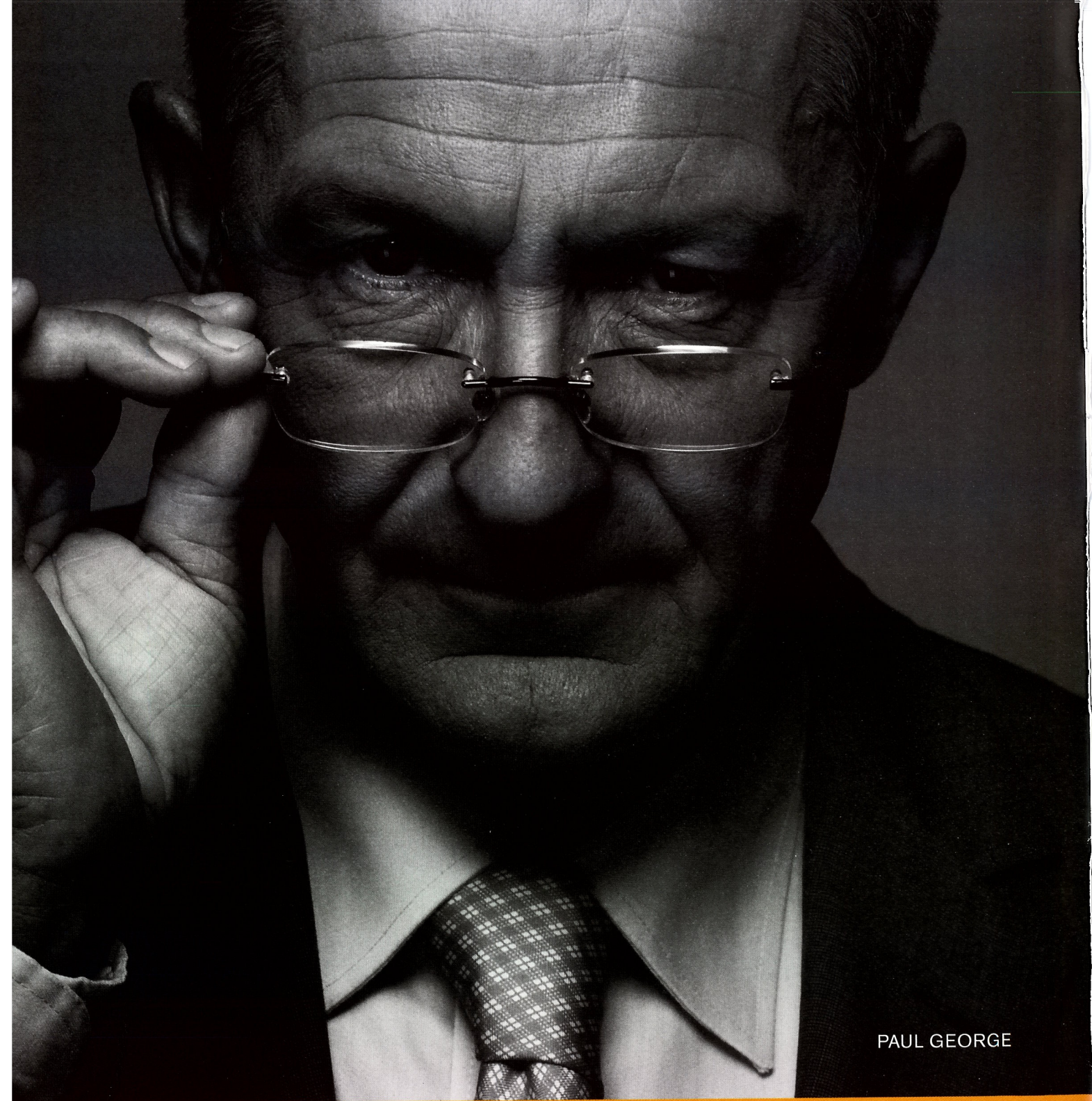


The Association
for International
Broadcasting

• •

Media
Excellence
Awards
2008

winners and finalists



PAUL GEORGE

MONEY & POLITICS

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WELCOME


2008 was the fourth year of the AIB International Media Excellence Awards. We inaugurated these Awards to celebrate creativity and reward success. The international broadcasting community has responded to our challenge to showcase its best work across a range of programme genres.

