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Razor TV will focus on local content offering both live and video-on-demand programmes.

MEDIA group Singapore Press Holdings has been issued a licence from the Media Development Authority (MDA) for its upcoming interactive Web TV service, Razor TV. The regulator on Wednesday awarded a five-year 'Niche' Internet TV licence to the media group, which is looking to launch the service next month.

A niche licence carries less onerous obligations than a 'nationwide' one. But it restricts the licence holder to no more than 100,000 viewers in Singapore.

Razor TV will focus on local content offering both live and video-on-demand programmes.

The interactive technology behind Razor TV is being developed through a grant from the Interactive Digital Media Office (IDMPO), which is hosted by MDA.

IDMPO supports Singapore companies in developing novel media services.

'The five-year Niche TV Licence will facilitate SPH's entry into the local IPTV market with its innovative service, establishing it as the first media company in Singapore to develop a new genre of TV with live web studio streaming and real time audience interactivity,' said MDA in a statement on Wednesday.

The niche subscription TV licence was introduced by MDA in 2007 to facilitate the growth of IPTV services in Singapore by offering operators greater flexibility to roll out services for different market segments.

There are currently eight nationwide and niche commercial and trial IPTV/VOD service providers, including SPH, offering more than 125 TV channels to viewers in Singapore.

'MDA encourages traditional media players such as SPH to reach out and engage our increasingly Internet and technology savvy viewers in Singapore with exciting and interactive content through new media broadcasting platforms such as IPTV and participative web 2.0 technologies,' said Ms Ling Pek Ling, Director of MDA Media Policy.

The core technology of Razor TV was developed in partnership with Singapore technology company, Ufinity Pte Ltd.

This is part of IDMPO's efforts in encouraging local flagship media companies to embrace new media and engage in IDM R&D to create innovative products and services.

Mr Michael Yap, Executive Director, IDMPO said: 'A key initiative of the IDMPO's research and development initiative is to bring about innovation in our new media sector, offering exciting new services to our local viewers.'

'We are pleased that SPH has launched a new genre of Internet TV using technology developed by our local company.'

MDA said it will not limit the number of niche licensees, and welcomes local and overseas IPTV service providers to come forward and use Singapore as a base for launching innovative media services.

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