DIGITAL TELEVISION IN THAILAND (2006-2007)

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ABSTRACT

The evolution of television and broadcasting technology from analogue to digital brings about changes in the global television industry. This technological transition is related to a political push which is highly concerned with national public interest in relation to socio-economic forces. Thailand's TV industry has also adopted and used digital television (DTV) technologies since the late 1990s in its TV production and broadcasting. The Thai government broadcasting regulators are expected to play a key role in launching and issuing national DTV policy. However, they seem to be involved in a conflict of interest which has negatively impacted Thailand's DTV transition.

This study selects Thailand's TV industry as a case study of a developing country in response to global technological transition. The thesis aims to explore major drives influencing Thai broadcasting in the shift from analogue to digital. It provides recommendations vis-à-vis the establishment of national DTV policy, and the current use of DTV technologies by Thai TV stations. The research project was conducted in Bangkok, Thailand, between October 2006 and October 2007, after the September coup in 2006. Two research methodologies employed in the study are (1) in-depth interviews with 26 experts (TV station administrators and mass communication scholars), and (2) observations of the nine TV stations.

Theoretical concepts in globalisation of communication technologies and communication policy are reviewed. The research reveals two major pushes significantly forcing Thailand's TV industry into a newly administrative sphere. These are: (1) global push, and (2) domestic push; both are extensively addressed in this thesis.

STATEMENT OF AUTHORSHIP

I hereby state that the following thesis is entirely my own original work and has not been submitted for any other degree to any other University or educational institution. All sources of information used in this thesis have been indicated and due acknowledgement has been given to the work of others. Ethics approval has been granted by Macquarie University Ethics Review Committee (Human Research) (Reference: HE25NOV2005-D04374)

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