These Awards cover all media: television, radio, online and mobile. We have seen considerable growth in the number of excellent cross-media entries, demonstrating that broadcasters are meeting the challenge of producing content that serves their audiences across different platforms.

Our judges – based in North America, Europe, Africa, the Middle East and Asia – have devoted considerable time to evaluating the extensive number of shortlisted entries. There were many difficult decisions to make in deciding the final winners. The wide geographical base of our judges helps the AIB to be fairer to entrants. We know, through our regular reporting of the media scene, that not all budgets are equal. We know our judges are able to spot emerging talent and that good ideas are not confined to the English-speaking world.

This year's entries have come from every continent and the winners, too, are spread throughout the world, confirming the truly international nature of this competition.

The AIB and its network of members thank all this year's judges, sponsors and production staff for their help in making the Awards 2008 the best yet. We also congratulate the companies and individuals who are the winners in the 2008 AIB International Media Excellence Awards.



Simon Spanswick
Chief Executive, AIB

AWARD CATEGORIES

BEST RADIO CURRENT AFFAIRS DOCUMENTARY

BEST TELEVISION CURRENT AFFAIRS DOCUMENTARY

BEST INVESTIGATIVE TV DOCUMENTARY

CLEAREST RADIO COVERAGE OF A SINGLE NEWS EVENT

CLEAREST TV COVERAGE OF A SINGLE NEWS EVENT

BEST CREATIVE TV FEATURE

BEST CREATIVE RADIO FEATURE

BEST CROSS-MEDIA PRODUCTION

MOST INNOVATIVE USE OF GRAPHICS

Powered by Vizrt

MOST CREATIVE MARKETING STRATEGY

Powered by Russia Today

MOST INNOVATIVE TECHNOLOGY

Powered by Bloomberg

MOST CREATIVE SPECIALIST GENRE

INTERNATIONAL TV PERSONALITY OF THE YEAR

INTERNATIONAL RADIO PERSONALITY OF THE YEAR

AIB INSI SPECIAL AWARD

AIB EDITORS' AWARD 2008

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Meet the

judges



MARIA BALINSKA

BBC Radio

DIRK BEUSCH

Deutsche Welle

CATHERINE CANO

CanoVision



HUGH MILES

Journalist

LEIF LONSMANN

Danmarks Radio

SIMON SPANSWICK

AIB

PAULA MASSELOS

SBS Australia

MARCUS METZNER

S4M

SUN WEI

Shanghai Media &
Entertainment Group



CARLSON HUANG

Radio Taiwan International

JONATHAN MARKS

Critical Distance

BRIAN MARTINEZ

Bloomberg TV

ADRIAN MONCK

Journalist

LINDSAY CORNELL

BBC

CHRIS CRAMER

Cramer Media

ANDREW FINLAYSON

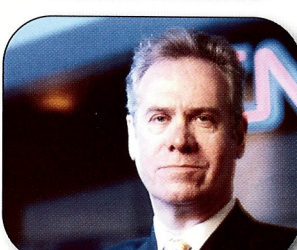
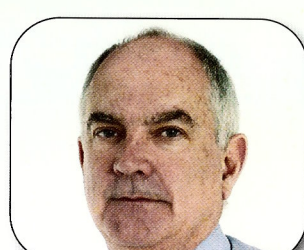
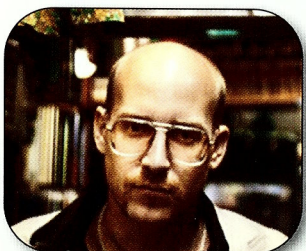
Fox News

