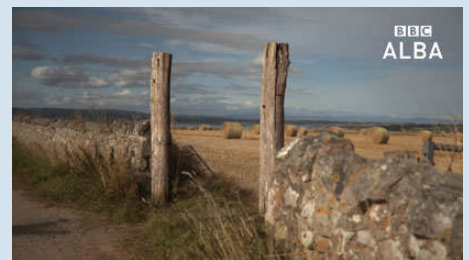




THE FIRST SIX MONTHS



April 2009

Slighe eile, sealladh ùr

a new channel for Scotland



BBC ALBA, Scotland's Gaelic television channel, launched on 19 September 2008.

ALBA, of course, means Scotland and our channel is for the viewers of Scotland and beyond, Gaelic and non-Gaelic speakers.

The significance of ALBA for Gaelic is that the channel is a major step forward in bringing Gaelic into the mainstream, sustaining and developing the language and culture.

ALBA offers international, national and local news, a comprehensive sports package, music programmes, drama and documentaries in Gaelic.

We have been inspired and greatly encouraged by the tremendous goodwill towards the channel from across Scotland and the support it has attracted from the broadcasting industry both in the UK and abroad.

It has been a very promising start for a channel that is valued greatly by its audiences, and the partnership between the BBC and MG ALBA is fully committed to making progress towards establishing BBC ALBA as an important part of public service broadcasting in Scotland.

Alasdair Morrison
Chairman, MG ALBA



BBC ALBA opening night
National Museum of Scotland, Edinburgh



Greg Hemphill
Eilbheis



Air an Rathad

Na prògraman againn

what we produce



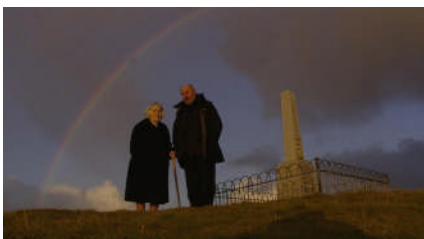
Cuide ri Cathy



ALBA Challenge Cup



Cobhair bho Anna



An Iolaire



MG ALBA Scots Trad Music Awards



Peter Manuel: deireadh an uilc?



Bliadhna Mhath Ùr!



Fiona is na Fuinn



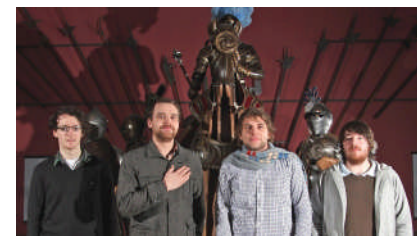
ALBA Challenge Cup



A' Chroit



A rèir na h-Aimsir



Rapal



Farpaisean chon-chaorach



An Là



Cuirm@Celtic



Trusadh: Caismeachd



Tòmas Telford: A' togail na Gaidhealtachd



Ann am bàta, nam aonar



Creating ALBA

the new Gaelic channel for Scotland

BBC ALBA is a partnership service between MG ALBA and the BBC. It is the first BBC-licensed channel to be run with a partner organisation.

The partnership delivers a tri-media Gaelic digital service comprising the new television channel BBC ALBA, the established Gaelic radio station BBC Radio nan Gaidheal, and online services including www.bbc Alba.co.uk and “watch again” facilities on the BBC iPlayer.



Alan Esslemont, Head of Content
Margaret Mary Murray, Head of Service
Donald Campbell, Chief Executive MG ALBA

Donald Campbell, Chief Executive of MG ALBA

“Our ethos is to ensure we deliver high-quality programmes across a range of genres including sport, news and current affairs, documentaries, children’s programming and education, drama and music. The channel’s premier range of home-produced programmes will serve Scottish broadcasting well with an excellent package that will be attractive to viewers throughout Scotland, reaching out across Gaelic and non-Gaelic target audiences.”

A Partnership Approach

BBC ALBA is the first BBC-licensed service to be managed within a partnership framework. By pooling resources and skills the partnership aims to unlock previously untapped potential for Gaelic and Scottish broadcasting and deliver added value to audiences and stakeholders. The partnership ethos is not solely for MG ALBA/BBC but reaches out to the rest of the industry including training, programme supply and performers with a Scotland-wide impact.

