

BROADCASTING

Nielsen changes the channel on official ratings post

SAENGWIT KEWALEEWONGSATORN

In a surprise move, Nielsen Thailand, long the country's dominant TV ratings and measurement company, has turned down a chance to join the selection process to establish an official TV ratings agency, due to be completed in June.

The seven-day application period for interested candidates closed last Friday with only three companies submitting proposals — German research firm GfK, Tokyo-based Video Research and Britain's Kantar Media.

Nielsen Thailand earlier said it asked permission from its headquarters to apply, but still had not heard back when the submission period ended.

This means the new data for digital TV ratings, expected to go live in July 2016, come from a different company for the first time in 25 years.

However, the ratings report from Nielsen Thailand will be adopted by the industry until June 2016, as the survey process will take about a year to complete.

Wannee Rattanaphon, chairwoman of the Media Research Bureau (MRB), said after it briefed interested agencies about TV ratings and measurement proposals, their

presentations on research approaches and pricing were scheduled from May 25-26, with the results announced in June.

The terms of reference for ratings and research agencies are focused mainly on multi-platform audience measurement to keep up with market and consumer behaviour changes. However, the MRB will not impose home panels.

The three research companies will have to propose appropriate panel instalments based on statistics principles. The judgement criteria is based on research approach (40%), pricing (30%), experience (20%) and software (10%).

The winning company will get a five-year contract with a renewal option for another five years. It will be audited by French independent auditor CESP.

Once a new ratings agency is chosen, it must start its survey work, design a large face-to-face questionnaire to define the population characteristics and find potential homes for panel installation in July.

Ms Wannee said unlike with the existing process that favoured media owners, clients who subscribed to the ratings data would have equal access to all data, enabling TV firms to control their costs via fixed contracts with the new ratings agency.