JOHN O'LOAN

iO Media

SAMUEL ATTAH-MENSAH

Citi FM Ghana



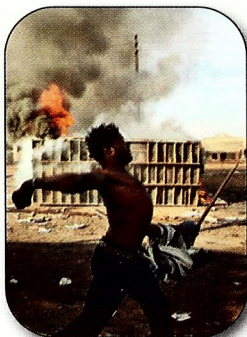
Not pictured:
Dirk Beusch

Clearest TV coverage of a single news event

We saw too many entries that were simply extracts from rolling news coverage where the aim was to be first, rather than to provide context and answers for the viewers. But there were 17 entries which demonstrated conscious attempts to provide viewers with strong analysis and clear story lines.

News, especially TV news, is expensive and often throws up logistical nightmares that need to be solved. The judges looked at the short-listed entries and took into account the very different budgets available to TV broadcasters in different territories. As a result, they decided to award two top prizes.

The first goes to the **South African Broadcasting Corporation** for an edition of its Special Assignment strand called *Hambani Makwere-kwere* – foreigners go home, telling the story of the ethnic unrest in South Africa in May and June this year. The judges said that this was a very engaging production, giving the viewer a real sense of being there. They commented that it was a thorough and engaging piece of journalism that got behind the headlines. On the one hand it showed the personal tragedies of the victims of the anti-foreigner violence. But it also heard from perpetrators and pundits who gave much-needed political, social and economic context to the frustration displayed by many poor South Africans. The team took risks in going in trying to talk with people who had taken part in the mob violence. At the same time, the interviewing and sensitive, un-hurried editing was such that one got a three dimensional sense of many of the characters profiled.



Sasha Wales-Smith,
Special Assignment
Producer, collects the
Award from Mark Owen

The second prize in this category goes to **France 24** for *Crackdown in the heart of Burma*. The judges felt this was an extremely "good watch", as well as being fast-paced, emotional, sensitive and visceral in delivery. The undercover footage from the demonstrations was extraordinary and was truly an example of brave journalism. The on-the-spot reporting was immediately gripping and put the viewer at the centre of the action.



Cyril Payen, France 24



SABC
France 24

COMMENDED

Al Jazeera English *Myanmar Cyclone* Judges' comments

Comprehensive and polished coverage combined with moving on-the-ground undercover pictures and useful political context made this a highly commended entry.

COMMENDED

BBC World Service ***The Assassination of*** ***Benazir Bhutto***

Judges' comments

A comprehensive and well researched series of broadcasts with excellent analysis that showcased the skill and ability of the team. The story was well paced conveying the seriousness of the situation.

BBC Russian Service – ***Presidential Elections in Russia*** **Judges' comments**

Wide ranging interviews, a diversity of talent and tough questions going to the heart of the issues. The background research, plus the lighter elements, served to make this compelling radio. Good technical production, effects and music, added colour and texture.

Clearer radio coverage of a single news event

BBC World Service

This category attracted fewer entries than in previous years, despite the number of major, headline-grabbing news stories that occurred in the past year. Some of the entries showed that radio is trying to mimic rolling news TV networks, simply repeating facts and figures but not providing enough critical analysis. For many productions, if you didn't join the coverage early on, it was impossible to pick up the thread easily.

The judges awarded the top prize to **BBC World Service** for *The World Today: Chinese Congress Party*. The production provided, said the judges, a very absorbing insight into a subject about which little is known. This highly competent and professional production opened a door on a closed event while also becoming a broader exposition on the Communist Party, how it works and what people think. This radio broadcast was, said one judge, better than watching the event on the TV screen, making it very real and engaging.



COMMENDED

Ruth Evans Productions ***Kenya, Healing the Rift***

Judges' comments This was a gruesome eyewitness report of human violence. The programme was "scarily credible" and told a story in a graphic way that could not help but to involve listeners. The pace of the programme was just right.

