Entertainment meets education in the islands

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ABSTRACT

Roll‘em Productions was the first film and video company to establish itself in Palau. In 2007, Roll’em productions introduced Oceania Television Network (OTV) and began serving the Palauan community with shows that provide entertainment and education. As a media pioneer, Roll’em Productions continues to produce high end and cutting-edge media of all kinds. It is Roll’em Productions/OTV’s commitment, through media, to preserve the region’s identity—that is collectively its history, culture and natural environment. In this workshop, we introduced several projects including GEF Pacific IWRM Project, Social issues in the Micronesia region and “Stepping Stones” Program.

Keywords: Islands • Micronesia • Oceania Television Network (OTV) • Palau • Roll’em Productions

INTRODUCTION

Roll’em Productions was the first film and video company to establish itself in Palau. With a state of the art facility, it is fully equipped to meet the highest quality video and audio production needs. In 2007, Roll’em productions introduced Oceania Television Network (OTV) and began serving the Palauan community with provocative shows that provide entertainment and education. Later on, OTV began anchoring local news and increasing its program line-up. As a media pioneer, Roll’em Productions continues to produce high end and cutting-edge media of all kinds from print material to commercial advertisements from film to documentaries, all are geared at enlightening and empowering the people of Palau and beginning this year also in the Micronesian region. It is Roll’em Productions/OTV’s commitment, through media, to preserve the region’s identity that is collectively its history, culture and natural environment. Through the years in the media industry it has become evident to our company that it is educating the region about itself that has become our most important role.
PROJECTS

**GEF Pacific IWRM Project**

One of my favorite projects is this one with SOPAC: Pacific Island countries have uniquely fragile water resources due to their small size, lack of natural storage, competing land use, and vulnerability to natural hazards. In most Pacific countries, even small variations in water supply can have a significant impact on health, quality of life, and economic development. Entitled, “Implementing Sustainable Water Resources and Wastewater Management in Pacific Island Countries” (GEF Pacific IWRM Project) this Global Environment Facility (GEF) funded project is being executed by the Pacific Islands Applied Geoscience Commission (SOPAC) in cooperation with 14 Pacific Island countries. The project is developing “Ridge to Reef – Community to Catchment” IWRM in the participating countries. Roll’em Productions has done five documentaries with SOPAC on water conservation and management in the Micronesia region. We have done videos for the Federated States of Micronesia, Palau, and the Republic of the Marshall Islands.
Fig. 2. (Left, Right) Scenes from “Implementing Sustainable Water Resources and Wastewater Management in Pacific Island Countries”.

Fig. 3. (Left, Right) Scenes from “Fish for the future-Respecting and managing Palau’s spawning aggregations”.

Fig. 4. (Left, Right) Scenes from FSM (Federated States of Micronesia) water management video.
“Stepping Stones” Program
Roll’em Productions has worked with the Secretariat of the Pacific Community to produce a documentary video that introduces their “Stepping Stones” Program to the Micronesia region that was so successful in the south pacific. Stepping Stones is a workshop series designed as a tool to help promote sexual and reproductive health. The training package addresses questions of gender, sexuality, HIV/AIDS, gender violence, communication and relationship skills. It is also a life-skills training package, covering many aspects of our lives, including why we behave in the ways we do, how gender, generation and other issues influence this, and ways in which we can change our behaviour, if we want to.

Fig. 5. Scenes from ”Stepping Stones”. 
Social issues in the Micronesia region

Another project is a documentary film we produced with the SPC to address social issues in the Micronesia region: As the influences of western society continue to spread across these islands, a culture clash between local and western traditions has created a new breed of social issues. Facing them for the first time, many Pacific Islanders lack the experience, knowledge, and tools to cope with these problems. Gender inequality, lack of communication skills, and lack of education continue to hinder Pacific Islanders from effectively addressing these issues.

We have numerous other projects that tackle issues such as climate change, which has become one of the biggest real concerns in our region. Also, environmental conservation within the region is a major theme. We’ve worked with the Palau Conservations Society to produce documentaries and promotional ads that strengthen conservation awareness. Nature is not only our major source of revenue it is the source of our culture, and base of our history and the reflection of our identity. Media is vital in strengthening this relationship and we are at a point in our history where responsible media is crucial.

Fig. 6. (Left) Environmental News update. (Right) Advertisement for locally made products.

COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS AT THE WORKSHOP

Maya: I can see from the videos that you and your company is very enthusiastic at finally being able to inform the people of Palau or the people of the region and linking each other’s problems. I hope you further success and also hoping that these links that you’ve created will bring more to the Palau people.
Kazuo: Thank you. That’s quite a comment. Actually that is very true. This is the first of its kind to connect these islands. Although we are very close, we have different languages, mostly different culture but when it all comes down, our culture and our lives are based on our environment and it’s really what we have in common, it’s really all we have. For the first time we have a medium, a vehicle for all the big policies to come together, to think as one. It’s what makes that region stronger rather than fighting.

Sugamata: I’m a virologist interested in infectious diseases so I’d like to ask Mr. Kazuo. In your presentation you showed the number of patients infected by HIV/AIDS but I’d like to know the percentage of patient’s age wise because AIDS has transition time.

Kazuo: We at our company have been working closely with the public health in Palau so I speak only for Palau. We are very close with the HIV prevention program. It is very privileged information that they give but it is public information to know exactly how many people in Palau are positive with HIV and it is so far 8 out of 6000~13000 people. It has grown but the problem with Palau and these islands is that nobody is brave enough to get tested so that number isn’t really approximate.

Sugamata: You said last night that the population size is at about 16,000.

Kazuo: The last census was in 2004 and it has increased.

Sugamata: I am worried if the person infected with HIV means they suffer from other infectious disease such as hepatitis B and syphilis.

Kazuo: One person died from hepatitis.

Sugamata: You also showed about chlamydia infection.

Kazuo: Yes, the Stepping Stones program. That video in full high lights the infectious diseases in the islands. It shows that going through stepping stones you are offered resources both educational and medical.

Sugamata: Originally, the first case of HIV infection appeared in 1981 in United States. When was the first case in Palau?
Kazuo: The first case in Palau as in the first person who came out, whom I know personally, came out in 1993 and died three years later. He went to schools to talk to people how important it is to come out, it’s a disease that should not be hidden in a country this small and the infrastructure is very poor.