of more than 110 film and TV bases. However, only 30 bases have been completed and 14-15 bases are now operating normally. Most bases focus on exterior shots and tourism services and only 5% make profits.

*Source: China Youth (Zhongguo qingnian) – November 23, 2010.*

### **China Daily Launches Asia & Europe Editions**

China's state-run newspaper China Daily has launched a weekly European edition that hit the UK newsstands on December 3. The English-language newspaper aims to bridge the current affairs gap that exists between China and Europe and follows the launch of its US and Hong Kong editions. In addition, China Daily is also to launch a weekly Asian edition on December 10.

*Source: China Daily – December 4, 2010.*

### **Over 2,000 Book Titles Translated with Chinese Subsidies**

Within the framework of the 'go out' strategy, since 2006 the Chinese government's *Chinese Book Promotion Plan (Zhongguo tushu duiwai tuiguang jihua)* has funded more than 200 publishing companies from over 50 foreign countries to translate over 2,000 Chinese book titles, according to a source from the 5th China Beijing International Cultural & Creative Industry Expo held from November 17th to 21st.

In 2004, China's State Council Information Office (SCIO) and General Administration of Press & Publications (GAPP) jointly launched *The Chinese Book Promotion Plan*, which provides foreign publishing companies with grants to translate Chinese books. With the implementation of the plan, China's

annual book trade deficit dropped from 15:1 in 1999 to 4:1 in 2009.

*Source: China Culture Daily (Zhongguo wenhuabao) – November 25, 2010.*

### **Private Book Enterprise to List on GEM**

Hunan Tianzhou Culture will soon list on China's growth enterprise market (GEM) and will thus become the first private listed book enterprise. Founded by President Xiao Zhihong in 2003, Hunan Tianzhou Culture distributes children's books and magazines. Its distribution networks include over 300 distribution sites in more than 20 provinces. Over the past four years its annual revenue growth rate has been 53.4%. It made RMB97.87 million (€11.36 million) in H1 2010.

*Source: Securities Daily (Zhengquan ribao) – December 2, 2010.*

### **Jiangsu and Anhui Cancel Product Placements; BAMC furious**

Anhui Satellite and Jiangsu Satellite TV recently announced the cancellation of some product placements from the TV drama *Golden Wedding II (Jinhun II)* which they bought jointly. *Golden Wedding II (Jinhun II)* was launched on some terrestrial TV channels and gave rise to fierce criticism from viewers because of the more than ten product placements. The director Zheng Xiaolong had to apologize for this during a press conference.

"Too many product placements are detrimental to the artistic quality of TV drama, hurt viewers and also entail risks for broadcasters," said Liu Yuan, director of the brand marketing department at the Chief Editor's Office of Jiangsu Satellite TV.

"What we buy is the TV drama and not so many product placements. If the producer does not agree with us, he can pay us to keep those product placements,"

said Zha Daocun, director of the advertising department of Anhui Satellite TV.

However, both satellite TV channels state that the product placements that serve as a link between the storylines will be kept.

The drama copyright holder Beijing All Media and Culture Group (BAMC) has objected to Anhui Satellite TV and Jiangsu Satellite TV cancelling the product placements. "Consultation with the two channels continues", said Ms Yang, responsible for public relations at BAMC.

Source: *Huashang Mornig Post (Huashang cengbao)* – November 19, 2010.

### CTR: China Adspend Up 14% YOY

China's adspend on all media excluding internet totaled RMB430.2 billion (€49.95 billion) in the first three quarters 2010, up 14% year-over-year, according to statistics released by market research company CTR. In addition, total adspend for the whole of 2010 is estimated to maintain a 14% growth rate. In 2009, total adspend reached RMB507.5 billion (€58.92 billion), a 13% YOY growth rate.

Tables 1-3 show the figures on

### CTR: China Adspend Up 14% YOY

**Table 1- Adspend on All Media Excluding Internet, January-September 2010**

Media	Total (Billion)	YOY Growth	Market Share
Television	RMB331.132 (€38.447)	12%	77.0%
Newspapers	RMB57.087 (€8.268)	19%	13.0%
Magazines	RMB10.971 (€1.273)	19%	3.0%
Radio	RMB10.518 (€1.221)	33%	2.0%
Outdoor	RMB20.466 (€2.376)	19%	5.0%

**Table 2 - Top 5 Industries by Adspend, January-September 2010**

Rank	Industry	Adspend (Billion)	Change %
1	Toiletries & Cosmetics	RMB67.114 (€7.792)	24.0%
2	Business & Services	RMB55.991 (€6.501)	10.0%
3	Beverages	RMB51.437 (€5.972)	22.0%
4	Foodstuffs	RMB42.3 (€4.911)	-0.8%
5	Pharmaceuticals	RMB36.66 (€4.256)	2.0%

the adspend in China from January to September 2010.