Ruth Evans Productions ***Ground Zero: Rebuilding*** ***Southern Sudan***

Judges' comments A true living, personal, intimate portrait of the victims of the wars in Southern Sudan. Simple, clear storytelling, gluing the images to the listeners' mind while adding important context for people not familiar with the situation in Southern Sudan and how it differs from the situation in Darfur.

Best radio current affairs documentary

Tinderbox Production

A smaller field of entries than in previous years causes us to ask whether the radio documentary genre is on the wane. The judges found a considerable range in quality. There were some excellent productions. But they stood out from a crop of very mediocre entries which either suffered from poor technical production, poor editing or the wrong choice of music.

We noted that independent production companies often came up with the best story, best script and by far the best use of sound design. They are clearly committed to documentaries.

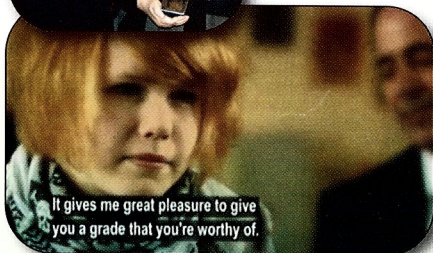


The judges awarded the top prize to Wales-based independent production company **Tinderbox Production** for its first-rate programme *Where Next, a Soldier's Journey*. This programme was a heartbreaking confession of a fallen fighter, a witness to a meaningless war.

Best television current affairs documentary

Strix TV

There were more than 70 entries for this category, which fell into distinct types: factual and investigative, so we split this category into two.



It gives me great pleasure to give you a grade that you're worthy of.

In factual documentary, the winner is Gothenburg-based production house **Strix TV** for *Class of 07* which aired on Sveriges TV. The judges said this was a strong documentary focused on a bold social experiment, with great use of close-up interviews while filming was carried out sensitively. One said

that this is one of those rare films that plays well in a foreign language and was impossible to stop watching. Another described it as completely engaging. Judges said this programme definitely needs a follow-up film in five or ten years: what happened next, both to the students and the school?

COMMENDED

TV2

The Serena Attack

Judges' comments The sacrifices of the press to bring the public the news were told in this chilling story of one night of violence. Very fast-paced, very sad, with strong delivery made this a compelling piece of television with strong narrative and good signposting.

Best investigative TV documentary

BBC Northern Ireland

Regional television is often overlooked in international competitions. Yet it can often be of world class standard. We were pleased to see that this year producers from this important broadcast sector submitted their work to the AIB Awards.



The winner of this investigative category was **BBC Northern Ireland** for *The Pitbull Sting* which investigated one of the largest dog fighting gangs in Europe, exposing the extent to which Northern Ireland has become a centre for this brutal activity. The team spent weeks following the perpetrators of this illegal "sport" across Europe, using covert filming to tell a horrific story. The judges said this production revealed an astonishing story in a very creative way. All commented on the excellent production and careful editing of what at times was highly graphic and deeply upsetting footage. The team took a risk in spending nearly 1½ years developing the material. Their rewards were high audience figures and decisive action by the authorities after transmission.

COMMENDED

TV3

Undercover Ireland: The Drugs Trade

Judges' comments Very deep investigative report with high social value. Excellent editing with good use of undercover filming. Thoughtful, comprehensive and revealing.

VRT –

Corrupt Romania

Judges' comments Corruption is common in many countries. But this production told the problem of endemic corruption in Romania, from cradle to grave. It gave an insight into a little known historical issue, brought to life through dynamic story-telling and a wide range of contemporary interviews.

COMMENDED

Russia Today TV *Russian Glamour*

Judge's comments The judges felt that this story drew them in and benefited from excellent research into the subject. Interesting characters added to the story being told, and great editing helped too.

