

GMM SETS BT5 BN FOR DIGITAL TV

Entertainment giant to bid on licences, produce shows for three channels

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THE NATION

Under its revised plan for digital terrestrial television, GMM Grammy has earmarked Bt5 billion for securing licences to operate three channels and their production, the new head of the company's digital-TV business unit said yesterday.

"Digital TV is a new chapter for our company in almost 30 years in the music and entertainment business," said Kanchit Kawachat, chief executive officer for digital-TV business.

The company plans to join the National Broadcasting and Telecommunications Commission's auction for three types of digital-TV channels.

If successful at the auction, GMM Grammy will utilise its expertise to produce and offer programmes for a variety channel in high definition, plus news and children's programming in standard definition.

For instance, for the HD variety channel, the company will synergise its strength from subsidiaries for music, movies, dramas and variety shows, he said.

In a recent move linked to the digital goal, the company appointed four key people to look after its GMM One variety satellite-TV channel. GMM One is expected to develop into part of its new commercial digital-TV channel after the music and entertainment giant secures commercial licences, he added.

As to the new management at

GMM One, Takonkiet Viravan, managing director of Exact & Scenario, was appointed chief executive of the channel.

He will work with key people such as Saithip Montrikul, co-CEO of GMM Grammy and CEO of ATime Media; Jina Osothip, managing director of film production house GMM Tai Hub, also known as GTH; and Sataporn Panichraksapong, managing director of GMM TV, which operates many free-to-air satellite-TV channels.

Exact & Scenario specialises in TV soap operas and sitcoms, ATime Media is a leading content producer for radio programmes and entertainment news shows, and GTH is one of the country's leading film-makers.

For news and children's programmes, the company will seek business partners to produce shows for both channels.

Kanchit, who has eight years' experience in the media and broadcasting industry, said his expertise in sales and marketing, plus creativity in television production, would help him and his company to create the right content for all types of viewer once the digital channels arrive.

He believes that once digital-TV operations begin, the industry will witness annual growth of 15-20 per cent on top of normal growth of 10 per cent each year.

The CEO expects each of GMM's digital channels to generate a profit within the first three years of operation.



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