

MCOT goes for softer approach on news

NANAT SUCHIVA

SET-listed MCOT Plc, the state-owned broadcaster, will adjust its news programmes by focusing more on news talk presentation in a bid to reach every audience group.

President Sivaporn Chomsuwan said the time was right to adjust MCOT's news programming because the digital TV business was highly competitive.

Thai News Agency, a unit of MCOT, has been responsible for producing news programmes for Channel 9 for more than 64 years.

Mr Sivaporn said Thai News Agency was ready to improve its capability of news reporting from the traditional style to be news talk as ordinary people could easily get straight news. Moreover, news talk can enhance its programming and presentation by using computer graphics to help report news.

After the change, MCOT aims to attract more attention from advertising agencies while increasing its audiences for news programmes.

Mr Sivaporn revealed that MCOT's revenue this year is projected to increase by 14% after the image improvement for Channel 9. The channel is offering more entertainment and news programmes to reach younger audiences.

Moreover, Thai News Agency will further use a two-way communications strategy to let audiences interact with the news station by sending video clips of any issue of the day to air on TV.

"This will integrate audiences and our news programmes as one because of interaction," said Mr Sivaporn.

Meanwhile, MCOT is ready to improve its digital media platform to cope with the changing behaviour of consumers.

Mr Sivaporn reaffirmed that audiences

can now easily access TV content from many channels such as websites, social media and mobile applications, so grabbing this opportunity will benefit the company's revenue in the future.

Last year MCOT posted 57.8 million baht in net profit, a big drop from 503.7 million in 2014, on revenue totalling 3.84 billion baht, down from 4.45 billion.

MCOT's core TV business contributed 44% of total revenue, followed by radio at 25%, joint ventures at 13%, digital TV network rentals at 7%, other items at 6% and new media at 5%.

MCOT now owns two digital TV channels: MCOT HD Channel 9 and MCOT Family children's channel.

MCOT shares closed yesterday on the Stock Exchange of Thailand at 8.95 baht, down five satang, in trade worth 726,000 baht.