

British and chinese contemporary media assignment



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The British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) and China Central Television (CATV) are the two popular media owning millions of audiences in the world. For years, they have been making efforts to adopt new technology, new techniques and new means for developing high standard programmer. However, mainly due to different social structures and different cultural background between China and the I-J, the BBC and CATV also have several differences in governors, funding resources and channel designs. In this essay, the background of the BBC and CATV will be briefly introduced, allowed by an analysis of their similarities and differences.

The BBC is the main public service broadcaster in the ASK. It was formed in October 1922 by a group of leading wireless manufacturers (History of the BBC, 2005). Currently, the Corporation comprises 9 1-J-wide Television Channels (See Appendix 1) and 10 1-J-wide Radio Stations. With its vision as to be the most creative, trusted organization in the world, the BBC provides a wide range of distinctive programmer and services for its viewers and listeners (Purpose and Values, 2005). CATV which was established in 1958, is the national TV network of the People's

Republic of China. Presently, CATV has 16 channels broadcasting various programmer (See Appendix 2). The coverage of CATV-I reaches over 94. 4% of the total population of China, with the number of viewers exceeding 1. 15 billion (Profile CATV, 2005). The corporation has been serving as a window for Chinese people to understand the world better and for the world to get a better understanding of China. As the two authoritative media in the world, the BBC and CATV have made enormous contribution to people's life and cultures. There are some similarities in them.

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Firstly, both of them provide a comprehensive range of programmes analogously or digitally in order to satisfy the needs of their users. Besides, with the development of modern technology, they are trying to use internet to propagandist their programmes. Both of them have their own websites containing various contents such as programme schedules, news, and contact methods. In addition, they also respect their users. Both of them are glad to listen to public comments and regularly consult users in order to improve their work. However, the two media also have some differences.

First of all, CCTV is run by the central government of the People's Republic of China. On the other hand, the BBC's activities are currently governed by a Royal Charter – a document that shapes the BBC, defining its objectives and functions. It is supported by the Agreement between the BBC and the Government, which sets out how the BBC will meet its general obligations, the services it will provide, and the standards it will meet (Your BBC Your Say, 2005). Whereas CCTV serves its political role first, the BBC tends to represent the public interest and be free of political bias.

Furthermore, CCTV is mainly funded by advertisements, whereas the BBC is funded by public subscription in the form of a License fee. CCTV viewers do not need to pay for its programmes, but they need to watch a lot of advertisements during programmes. Advertisements during golden time such as the time after the CCTV News help CCTV generate huge amounts of revenues. According to the latest data, CCTV gained 8.5 billion ARM from advertisements in 2005 (Profile CCTV, 2005). The BBC, on the other hand, obtains its revenues mainly from license payers.

It received £940 million in science fees in the latest audited financial year 2004/2005 (Annual report 2004/05, 2005). The license fee guarantees that a wide range of high quality programs can be made available unrestricted to everyone and helps support production skills, training, and local or minority programming (Plans, Policies and Reports, 2005). Besides, the absence of commercial pressures allows programming planners to be in direct contact with the needs and expectations of the general public (Christopher 1999, p. 106).

A majority of the BBC users prefer paying license fees rather than watching advertisements, and over 52% of users surveyed held the opinion that the BBC would lose its independence if it relied on advertising or sponsorship (Review of the BBC's Royal Charter: A strong BBC, independent of government, 2005). Because of this distinguishing characteristic, compared with CATV, BBC may care more about license payers when deciding its future, and could be more independent of commercial interests. Although both the BBC and CATV are providing a wide range of programming for audiences, they still differ in the TV channel designs.

It seems that CATV focuses such on the status of the audiences. For instance, it launches three international channels in four languages for foreigners and overseas Chinese. In contrast, the BBC lays stress on viewers' life cycle. It designs channels according to different age groups: CBBC is for children under the six, CBBC is for children from six to twelve, BBC 3 is for youth from 16 to 34, and News 24 focuses on audiences above 55 (Yang, 2004). The difference in channel designs shows the different strategies in

their market segmentations, which may be resulted by different roles they play and efferent users they face.