MG ALBA offices in Stornoway provide the hub for BBC ALBA channel operations and co-operate seamlessly with BBC playout at Pacific Quay in Glasgow. The daily news output has an editorial base for radio, television and online in Inverness fed by a team of video journalists from communities around Scotland and which uses Glasgow’s developed digital transmission facilities. BBC ALBA’s suppliers vary greatly in size and experience and are located across Scotland and beyond.



BBC Scotland headquarters, Glasgow



MG ALBA studio gallery, Stornoway

An luchd-amhairc

audiences, output and performance



BBC ALBA has a clear audience strategy:

- To serve Gaelic speakers – providing a credible, relevant service for native-speaking communities with full linguistic tenor and appropriate cultural distinctiveness
- To attract non-Gaelic speakers – offering added value to the Scottish audience through compelling documentaries, music programmes and sports coverage delivered in a visual and easily accessible manner supported by English subtitles

BBC ALBA aims to create national resonance with its programming reaching as deep as possible into Scottish communities, both geographic and interest, while offering international viewpoints which cross languages and cultures. Through this strategy, we hope to deliver a better service to the Gaelic audience, attract new speakers to the language and help secure a place for Gaelic in mainstream Scottish life.

BBC ALBA is at present available only on the Digital Satellite platform (Sky or Freesat) which represents just over a third of Scottish households.

The channel has ambitious audience targets stretching well beyond the traditional Gaelic-speaking population and progress towards these targets has been very promising. Since launch research amongst the Gaelic audience indicates that the proportion of Gaelic speakers accessing Gaelic television weekly has increased significantly to 72 percent (Lèirsinn). BBC ALBA Gaelic viewers typically tune in for an average of five hours during each week.

Encouragingly, BBC ALBA has managed to draw even larger numbers of non-Gaelic speakers, with an average of 5% of the national audience watching at least fifteen minutes every week. With both audiences, the full potential of BBC ALBA will be realised with widened transmission on the digital terrestrial network and cable.

Online

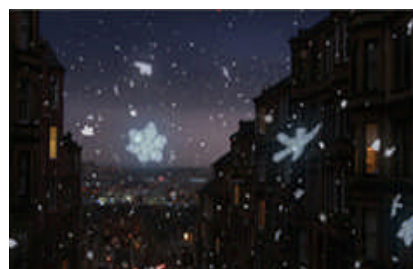
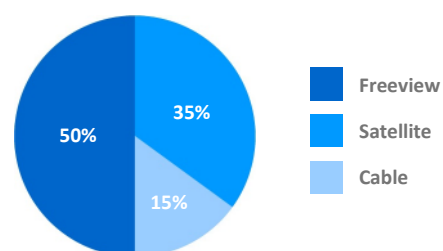
The prime audience website is www.bbc Alba.co.uk which offers many facilities for learners and Gaels alike. 10 hours of BBC ALBA programming is available every week to “watch again” on BBC iPlayer, and is available at www.bbc.co.uk/iplayer/tv/bbc_alba.

MG ALBA’s website www.mgalba.com provides a community and industry interface which will be enhanced further, particularly for new talent support.

Radio

Programming on radio offers the audience complementary scheduling and allows the partnership to maximise the impact of spend across different platforms. BBC Radio nan Gàidheal, with accompanying text and information graphics, offers a sustaining service when BBC ALBA is not on air. MG ALBA also commissions Gaelic programming for local and community radio.