Source: *CTR* – November 18, 2010.

### Alibaba Overtakes Google In Mainland Ad Sales

The Alibaba Group has overtaken Google as the mainland's second-largest collector of online advertising revenue. Alibaba accounted for 9.3% of Chinese online ad sales in the third quarter, up from 7.8% in the second quarter, according to a report by the market research company Analysys International. Search engine leader Baidu continues to lead with a 30.1% market share. Google has recently announced that combined revenues from ads, search and marketing by Chinese companies have increased this year, without specifying figures, but it has lost market share to Baidu since it left the mainland search market. Analysys said Google's online ad sales rose to US\$102 million (€78.213 million) in the third quarter, up 7% year-over-year. Alibaba has increased sales of keyword advertising on websites including Taobao and Alibaba.com, the group's only listed subsidiary.

Source: *China Economic Review* – December 10, 2010.

**Table 3 - Top 10 Advertisers by Adspend, January-September 2010**

Rank	Advertiser	Adspend	Change %
1	P & G China	RMB25.022 bln (€2.905 bln)	5.8%
2	L'Oreal Group	RMB9.06 bln (€1.051 bln)	2.1%
3	Unilever China	RMB8.303 bln (€964.058 mln)	1.9%
4	Yum Brands	RMB6.781 bln (€787.339 mln)	1.6%
5	Coca-Cola	RMB6.544 bln (€759.822 mln)	1.5%
6	Hangzhou Wahaha Group	RMB4.776 bln (€554.540 mln)	1.1%
7	Ting Hisin International Group	RMB4.521 bln (€493.582 mln)	1.1%
8	Inner Mongolia Yili Industrial Group	RMB4.109 bln (€477.095 mln)	1.0%
9	China Mobile	RMB4.011 bln (€465.716 mln)	0.9%
10	Pepsi China	RMB3.78 bln (€438.895 mln)	0.9%

Source: CTR - November 18, 2010.

### China's Mobile Phone Game Market Exceeds RMB160 Million in Q3

China's mobile phone online game market reached RMB162 million (€18.810 million), up 14% quarter over quarter (QoQ) and occupying a 17.7% market share of all mobile phone games in Q3

2010, according to market research company Analysys International. It is also expected to keep a 12% QoQ growth rate and an 18% market share of all mobile phone games in Q4. Table 4 and Table 5 show China's mobile phone online game market and growth from 2009 to 2010 and mobile phone online and offline game markets, respectively, from 2009 to 2010 on

### China's Mobile Phone Game Market Exceeds RMB160 Million in Q3

**Table 4 - China's Mobile Phone Online Game Market Size and Growth 2009Q1-2010Q3**

	Market size	QOQ Growth
2009Q1	RMB87 million (€10.101 million)	--
2009Q2	RMB101 million (€11.727 million)	16.0%
2009Q3	RMB118 million (€13.700 million)	16.2%
2009Q4	RMB118 million (€13.700 million)	0.1%
2010Q1	RMB121 million (€14.049 million)	3.0%
2010Q2	RMB142 million (€16.487 million)	17.3%
2010Q3	RMB162 million (€18.810 million)	14.0%

**Table 5 - China's Mobile Phone Online Game Market Share vs. Mobile Phone Offline Game Market Share 2009Q1-2010Q3**

	Mobile Phone Online Game	Mobile Phone Offline Game
2009Q1	12.6%	87.4%
2009Q2	13.5%	86.5%
2009Q3	16.0%	84.0%
2009Q4	17.3%	82.7%
2010Q1	17.7%	82.3%
2010Q2	17.6%	82.4%
2010Q3	17.7%	82.3%

Source: Source: Analysys International - November 18, 2010.

Note: the main difference between online and offline games is that while in online games you are connected to the Internet when playing, in offline games you are not.

a quarter-basis.  
*Source: Analysys International – November 18, 2010.*

### Microblog Users to Reach 75 Million, up 837.5% YoY

China's microblog users are expected to reach 75 million this year, up 837.5% year over year (YOY). In 2011 and 2012 users are estimated to reach 145 million and 240 million respectively. Sina's blog currently holds the leading place but other web microblogs still have opportunities to catch up because barriers to microblog open platforms and application groups have not been established.

