

SpongeBob SquarePants to hit sub-Saharan Africa

MultiChoice Africa has signed a multi-year distribution deal with MTV Networks International to carry leading kids' entertainment brand, Nickelodeon, in southern Africa. Starting 1 July 2008, Nickelodeon will launch as a 24-hour English language channel, broadcasting to more than one and a half million DStv subscribers in Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Swaziland, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

The news was announced today, Wednesday, 18 June 2008, by Nolo Letele, CEO - MultiChoice South Africa Group and Alex Okosi, SVP and MD, MTV Networks Africa.

Targeted at kids aged 2 - 14, Nickelodeon is the world's only multi-platform entertainment brand dedicated exclusively to kids. The channel will carry Nickelodeon's well-known programming for preschool, primary school and tween-age kids, with a dedicated programming block, Nick Jr. where kids play to learn, and Nic at Nite, a primetime slot created for older kids.

The new 24-hour Nickelodeon channel will consist of a mix of Nickelodeon's globally award-winning animation and live action programming. The channel's schedule will boast a rich programming lineup including Nickelodeon's beloved pre-school hit, Dora the Explorer and whimsical sea sponge SpongeBob SquarePants, as well as anime-inspired action adventure Avatar - The Legend of Aang, and comedy/live action series, Unfabulous and Drake & Josh.

Complement a wide range

Nickelodeon's new channel in Africa will complement the wide range of Nickelodeon programming that airs on K-All Day, broadcasting on DStv channel 300, and Nickelodeon's regional consumer product business.

Commented Okosi, "Nickelodeon is one of the world's most influential and appealing kids' brands. We are thrilled to partner with MultiChoice to bring Nickelodeon's award-winning programming on a 24-hour basis into Southern Africa."

Letele says, "We are pleased to launch the globally successful Nickelodeon kid's entertainment channel onto our DStv platform. The channel will complement and strengthen our current youth offering, whilst simultaneously providing more choice. Kids are in for a treat with the array of exciting content featuring the favorite characters and programmes."

Distribution and marketing for Nickelodeon in sub-Saharan Africa will be managed by Johannesburg-based MTV Networks Africa, which is also responsible for MTV, MTV base, MTV France, MTV Portugal and VH1 the region.