



PRESS RELEASE

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HEC selects Arqiva services for new channel launch in £2m deal

- **Five-year, £2m channel launch package for new home-entertainment retail channel**
- **Playout, uplinking and satellite space**
- **Innovative remote file-transfer and scheduling facilities**

Arqiva has announced a five-year contract worth £2million from Home Entertainment Corporation PLC, to provide integrated playout, uplinking and satellite capacity for its new 'ChoicesUK TV' home-entertainment retail channel which launched this week on the Sky Digital platform. The deal takes advantage of Arqiva's all-inclusive channel services package, including integration of a scheduling system and a file-transfer capability at Arqiva's Broadcast Media Centre in Feltham, enabling HEC to remotely manage the channel from its Peterborough headquarters and Teddington Studios.

The new channel, which allows HEC to capitalise on the popularity of its 227 ChoicesUK stores and ChoicesUK Direct operation, will showcase its full range of screen entertainment products to suit every pocket – from bargain DVDs and games, to high-tech home cinema equipment. ChoicesUK TV will also offer the complete range of current gaming consoles, X-Box, PS2 and the various Gameboy models, while simultaneously gearing up next-generation platforms X-Box 360, PS3 and Sony's soon-to-be-launched hand held device, the PSP.

Iain Muspratt, Chairman of HEC said: "We're delighted to be working with Arqiva for our channel delivery and technical support. Its heritage and long experience in broadcasting were important factors for us in awarding this contract, as well as the value-for-money and flexible approach that everyone expects these days. We have been delighted with the support they have given us and have no doubt this will be a long and fruitful partnership."

Arqiva's commercial director for satellite media solutions, Simon Thrush, added: "ChoicesUK TV is a great example of how new channels can benefit from our tailor-made,

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end-to-end service provision. With only one company to deal with for playout, connectivity, uplinking and space segment, the channel can stay focused on its business priorities while we take 24-7 responsibility for its delivery."

-Ends-

More on HEC

The company was established in 1985 by Iain Muspratt, Diane Gardner and Geoffrey Hopkins, to effect the management buy-out of Video Box Office from The Guild Organisation Limited, a specialist film production and distribution company. The company's initial objective was to exploit the video rental market in the United Kingdom and it is now the second largest video and DVD rental business in England and Wales but has successfully added significant rapidly growing sell thru activities covering DVD, Video Games, Gadgets, Mobile Phones and ancillary products.

Having started with 17 staff in 1985, the company now employs approximately 2,100 staff of which 300 staff are based at the head office and logistics centre in Peterborough. Initially, the business was centred on video rental through Video Box Office, which supplies third party outlets. The company's first owned retail store was opened in 1986 and that division of its business now trades as Choices Video from 227 outlets in England and Wales. A mail order operation for the sale of videos and DVD's, which trades as Choices Direct, was added in 1991. In 1994, the Group launched Mosaic Entertainment, a film distribution business, which primarily acquires and exploits video and DVD rights to selected feature films. An online internet based DVD rental service - Moviechoices started commercial operations in October 2003 and has been sold to LoveFilm for whom HEC provide product management and fulfilment services.

More on Arqiva (previously known as NTL Broadcast):

Arqiva, formerly the broadcast division of NTL Group, has a 50-year history in transmission and has helped pioneer the technologies of the digital age. 22 million UK homes receive ITV, Channel 4 and five via Arqiva's national transmitter networks. The company also provides transmission for most UK independent radio stations, both analogue and digital. In addition Arqiva provides end-to-end media solutions to the broadcast industry across terrestrial and satellite platforms. This includes satellite uplinking, satellite newsgathering, outside broadcast facilities, programme presentation, play-out and distribution. With a portfolio of over 2000 radio sites across the UK, Arqiva's Wireless Solutions group specialises in shared mobile and cellular network infrastructure, from conventional masts and towers, urban and in-building solutions to access circuits, managed back-haul and core network provision. Arqiva's Public Safety group provides a full range of support services to the UK police, fire, ambulance and other emergency services including design and installation of integrated telecommunications systems, radio system maintenance and fully managed services.

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