ChelloZone

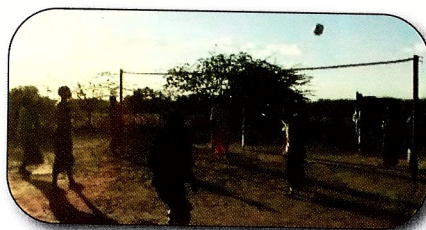
Psychic Private Eyes

Judge's comments This was an unusual approach to reality TV and follows the work of three respected UK mediums who use their unique gifts to help solve the murder of British model Sally Ann Bowman in 2005.

Best creative TV feature

Rockhopper TV

In this category, the judges were looking for a programme, or one episode from a programme series, that makes the most creative and the most exceptional use of the TV medium.



The judges were impressed by the range of entries, covering very different subjects, but were unanimous in their verdict that first prize should go to independent TV production company **Rockhopper TV** for *A Sporting Chance*.

This programme, from the series

"Survivors' Guide", looked at Somali girls in a refugee camp fighting heated resistance from the community when they tried to establish a volley ball team. Judges said that this was a very interesting social subject with balanced treatment of the different sides. It had very accurate and attentive editing and was highly relevant to international TV audiences well beyond the borders of Sudan.



Best creative radio feature

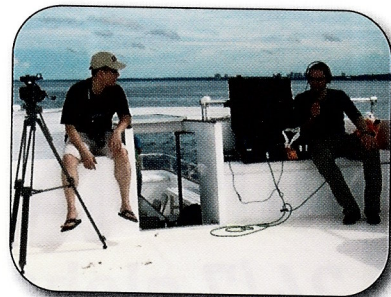
BBC Portuguese for Africa

Judges were listening for exceptional and creative use of radio. They were unanimous that they found it in the **BBC World Service Portuguese for Africa** submission entitled *The Amazon Paradox*. The programmes posed the question of whether the Amazon region can be developed economically without destroying this precious part of the world's ecosystem. Overall, the project brought together 11 language services from BBC World Service, ensuring there was South-South communication as well as South-North. It was a great example of teamwork using journalists with very different cultural backgrounds tackling a single issue from several interesting directions.



The judges commented that this piece of work was an encouraging display of journalistic competence, and was a "must listen" for a wide range of people, not just other journalists. The on-line videos on the websites complemented the live radio reportages. It was interesting to see the different variations the language departments made on the same story.

The judges also appreciated that this production is still accessible on-line and suggest that this could be a basis for a much larger, on-going environmental dossier. Too many "specials" are simply gone and forgotten a few months after the event - a waste of effort and knowledge gained.





RUSSIA TODAY
24/7 global news channel

www.russiatoday.com

COMMENDED

WDR

Radio Peelings

Judges' comments An innovative production from Germany's public broadcaster about a British public broadcasting legend – John Peel. A highly creative production and the sound balance and design were a pleasure to listen to.

Bloomberg Television

Emerging Africa Week

Judges' comments

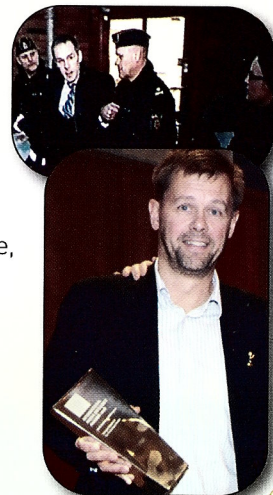
Bloomberg's Emerging Africa Week from the World Economic Forum in Cape Town involving interviews, in-depth reports and background was an excellent example of how to redress the balance of African events being so often reported in a poor light or laden with clichés.

Most creative specialist genre

Sveriges Television

This category – new for 2008 – allows us to highlight work that doesn't fit comfortably in mainstream genres. We were looking for innovative productions and creative thinking in radio, TV and cross-media.