*Source: [tech.sina.com.cn](http://tech.sina.com.cn) – December 7, 2010.*

### CNNIC: 2010 New Statistics on Internet Development in China

According to the 27th statistical report on Internet development in China issued by the China Network Information Center (CNNIC), at the end of December 2010 the number of netizens in China had reached 457 million, an increase of 19% over the previous year. Internet penetration also saw a growth

from 28.9% to 34.3% in one year. However, China's broadband access speed is only 100.9 KB/s on average, far behind the average speed of 230.4 KB/s in developed countries. The three provinces with the highest broadband access speed are Henan, Hunan and Hebei with 131.2 KB/s, 128.2 KB/s and 124.5 KB/s respectively. The full report in Chinese is available at <http://research.cnnic.cn/html/1295343214d2557.html>.

Table 6 and 7 show the key statistics about Internet development and use in China.

Three new patterns in Internet application use also emerged: firstly, the use of search dominates while the use of Internet for entertainment purposes (e.g. online music and online games) is in decline. In addition, the use of Internet for business purposes (online shopping, online payments and online banking) has increased, confirming the trend towards consumer business which began in late 2008 (Table 7).

*Sources: CNNIC, the 27th Reports on Internet Development in China – January 19, 2010.*

### CNNIC: 2010 New Statistics on Internet Development in China

**Table 6 - Key indicators about Internet development in China, 2010**

	2010	Change %
Total netizens	457 million	19.1%
- Rural	125 million	17.3%
Total average penetration rate	34.3%	5.4%
- Beijing	69.4%	4.3%
- Shanghai	64.5%	2.5%
- Guangdong	55.3%	4.4%
Broadband		
- Netizens	450 million	30.6%
- Penetration rate (via cable)	98.3%	22.9%
- Average access speed	100.9 KB/s	--
Mobile phone netizens	303 million	29.7%
Main access places to Internet		
- Home	89.2%	6.0%
- Work	33.7%	3.5%
- Internet café	35.7%	0.6%
- School	23.2%	0.2%
- Public places	16.1%	0.4%
Internet consumption (hours/week per capita)	18.3%	-2.1%

**Table 7 - Internet use by utilization rate in %, 2009 - 2010**

Use	2010 utilization rate %	2009 utilization rate %	Growth rate users %	Function
Search engine	81.9% ↑	73.3%	33.1%	Information gathering
Online music	79.2% ↓	83.5%	12.9%	Internet entertainment
Online news	77.2% ↓	80.1%	14.7%	Information gathering
Instant messaging	77.1% ↑	70.9%	29.5%	Communication
Online games	66.5% ↓	68.9%	15.0%	Internet entertainment
Blogging	64.4% ↑	57.7%	33.0%	Communication
Online video	62.1% ↓	62.6%	18.1%	Internet entertainment
Email	54.6% ↓	56.8%	14.6%	Communication
Social websites	51.4% ↑	45.8%	33.7%	Communication
Web literature	42.6% ↑	42.3%	19.8%	Internet entertainment
Online shopping	35.1% ↑	28.1%	48.6%	Commercial transactions
Forums/BBS	32.4% ↑	30.5%	26.6%	Communication
Online banking	30.5% ↑	24.5%	48.2%	Commercial transactions
Online payments	30.0% ↑	24.5%	45.9%	Commercial transactions
Online trading	15.5% ↑	14.8%	24.8%	Commercial transactions
Travel booking	7.9% →	7.9%	19.5%	Commercial transactions
Group purchases	4.1%	--	--	Commercial transactions

Source: CNNIC, the 27th Report on the Internet Development in China - January 19, 2011.

## FOCUS

### China in Africa: A New Approach To Media Development?

#### Executive Summary

Iginio Gagliardone, Maria Repnikova, Nicole Stremlau

This report is based on the outcomes of the workshop organized by the Programme in Comparative Media Law and Policy (PCMLP) at the University of Oxford and the Stanhope Centre for Communications Policy Research. The workshop reflected on China's growing influence in Africa's communications sector and on the implications this has on the prevailing local and Western approaches

to media assistance and media development in Africa and beyond. It brought together researchers from Africa, China, and Europe to build a common research agenda and to develop an innovative and multi-actor approach to studying the transformations experienced by media systems in an increasingly multi-polar world.

