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## German Broadcaster Considers Pay-TV Features

By ERIC PFANNER  
Published: October 28, 2009

PARIS — Challenged by a steep downturn in advertising, the German television broadcaster ProSiebenSat.1 Media said Wednesday that it planned new pay-TV services and other initiatives aimed at raising more money from viewers.

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Thomas Ebeling, chief executive of the company, told the German business newspaper Handelsblatt that ProSiebenSat.1 aimed to generate 30 percent of its revenue from sources other than advertising within five

years, roughly double the current percentage.

ProSiebenSat.1, one of two leading commercial broadcasters in Germany, along with RTL, plans to build up its video-on-demand services, among other things, Mr. Ebeling said.

Daniel Knapp, an analyst at Screen Digest, a research firm, said the move to look for new sources of revenue was “commendable,” given that advertising was likely to remain soft even when the economy improves. A proliferation of television channels gives advertisers more outlets, and audiences are also spending more time on the Internet.

But Mr. Knapp said that he thought the company would fall short of its goal, saying that he expected revenue from nonadvertising sources to reach 18 percent, rather than 30 percent, by 2014.

German viewers have been more reluctant to adopt paid services than their counterparts in Britain and some other European markets.

But Mr. Knapp said enhancements like high-definition television might allow German broadcasters to introduce some additional paid services. ProSiebenSat.1's basic channels will probably remain free for many years, he added.

Together, RTL and ProSiebenSat.1 still take in more than 80 percent of German television ad revenue. ProSiebenSat.1 is controlled by the [private equity](#) firms [Kohlberg Kravis Roberts](#) and Permira, while RTL is controlled by [Bertelsmann](#), the German media conglomerate.

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