The judges presented first prize to **Sveriges TV's** interactive drama *The Truth About Marika*. Part reality game, part mystery programme, SVT describe it as "participation drama". If you switch on, you might think that it's a true story that's being told. In fact, it's a story that has more than a ring of truth to it. Setting it apart from conventional television shows, viewers could search for clues planted in a virtual world called Entropia Universe, helping solve a mystery. Fans could also interact with avatars of the show's main characters. Many television companies are looking for ways to capture viewer loyalty before, during and after a programme. With "based on a true story" marketing, *The Truth About Marika* saw its fan community overcome a series of complex trials in order to come face-to-face with "the mind-blowing truth."



COMMENDED

Russia Today TV

New Year Promotion

Judges' comments Hiring Times Square in New York isn't an everyday affair – certainly not for an international TV channel. This innovative campaign offered a taste of Russian Christmas and New Year in the heart of New York and resulted in more people tuning into Russia Today TV – exactly what the channel was looking for. They certainly drew a curious crowd during the campaign.

Most creative marketing strategy

Sveriges Radio

Inspiring audiences to tune in, access programmes or to remain loyal to a media brand is a constant challenge for broadcasters in the crowded media marketplace. The AIB wants to highlight the companies that are meeting this challenge and to help spread good practice among broadcasters.



Swedish Radio's Programme Guide was aimed at getting 15-25 year-olds to discover that there's great content on SR through the use of a clever recommendation engine.

Judges praised this idea as innovative, focused and highly

cost-effective. They thought the recommendation engine was a brilliant way of solving the problem that radio faces – great content hidden under a number (the frequency). Judges complimented the way the campaign worked across different media including the special interactive billboard. SR has faced a huge challenge reaching this part of the audience: the audience doesn't know it's there and finds it hard to discover great shows.



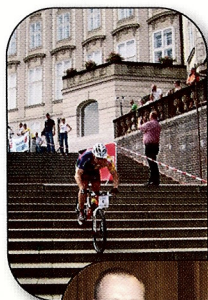
Powered by

Most innovative technology

Powered by
Bloomberg
TELEVISION

Link Research

This year the AIB Awards judges were searching for technology that is both innovative and transferable throughout the international broadcasting industry. As broadcasting systems become more commoditised, there needs to be creative thinking to serve the needs both of broadcasters and audiences.



The judges awarded the top prize to **Link Research** for The Prague Steps Project. The challenge of getting live pictures from "inside" a cycling event, especially in this kind of terrain, was greater than most people imagine. The camera and transmitter had to be light yet robust, and the receiving antennae had to be in a complex network around the track to ensure uninterrupted coverage. The judges were impressed with the result and the way Czech TV incorporated the live footage. There are clearly other sports that would benefit from giving viewers a true picture of what it's like to participate.

COMMENDED

VT Communications
Global Media Network and
Media Management Centre
Judges' comments

International broadcasting is shifting towards the delivery of more and more cross-media content to partners around the world. This may be delivering to radio, TV stations, cable head-ends, newspapers, on-line services and mobile. The judges were impressed with the design and implementation of this global delivery system based on Internet Protocols. This means that the system delivers the content in a reliable way, without needing to worry if it is audio, video or text.



COMMENDED

Al Jazeera English Iran Nuclear

Judges' comments Al Jazeera English used well-crafted visuals and maps in its news programming and judges said these really added to viewer understanding of the subject and provided additional context.

DIRECTV

NASCAR Hotpass

Judges' comments Stock car racing is a fast-paced sport and keeping track of who's where and who's winning is vital. As the cars scream around the track, keeping fans up to date with their favourite driver's performance is essential. The NASCAR Hotpass initiative, from Reality Check Studios, impressed with the way it kept viewers informed and entertained before, during and after races.

Most innovative use of graphics

Powered by **vizrt**

NFL Network

In this new 2008 category judges were looking for the most creative use of dynamic graphics in television story-telling. Graphics can add to viewer understanding of complex issues or add value to sports programming. Dynamic graphs and maps, showing data in real time, have become indispensable to TV news and sports.

