

SATELLITE TV

GMM Z gets go-ahead for pay channels

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GMM Z, the satellite TV unit of GMM Grammy Plc, will roll out its pay-TV service on Feb 15 after regulators granted it a licence yesterday.

The National Broadcasting and Telecommunications Commission (NBTC) issued GMM Z a licence to provide 12 pay-TV channels.

Dew Waratantagoon, managing director for platform strategy at GMM Z, said the company plans to provide eight pay-TV channels on the satellite platform next month.

The eight are Euro Sport, GMM Club, GMM Football Extra, GMM Sport One, Nick Junior, Nat Geo Adventure, Warner TV and GMM Movies.

The company's programming will come in three monthly packages: 200 baht for four entertainment channels, 300 baht for four sport channels and 400 baht for all eight channels.

"We aim to attract at least 150,000 subscribers by the end of this year, or 15% of our existing customers," said Mr Dew.

As of December, GMM Z had sold 1.5 million set-top boxes, missing an initial goal of 2 million units in 2012.

The company plans to exclusively offer an additional four satellite TV channels free of charge for those who buy a GMM Z set-top box.

Mr Dew sounded optimistic that GMM Z would sell an additional 2 million boxes this year.

"Thailand's satellite TV market has huge room to grow, as 40% of the country's households still use antennas," he said.

The pay-TV service is set to become a major revenue stream for GMM Z, contributing up to 80% of total revenue, with the rest coming from ad sales.

The company also plans to launch a high-definition (HD) set-top box next month with extra packages, said Mr Dew, who is tipped to take the chief executive seat at GMM Z.