

A Common Platform? A debate about public service media in Britain

Wednesday 25 June, The Council Chamber, BBC Broadcasting House

Panelists:

Tony Ageh, Controller, BBC Internet

Jem Stone, Portfolio Exec, Social Media for Future Media & Technology, BBC

James Cridland, Head of Future Media & Technology, BBC Audio & Music

Tom Loosemore, Ofcom

Jon Gisby, Director of New Media, Channel 4

Azeem Azhar,

The trigger for this debate was Mike Butcher's cheeky post at Techcrunch in which he responded to the BBC Trust's review of bbc.co.uk with a heartfelt plea for the BBC to provide (or to be required to provide) some proper support for UK tech and media startups.

Mike's angle is that the Corporation is sitting on a fund of content, data and applications that ought to be made available, using all those clever web 2.0 devices (APIs, feeds and so on), to the country's creators and entrepreneurs. He thinks this would jump start an industry and be a really profitable exploitation of the BBC's huge investment in content and technology.

So, tomorrow night at the BBC, we're going to talk about Mike's idea but also —because we might as well—the future of public service media in Britain, Ofcom's four-part analysis of PSB, Channel 4's plans for 4IP, iPlayer as ecosystem, Peter Bazalgette's Boggle, perhaps even Mark Thompson's plans to "transform the economics of the entire sector" etc.

The event, which is sold out, is taking place in the BBC's Council Chamber at 19:00 tomorrow evening (Weds 25 June). Come to the Broadcasting House reception in Portland Place, London W1A 1AA at 18:30 and we'll have a chat before we get started.

I anticipate it'll go like this:

- Mike opens proceedings and introduces the panel.
- You each speak for a few minutes.
- I ask you a few questions about your presentations.
- I then invite questions from the assembled audience (if it all kicks off at this point I know a back way out).

Most of the audience, being readers of Mike's TechCrunch blog, will be geeks or entrepreneurs or both. We've got some media coming but we haven't made a big effort. We'd really just like to advance the debate a bit, get people from different parts of the industry talking and maybe even come up with some new ideas. Afterwards we can have a beer somewhere.

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