The judges awarded the top prize in 2008 to US **NFL Network** for its Games Graphics Package. They were particularly impressed by the creativity and energy demonstrated by the artists. The work was produced for NFL Network by Reality Check Studios in Los Angeles. The judges felt they had captured the flavour of NFL and gave something useful and extra to viewers across the USA and beyond. We suspect the artists at Reality have a real passion for sports as well as for creative design.



Andrew Heimbold of Reality Check Studios receives the Award from Mark Owen



COMMENDED

Sky1

Lost

Judges' comments US series *LOST* has inspired passionate communities around the world. Sky's new media department used this high quality content plus specially commissioned material, giving UK fans exclusive insights behind the scenes.

3FM

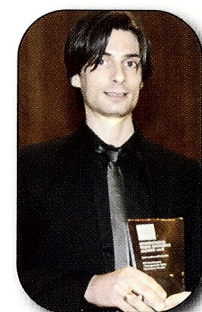
Serious Request 2007

Judges' comments This Dutch public radio network adopted a multi-media approach to fund raising that aimed to provide more people across Africa with clean, healthy drinking water. The judges were impressed by the use of different platforms in complementary ways to achieve a single aim – raising money and awareness for a good cause.

Best cross-media production BBC World Service

The AIB firmly believes that cross-platform is the way broadcasting must develop if it is to remain relevant to large sections of society. It's vital the programming is produced in such a way that it fits comfortably on each device it's consumed on. We had more than 30 entries in this category, showing that many broadcasters are thinking the right way. Among them was the winner, **BBC World Service**, for the *Bangladesh Boat Project*.

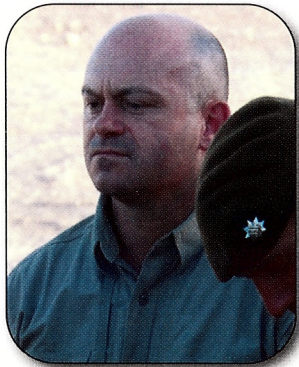
The BBC set out to report from Bangladesh on board a boat about the effects of climate change in this low-lying country. A number of language services from Bush House were onboard, each feeding back reports across TV, radio, online and mobile platforms to audiences. On 15 November, Cyclone Sidr hit, turning documentary and feature production into live journalism. The journalists on the project coped well with the changing situation. The judges said that this submission was authentic "wall-to-wall multimedia production".



Luis Cardador Pereira, BBC Portuguese for Africa

International TV personality of the year

Ross Kemp



As more channels appear on the air, the need for engaging presenters who can relate to audiences has never been higher. Whether its news or documentaries, there's a need for someone who can explain a story in a creative and non-patronising way.

The judges decided that, from a very strong field involving TV presenters from more than a dozen countries, **Ross Kemp** should be this year's international TV personality of the year. They described him as a very impressive authentic

character – and someone who seems to revel in dealing with dangerous situations whilst at the same time explaining the context. Kemp's commitment enables audiences to experience the most extraordinary situations. His programmes are "neither the movies nor the news", said the judges, but show reality from Kemp's own perspective. He makes absorbing television from the heart. His authenticity was unquestionable.

COMMENDED

Martine Tanghe

Judges' comments A highly professional presenter and news anchor, Martine Tanghe works for public broadcaster VRT in Flanders, Belgium. She impressed the judges by the way she understands how to combine friendliness, respect, trustworthiness and a genuine interest in people. Searching for interesting stories is clearly at the heart of what she does so well. She is tough – but fair. And having compared her handling of both elections, as well as news presentation, we conclude that she's world class. Belgians already know that. Now the rest of the world needs to know, too.

International radio personality of the year

3FM Serious Request team

The AIB is passionate about broadcasting and we hope that people working in the industry share that passion – and convey it to the audience. Our search for radio personality of the year considers who's most engaging and who is most engaged.