Share of digital penetration in Scotland



BBC ALBA channel idents



Bho sgrìobt gu sgàilean

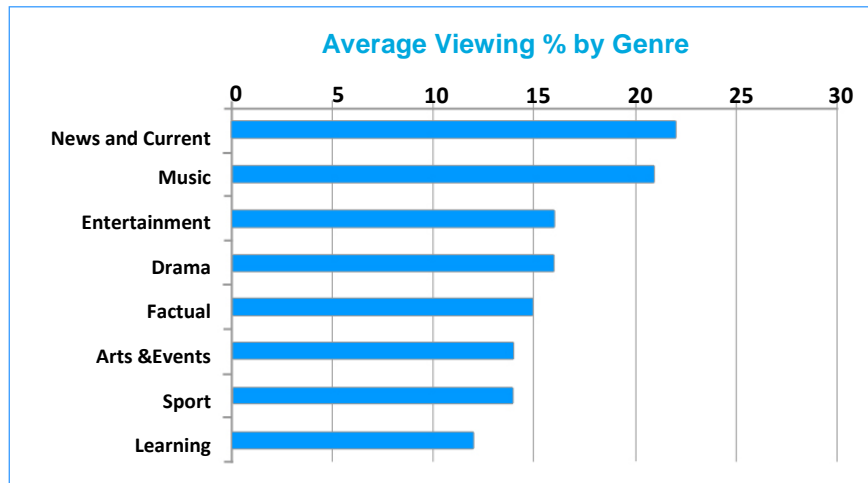
the commissioning process

The BBC ALBA partnership commissions television, radio and online content and operates a dual commissioning strategy, based on volume agreements and commissioning rounds.

Volume agreements with established suppliers – covering sport, documentaries, music, entertainment and dubbing – provide the core schedule requirements at an affordable cost and enable suppliers to plan for the long term.

Commissioning rounds seek the best ideas from all of the production sector for specific schedule slots and encourage new companies to produce Gaelic content.

Three commissioning rounds have taken place with an average of over 150 submissions received per round resulting in an average of 15 commissions. Commissions have been awarded to 28 production companies, eight of which were new to Gaelic production.



Na Bonnachain



Cùl nan Dorsan



Sear gu Siar

Creating tomorrow's Gaelic digital content



Training

MG ALBA is committed to training and development initiatives and has focused its attention on projects that deliver tangible results in a short period of time. These include:

- Funding for eight students a year on the Gaelic Television Training Course at Sabhal Mòr Ostaig
- Annual FilmG short film competition for professionals, young people and new entrants to the industry
- Funding for a Gaelic writer to attend Glasgow Caledonian University's MA in TV Fiction Writing, beginning September 2009
- Matching the funding for continuing professional development courses for industry professionals in independent production companies as well as freelancers
- Four talent development projects in Gaelic-speaking communities and at Fàs in the Isle of Skye - Sgàilean Ùr, Rèidio Òigridh, Stòiridhean nan Gaidheal and Òigridh nan Eilean

FilmG

FilmG is MG ALBA's Gaelic online digital shorts competition aimed at discovering and nurturing new talent in all areas of audiovisual content production. The inaugural competition, launched last year, was an outstanding success and attracted more than 50 entries, a third of which were submitted by young people.

The project is generously supported and endorsed by film industry professionals and offers online support as well as training workshops. Last year's mentors and tutors included BAFTA award-winning directors Don Coutts and Annie Griffin.

Prizes included valuable production development contracts for winners in the professional and new entrant categories, and training workshops for the winning teams from schools.

FilmG, supported by Highlands and Islands Enterprise, is now an annual competition with online presence through its dedicated website at www.filmg.co.uk.



Award winners at Castlebay High School



FilmG training workshops



Channel presenter Fiona MacKenzie





A' coimhead air adhart

new goals for the next six months



Aifric



Eilbheis



Peter Manuel: deireadh an uilc?

BBC ALBA has delivered over 500 new hours of originated programmes in the first six months. A new autumn programme schedule will be launched in September 2009 delivering a diverse range of quality programming for the Gaelic and Scottish audiences.

The continued support and development of the Gaelic broadcast sector remain key priorities for the partnership, including the training of new on-screen and off-screen talent.

Our key strategic goals which will bring about the full realisation of the potential of BBC ALBA are:

1. Universal carriage in Scotland for BBC ALBA with due prominence on EPGs in Scotland
2. A long-term funding settlement that will allow for investment and planning

MG ALBA

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MG ALBA is the operating name of Seirbheis nam Meadhanan Gàidhlig (Gaelic Media Service).

Chairman:

Alasdair Morrison

Chief Executive:

Donald Campbell

Head of Content:

Alan Esslemont

Head of Operations & Finance:

Neil Graham

