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**Babelgum** in studio talks over content

Kate Bulkley  
4:40pm



Web TV provider **Babelgum** will offer users 100s of hours of content when it launches later this year. This will include sports and fashion shows from IMG and news from Reuters and Associated Press. It is also in discussions with some major studios about content deals.

"We are talking to some of the big companies but at the moment I cannot name anyone," **Babelgum** chief executive Eric Lumer told *Broadcast*.

The company is being backed financially by Silvia Scaglia, the founder and former chief executive of Italian IPTV company Fastweb, and is a direct competitor to Joost in the nascent peer-to-peer TV on PC market.

**Babelgum** has already spent some €10 million to get its web streaming technology up and running.

Joost, formerly known as The Venice Project, is the brainchild of Janus Friis and Niklas Zennstrom, the duo that brought the world internet calling company Skype and music sharing site Kazaa.

Both Joost and **Babelgum** are currently running technical trials and both ventures have plans to launch to consumers later this year. They both use peer-to-peer technology, which will allow the video to be delivered much more quickly to consumer's PCs than if it was all coming from a few dedicated servers.

Joost raised its profile substantially in February, signing up Viacom as a "key content partner" to offer a range of brands and TV and film programming, from MTV Networks, BET Networks and Paramount Pictures.

Both services will offer their content free to consumers, supported by advertising, but Lumer believes **Babelgum**'s model will be more attractive to content owners.

It will offer minimum guaranteed revenues at least until there are enough advertisers on the service to make revenue-share deals worthwhile. **Babelgum** will also do straight licensing deals in the range of €300 to €2,000 per hour, depending on the content, but is not expecting to do many exclusive deals.

Lumer believes attracting smaller, niche content is very important because of the long-tail theory of the web, which says there are meaningful audiences for niche content.

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2 March 2007

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