

PRESS RELEASE

Why innovation is essential to grow your brand

BBC Worldwide ANZ MD Jon Penn speaks at the ABDMS

Sydney, 4 March 2015: Jon Penn, Managing Director of BBC Worldwide Australia & New Zealand (ANZ), warned of the dangers of neglecting your brand in a fast-changing broadcasting world, in a speech at the Australian Broadcasting Digital Media Summit today.

“These days, and increasingly in the future, brands are crucial. In a fragmented, online world, consumers are going to increasingly gravitate towards entertainment brands that they know and trust.”

However, he warned: “Change is not just about feeding a need anymore. Today, increasingly, change is the need. People demand that what they have today is different to what they had yesterday.

“Any brand owner that doesn’t innovate in response to this is in trouble and may face their Kodak moment. Change is what consumers demand.”

Jon talked about BBC Worldwide ANZ’s defining moment, which led to it launching the premiere drama channel BBC First in August 2014.

He said: “The BBC brand globally is big, but in markets like Australia, we weren’t building that brand, we weren’t preparing ourselves for a fragmented future.

“We also knew that our future lay in building our own brand. We knew we could only achieve that if we really owned our own brand. We knew that this would clear the way for us to grow a much deeper much more direct relationship with our viewers.”

Jon explained that changing its business model and launching BBC First, was the innovation that was needed for BBC Worldwide ANZ .

“The leap required was to own our brand. To adjust our business model for drama distribution, which had remained unchanged for 50 years.”

Although the decision was supported by clear evidence that Australians were particularly positive towards British drama, Jon acknowledged that with innovation there inevitably comes risk.

He said: “We can’t talk about taking risks without also talking about some of the things we can’t risk. But innovation is often misunderstood. It’s not about ripping everything up. I think about innovation

as a sort of assembly line of great ideas. You mix and match the ones that you need to solve your particular problem.

“There are elements of our brand which are not up for compromise. They run right through us like DNA. Which is exactly what a brand should be.”

He continued: “Often the best way to grow a brand is to ensure that you stay true to your brand. That you really own it and understand it and know what it is that you stand for.

“When you understand that then you know where it is that you can take risks. They’re the really precious things and if you lose them, you’ve lost everything.

“There are elements of the BBC which cannot be jeopardized. We won’t jeopardise our heritage. Our heritage is a source of great affection and great pride. Some people turn their back on the past. We won’t. Our past gives us clues to our future. But whilst we respect our history, we will never be a hostage to our heritage.”

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NOTES TO EDITORS

About BBC Worldwide Australia & New Zealand

Australia & New Zealand (ANZ) is a priority territory for BBC Worldwide, focusing on growth across all its core business areas. Based in Macquarie Park, Sydney, BBC Worldwide ANZ wholly owns six channels: BBC First, UKTV, BBC Knowledge and CBeebies in Australia; UKTV and BBC Knowledge in New Zealand; and is responsible for the distribution and promotion of BBC World News which transmits in both countries. BBC Worldwide ANZ distributes great British content from the BBC and other producers to all free-to-air and most subscription channels in Australia and New Zealand. It works with partners to bring BBC Worldwide DVDs, magazines, digital apps, innovative products and live events to the local market, as well as offering advertising opportunities for the BBC’s world renowned bbc.com news site.