

Econet Media embraces its digital future

Kwesé TV, a subsidiary of Econet Media, will focus on three core services; Kwesé Free Sports, Kwesé iflix and Kwesé Play, as part of its strategy to reposition the business for a digital future. The broadcaster will also create an African content creation hub, Kwesé Studios, where it will develop its own original programming.



Joe Hundah, group president & chief executive of Econet Media.

In order to maintain its position as a leader in broadcasting innovation in Africa, Econet Media has reviewed its business strategy and service offerings, to align them to changes in the global digital and satellite broadcasting sector, and growth in access to mobile and fixed broadband on the continent.

Kwesé Free Sports is Africa's largest free-to-air TV service; Kwesé iflix is Africa's leading mobile video-on-demand sports and entertainment platform; while Kwesé Play is a leading edge video streaming service with more than 200 sports, entertainment, kids and news channels including Red Bull TV, NBA, YouTube, TED and Bloomberg.

Streamline

With increased focus on these three services, Econet Media will streamline its direct-to-home satellite television service. This will see the reduction of third party channels available on the bouquet, as well as the removal of Kwesé branded sports (excluding KFS) and general entertainment channels.

The broadcaster's new bouquet will carry FTA, religious, and news channels which will be available to viewers for a minimum fee, as the broadcaster will waive monthly subscription fees. Kwesé subscribers who have already paid their subscriptions for the month of October, or in advance, will receive a full refund.



TV

#AfricaAchiever: Kwesé TV disrupts pay-TV market in Africa

Louise Marsland 10 Oct 2017



Kwesé was launched at a time when the global pay television industry was in transition. Business models were evolving from traditional content rights linked to linear broadcast channels, to premium content rights moving towards digital media platforms.

Kwesé has built a satellite TV business with presence in 11 markets, a free-to-air business across 27 countries, delivered 2018 FIFA World Cup Russia across Africa to a network of 115 sub-license broadcasters across 37 countries – reaching over 200 million households, acquired a controlling stake in a leading mobile video-on-demand service, and launched its own OTT service Kwesé Play.

The business has also managed to secure leading sports rights and general entertainment channels to build a compelling content offering across its platforms, making a significant shift in the continent's complex and competitive media industry.

Content hub

Having recognised the importance of carrying original local content, Econet Media will also establish its own content creation hub, Kwesé Studios. Through Kwesé Studios, Econet Media will invest in developing its own original programming and provide a platform for African producers, script writers, actors and directors to tell authentic African stories on a pan-African broadcast network.

These changes are in keeping with Kwesé's commitment to providing affordable premium content, maintaining an innovative approach to content delivery and being attuned to audience viewing and purchasing habits.

As a consequence of the revised business model, Econet Media is reviewing its operational structures across all markets where Kwesé TV has presence which may result in changes to the company's various business units.

Repositioning

Joe Hundah, group president and chief executive of Econet Media, says the business' repositioning is perfectly timed in response to market trends.

"We believe these changes will safeguard the future success of our business as we continue to make an indelible impact on Africa's media industry. The revised business strategy will also ensure that Kwesé TV continues to remain competitive with the industry.

"Refocusing our business offering across markets is a strategic move which aligns our business to OTT and video-on-demand trends which present significant growth opportunities for Kwesé. This renewed focus on digital services will see us provide new compelling offers for our customer's enjoyment."

"Additionally, through the development of the Kwesé Studios content hub, Econet Media will now have a legitimate claim to being the home of African content, as we will now create a place where Africans can tell their own stories and shape their own narrative.

"Kwesé's entry into the market had a game changing impact on the media industry. With these changes, we believe Kwesé will continue to positively disrupt the industry for the benefit of African consumers, as we continue to provide affordable premium content through digital media services."

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