In the past few years China has rapidly become an important player in the media sector in many African countries in at least three ways. First, its economic success and the impressive growth of media outlets and users within China have quietly promoted an example of how the media can be deployed within the larger political and economic strategies of developing states, moving beyond the democratization paradigm promoted in the West. It has shown that major investments in media and information and communication technologies can go hand-in-hand with a tight control over them, posing a lesser challenge to local governments and to political stability. Sec-

ond, the Chinese government, and its associated companies, have enhanced their direct involvement in the telecommunication and media markets in Africa. Chinese companies have started winning large bids on the continent, as exemplified by the 1.7 billion dollars project won by the Chinese telecom giant ZTE to overhaul Ethiopia's telecommunication system. At the same time, the Chinese government has provided significant support to state broadcasters in selected countries, such as Kenya and Zambia. Third, China's public diplomacy strategy has been stepped up through expanding the reach and content of its international broadcasters including China Central Television-CCTV and China Radio International-CRI. There has also been a heavy investment in the growth of the government news agency, Xinhua. Cultural diplomacy has been growing through the continued establishment of Confucius institutes. And programs that offer scholarships for foreign students and journalists to study in China have been expanded.

The workshop approached these issues from different angles, ranging from broad philosophical approaches to the media, to specific case studies and comparative analyses. It aimed at developing a new set of questions, and at exploring paths that could lead to a possible normative synthesis. The participants were asked, for example, what the shared elements were across different traditions of understanding the role of the media in governance, particularly in fragile states. It was asked whether there was a Chinese approach to using the media to build a harmonious society, what resonance it had in African states emerging from conflict, and whether there were commonalities with the ideas of harnessing the media for unity and integration supported by leaders of pan-Africanism such as those of Julius Nyerere, the first President

of Tanzania, and Kwame Nkrumah, the first President of Ghana.

*This executive summary is extracted from the final report of the workshop "Where Africa, China and the West meet: towards new frameworks for media development" held on June 10-11, 2010. This workshop, organized by the Programme in Comparative Media Law and Policy (PCMLP) at the University of Oxford and the Stanhope Centre for Communications Policy Research, aimed to reflect on China's increasing influence on the media in Africa and on the implications this has for traditional approaches to media assistance and media development on the continent and beyond. The full text of the report is available at [http://www.chinamediaobs.org/pag/china\\_in\\_africa\\_report\\_2010\\_final.pdf](http://www.chinamediaobs.org/pag/china_in_africa_report_2010_final.pdf) and <http://pcmlp.socleg.ox.ac.uk/news/2010/new-report-published-china-africa-new-approach-media-development> where additional material produced by all the participants for the workshop is available to the public.*

## EVENTS, CONFERENCES and BOOKS ABOUT CHINA

China Media Observatory, Lugano.

- **The new landscape of global communication International conference**  
School of Journalism and Communication, Renmin University of China, Beijing, July 1-3.

The shifting patterns of the world economy also mean shifts in the global circulation of media products. The economic crisis in many parts of the world, and the rapid growth of new competitors, above all China, has created new opportunities for entry into the world media markets. This conference, organized by the School of Journalism and Communication, Renmin University of China and the China Media Centre, University of Westminster in UK, aims to bring together Chinese and international experts to discuss the changes of the recent past and the prospects for the next decade.

The conference sessions will address the following, but not exclusively, issues:

- 1) The development of internationally oriented news channels;
- 2) Audience responses to international news channels;
- 3) Changing notions of journalistic practice and of news values;
- 4) Patterns of trade in programmes and formats;
- 5) Problems of localizing acquired programme formats;
- 6) Developing international markets for new programmes and channels;
- 7) Use of the internet to access media content and its consequences for intellectual property;
- 8) Patterns of production and consumption in computer gaming;
- 9) Social media and new forms of content production.

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### **New & Notable Books**

Cheng, Zhengrong (2007), **Report on the development of city television in China [Zhongguo chengshi dianshitai fazhan baogao]**, Beijing: Communication University of China Press.

City television (*chengshi dianshitai*) refers to television operated by city administrations. In China, this term means television run by a number of local governments grouped under the administrative status of 'city': indeed, there are cities linked up with municipalities and the main cities of the provinces, as well as governments at city and county level according to China's administrative organization. Although television operated by city governments has been acquiring increasing importance as China experiences fast urbanization under the opening-up policy, city television broadcasters face fierce competition at a local level from CCTV, the broadcasters at provincial level and the provincial satellite channels. As a result of this, many city television broadcasters have gradually reorganized their programming structure and their program content to focus on the genres that most attract the urban residents such as local information and personal stories, editorials and lifestyle programs that address 'localness'. The author discusses many case studies of city television broadcasters to better investigate and explain the role of city television in China's television landscape.

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