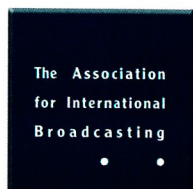
The judges considered that this year's winner should be not just one person but a team of three – **Gerard Ekdorf, Rob Stenders** and **Michiel Veenstra**, the lead presenters at Dutch public radio station 3FM who organised Serious Request. Just before Christmas last year, the team locked themselves in a glass box very near the Dutch parliament in The Hague. They broadcast great non-stop radio for six days without food, raising money for a charity that works to provide clean drinking water in the Developing World. The judges noted that the team made a massive impression on the Dutch public, with people travelling long distances to see 3FM in action and have their requests played. The presenters succeeded in building a fantastic rapport with their audience, including people who might not be regular listeners to the popular music network.



COMMENDED

Owen Bennett-Jones

Judges' comments The judges singled out Owen as a particularly knowledgeable and engaging presenter. He is a world-class journalist with an in-depth knowledge of the Middle East and, especially, Pakistan. He is not afraid to tackle difficult subjects and tricky interviewees in order to bring the story of the moment to BBC World Service listeners around the globe. The judges were also impressed with his investigative reporting skills.



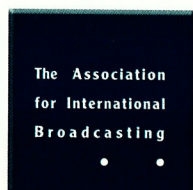
AIB INSI Special Award

Sami Al Haj

Bringing the news from the world's trouble spots is essential for the spread of democracy and the freedom of information. Journalists, camera crews, translators – all face constant danger as they work to bring news stories to our screens and to our radio sets. So far in 2008, over 70 people working in the news industry have been killed and many more have been injured. News crews regularly come under fire. They are subject to harassment by armed militia, by armies, by rebel forces, by hooligans and by thugs. News crews are often seen as legitimate targets.

Two years ago, the AIB Media Excellence Awards recognised the documentary *Prisoner 345* which reported on the plight of Al Jazeera cameraman **Sami Al Haj**. Arrested by US Forces in the Pakistan border region he was accused of being a terrorist. Sami was sent to Guantanamo Bay where he was kept, without trial, for more than seven years. The world's media campaigned and lobbied for his release – but it wasn't until May 2008 that Sami was allowed to leave. He returned to his home country, Sudan, where he was reunited with his family. Sami has now been appointed head of Al Jazeera Network's Public Liberties and Human Rights Desk whose primary focus is to promote respect for human rights and public liberties by monitoring, documenting, broadcasting and raising awareness of these key issues worldwide and in the Arab region in particular.

The **Association for International Broadcasting** and **INSI**, the International News Safety Institute, have come together to recognise the work of Sami Al Haj who endured immense personal hardship, all in the name of bringing the news to the world.



AIB Editors' Award France 24

The AIB has been monitoring the work of broadcasters throughout the world to see who is thinking creatively about the convergence that's taking place in the media. However, thinking about this is not enough – what the AIB wants to see is a whole-hearted and thoroughly engaged approach to ensuring that broadcasters are true cross-media production houses. Today, broadcasters have to engage with audiences on multiple platforms – the audience has immense choice and if you're not on the platform that they want to use, you'll lose them.

France 24 launched in December 2006 and from the start had a true multimedia approach to international broadcasting. It has developed applications in partnership with other organisations – both commercial and public – to get its content onto mobile handsets, on to the web and delivered via e-mail. At the same time, France 24 has not lost sight of the traditional TV audience, with excellent presentation across all three of its language services – Arabic, English and French.



With a young, enthusiastic team at its headquarters in Paris, France 24 has pushed boundaries, both in style and coverage of different themes. The AIB believes France 24 has now matured into a strong, reliable and inventive international news channel for the 21st century. They have been open to sharing their ideas and technologies with other broadcasters, believing the world needs a multitude of voices to be better informed. This is why France 24 is recipient of this year's AIB Editors' Award.

An iceberg floating in a dark blue ocean under a light blue sky with wispy clouds. The visible part of the iceberg is small and white, while the submerged part is much larger and shaped like the continent of Africa.

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