

Anti-piracy body to launch at Discop Africa

LOS ANGELES/PARIS: Organisers of sub-Saharan Africa TV market, Discop Africa, which takes place 1-3 September 2010 at the Hilton Nairobi in Kenya, have announced that the Africa Media Rights Watch initiative, an anti-piracy body monitoring the region, will officially launch in 2011.



Following a series of meetings that have taken place during the last two Discop Africa markets, many broadcasters and content suppliers involved in sub-Saharan Africa have come together to form Africa Media Rights Watch. The initiative is supported by international key players such as Canal+ Overseas, M-Net and Cote Ouest as well as by African associations of broadcasters and content producers.

Promoting business

As an anti-piracy body standing against audiovisual piracy across that region, Africa Media Rights Watch's objective is to help establish and promote a business environment that is respectful of copyright laws and of measures to enforce these laws. Participants believe the timing is right considering the speed at which the sub-Saharan African television marketplace has grown over the last two years.

Since its inaugural edition back in 2009, the Discop Africa market has brought together more than 300 companies from 59 countries eager to buy and sell regional distribution rights. Close to 220 companies are already registered for the Nairobi edition.

Piracy elimination, vital

Commenting on the Africa Media Rights Watch initiative, Bernard Azria, founding manager, Cote Quest, Africa's largest independent distributor noted, "It is vital that the problem of piracy be eliminated, or at least significantly reduced in sub-Saharan Africa. If the theft of intellectual property is allowed to continue at its present levels it will be a very severe blow to the possibility of building a flourishing audiovisual business with a secure long-term future in the region".

Benedicte Cheneut, general manager, Canal+ Overseas, agreed, saying, "For all those legitimately concerned with the audiovisual business in sub-Saharan Africa, content piracy is robbing them of their future. We have to put an end to this theft, and we will."

Ensure rules are enforced

Mike Dearham, head of sales and acquisitions, M-Net, underlined the necessity of the initiative, observing, "It is not enough merely to frame rules, it is also necessary to construct a mechanism capable of ensuring that the rules are enforced."

Patrick Jucaud, founding manager, Discop Organisation says, "As the only market at which the continent's entire audiovisual business gathers, Discop Africa has a key role to play in providing the means for all the major players of sub-Saharan Africa to unite and defeat the pirates, and we are very pleased to host the launch of the Africa Media Rights Watch initiative."

Africa Media Rights Watch launched in Accra edition

Africa Media Rights Watch will be officially launched on Friday, 11 February 2011, during the fifth edition of Discop Africa to take place in Accra, Ghana from 9-11 February 2011.

Close to 2500 participants are expected to take part in the various Discop events organised in 2010, demonstrating the growing importance of world regions such as Central and Eastern Europe, Central Asia, Africa and the Middle East for audiovisual content business.

Discop events are held in partnership with the National Association of Television Program Executives (NATPE).

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