



Our Sound™ – The Asia-Pacific Song Contest defies economic slump

The new format, inspired by the iconic Eurovision Song Contest, is deemed to become Asia's biggest music entertainment programme. Despite recession it will be launched in the second half of 2009.

Singapore, March 4, 2009. It is regarded as “easily the hottest media property of the year” by the trade press and it is deemed to become Asia's biggest music entertainment programme ever. Our Sound – The Asia-Pacific Song Contest, initially developed under the working title Asiavision Song Contest, will be launched in the second half of 2009. This was confirmed by Asiavision Pte. Ltd. in Singapore, the company owning the programme. “Certainly, this is not an ideal environment to start a project of such magnitude”, says Andreas Gerlach, CEO of Asiavision. “However, the feed back we got from the market, from sponsors and broadcasters, is so encouraging that we – although with a little delay – decided to proceed.”

Our Sound is an annual Asia-wide programme. Like in Olympic Games where the best athletes from all over the world are fighting to win gold, top artists from up to 16 Asian nations will compete for the honour of taking the Our Sound title to their country. “Our Sound is not another talent hunt. The participants are professional, established artist and celebrities. Together with guest performances from international superstars this will add to an extravaganza Asia has not seen before,” says Andreas Gerlach.

The participating stars will be chosen in National Selections in each country by public vote. National Selections will start in July 2009. The winner of each national preliminaries, either an individual artist or a group, will proceed to the programme's Grand Final. The Grand Final, scheduled for November 2009, will stretch over an entire weekend, starting with the Performance Show on Friday night and culminating in the Winners Show on Sunday night. Both shows will be telecasted in all participating countries by leading free-to-air broadcasters and worldwide.

Between the shows people across Asia will have the chance to vote for their favourite song by SMS and online. In the Winners Show, all countries will report their voting results via satellite link live. The song that receives the most points will be declared the winner.

The format is inspired by the iconic Eurovision Song Contest - a programme that has been successfully running in Europe for more than 50 years and achieves market shares of up to 80%.

However, the Asian version of the Eurovision Song Contest has very much emancipated itself from the European model. Together with leading Asian broadcasters, international producers and regional media experts the Asiavision team in Singapore has risen to the challenge of developing a concept that caters the needs and expectations of an Asian

audience of up to 3 billion people. The result is a fresh, appealing format driven by national pride, star power, celebrities and competition.

“Asiavision is only initiating and financing the contest“, says Andreas Gerlach. „The most important decisions are made by our broadcasting partners in the markets and by the Asian people. They decide who participates. They decide who wins. Thus the people of Asia may rightfully claim: This is our song contest. The winning song is our sound. Consequently we decided to call the programme Our Sound instead of Asiavision Song Contest“, Andreas Gerlach explains.

By changing the name the Singaporean company also met a request by the Asia-Pacific Broadcasting Union (ABU). ABU has been operating a daily exchange of news by satellite among television stations under the name of Asiavision for more than 20 years and wanted to avoid any confusions. “We understood and respected this concern. ABU and its members are excellent partners for us and we are glad that we were able to come up with a better solution“, says Andreas Gerlach.

Over the next years Our Sound plans to increase the number of participants up to 33 countries. In the inaugural year the number of contestants will be limited to 15. While key markets are confirmed already, Asiavision has not yet made final decisions in others and is still in the conversations with potential channels. “The format is new to Asia. Thus great deal of convincing had to be done at the beginning. However, our business model does not imply upfront costs for the channels, but offers high revenues. This makes it an easy decision for broadcasters – especially in these difficult economic times.”

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Asiavision Pte. Ltd. was established in Singapore in September 2007 as media content management company that develops, acquires, produces and markets media content Asia-wide, with *Our Sound – The Asia-Pacific Song Contest* being its flagship product.

Shareholders are Dr. Andreas Gerlach, Founder and CEO of Asiavision Pte. Ltd. and Asiavision Equity GmbH & Co. KG, a Germany-based Private Equity Company.