

PRESS RELEASE

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VMMa launches the internet TV platform Stieve

No less than 98 percent of those who tested Stieve responded enthusiastically. Flemings find Stieve a modern and valuable way of watching TV. They especially appreciate its ease of use. The platform is perceived as intuitive, logical and fast. Three-quarters even say they could no longer be without it. Stieve is mainly used to watch programmes slightly later than when broadcast. Over 80 percent also indicated in the test that they were prepared to pay for Stieve.

This information comes from the large-scale Stieve test launched four months back by Flanders' three major broadcasters, VRT, VMMa (50% Roularta) and SBS Belgium. Stieve is an app that enables Flemings to watch TV, both live and with a slight time delay, via their smartphones or tablets. 10,000 Flemings tested Stieve over a four-month period. Research agency InSites then quizzed testers extensively on their experiences and needs.

The three broadcasting stations initiating the service are particularly happy with the positive results. The new viewing platform clearly meets a real need of Flemings to be able to watch TV in mobile mode and slightly later than broadcast.

Stieve for the general public

Stieve has come a long way. Rumble, as it was originally named, began as innovation project by VRT to test Flemings' use of new media for slightly delayed TV viewing. The public broadcaster then invited the other channels to participate in an industry-wide test app. This was finally presented to the test audience under the new name of Stieve.

Now that the innovation path and testing phase have proven successful, the Stieve app will be offered as a paid service to all Flemings before the end of this year. VMMa has decided to take this task upon itself. For this it will set up a separate subsidiary named Stievieco (working title), fully owned by itself. The other broadcasters may well come on board at a later stage.

As in the test phase, all programmes of the three broadcasters will be available for viewing both live and slightly delayed on Stieve. Agreements on conditions and the use of the programmes are right now being concluded between VRT and SBS and the new Stieve company.

Meanwhile, Stieve testers can continue using the service. In this way in the coming weeks they can continue to watch TV via Stieve without problems.

Sandra De Preter, CEO VRT: *"VRT has played a leading role in testing slightly postponed viewing. In line with our mandate from the government we sought cooperation with the*

commercial broadcasters. This unique cooperation between public and commercial broadcasters is now launching Stievie onto the Flemish market. VRT is particularly pleased that VMMA is taking the initiative to make the new service available to all Flemings."

Peter Bossaert, CEO VMMA: "Viewing habits are changing very fast. Viewers are very receptive to innovations and all new forms of user comfort. Stievie fits perfectly into this picture. The test audience is clearly excited about Stievie and so we want to offer the whole of Flanders this new way of watching TV. VMMA is picking up the challenge and our recently launched innovation unit will continue in the coming weeks to work on launching Stievie for the general public. During this time we shall be examining when to launch, the exact content of the offering, and how to price it."

Philippe Bonamie, CEO SBS Belgium: "As a partner of the first hour, we are pleased that VMMA has taken the initiative to bring Stievie rapidly to the market. The structure as it is now gives us the best chance of success. For users, it is very important that the product and the content meet their expectations. SBS Belgium is therefore happy to make the signals of FOUR and FIVE available to Stievie."

Test results

The test shows that:

- 98 percent of test users are enthusiastic about Stievie. 78 percent say they would miss Stievie if their accounts were deleted.
- For eight out of ten users Stievie is a new way of watching TV. For two out of three Stievie represents the TV viewing of the future.
- Stievie is extensively used. Two out of three users watch Stievie for an hour or more a day. 20 percent view even two hours or more. Six in ten use Stievie to view at least one complete programme. More than half watch more TV as a result.
- Stievie is used primarily to watch programmes at slightly deferred times. 20 percent of the time Stievie serves to view live.
- People use Stievie to relax and to be informed. News and Flemish programmes in particular are viewed more via Stievie.
- Testers praise the ease of use; Stievie is intuitive, logical and responsive.
- The majority (84 percent) are willing to pay for Stievie.

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