

Chris Cramer for new pan-African news channel

Chris Cramer, former head of international channels for CNN, will take a leading role in the launch of the multimedia, all-news pan-African channel, A24, it was announced yesterday, Tuesday, 11 September 2007. A24, due to be launched next year, will encourage intra-African dialogue by presenting relevant stories, told by African journalists, going beyond the norm of disease, poverty, and corruption.

A24 will explore investment, development, and trade, among other subjects - areas frequently ignored by the world's media. A24's programming aims to create economic opportunity and promote freedom and transparency among African nations by painting a new, exciting, picture of the continent.

Cramer, a respected global media executive who promoted coverage of Africa across CNN's programmes and channels, will become non-executive chairman of A24's Editorial Advisory Board once the channel gets start-up funding

Comments Salim Amin, the channel's chairman and founder, "I am delighted that Chris had agreed to become part of Africa's most exciting media project," says Amin, 37. "Putting his experience with the BBC and, more recently CNN, to use for the African continent will help make A24 the African broadcast news leader. He has always been a strong advocate of African journalism and A24 will turn many of our mutual aspirations into reality."

Says Cramer, who retired from CNN earlier this year after 11 years running its international services, and who now has his own global media consultancy, "This is a bold and exciting venture and I'm happy to give it my support. What the continent needs is to have its own voice and A24, as conceived, will deliver that."

Cramer was principal sponsor of the CNN African Journalist Award and did much to promote African journalism during his BBC and CNN career.

46 two-person bureau

A24's aim, over a period of time, is to open 46 two-person bureaux across Africa and in London and Washington DC. A24 will operate a multimedia platform to make it accessible to Africans through a range of distribution methods.

Streamed highlights of A24 content will be available on the Internet and video and audio podcasts will be created. The service will also tap into the growing mobile phone market in Africa. It is expected that in the next three years an additional 150 million people will have mobile phones on the continent.

Daniel Rivkin, A24's MD and co-founder, welcomes Cramer's input in the development of the channel. "Chris is a master of content. As we move towards launch, he will give the channel a clear sense of editorial direction."

Amin adds, “A24 will make a difference because it will create a new kind of voice – truly African, beyond local politics and prejudices, offering up-to-date information that will be accessible as part of the mainstream media.”

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