

# Q&A with Stingray's Eric Boyko

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*Canadian Stingray is fast expanding with its music services for platform operators. They just announced a rebranding exercise in Europe and are launching a dedicated streaming music app. Broadband TV News spoke to Eric Boyko is co-founder and president (since 2007) of Stingray.*

**For the past few years this relatively small Canadian company has been on a buying spree, including Music Choice Europe and the Dutch Archibald Media Group (XLnt Radio and Lite TV) and more. Can you tell a bit about your strategy and the thoughts behind it?**

Yes, we started off in 2007 as a start-up in Montreal Canada. We have been since looking at opportunities to expand beyond our borders and merge with companies that already have a footprint in other parts of the world. Our main focus of the various acquisitions made throughout the years have been to find companies that offer similar

products as ours so that we can build on what already exists. We have been very selective in the process. One consistent element remains across all the companies we have acquired, is that they are all focused on music or entertainment. We have now successfully grown our product offer to more than 113 million subscribers in 130 countries. We have now acquired more than 18 companies in the last 8 years.

**Stingray is not just a video music channel or a concert on-demand service, but you have quite a portfolio of products. Can you explain?**

As mentioned Stingray is more than just music channels. We offer a series of products across a variety of brands. Our most well-known brand is Stingray Music. Stingray Music provides TV subscribers with a wide selection of uninterrupted music channels. Each channel is professionally curated by expert programmers. We have also created an exciting look and feel to the screen both for cable and IPTV. Stingray Music also offers subscribers the same great music on the go with the Stingray Music Mobile App and the Stingray Web Player.

Stingray Concerts is another exciting product in our offer. It is the most widely distributed Stingray service, available in 80 million households. We provide concerts from all the best artists in the world right in the comfort of their home. The service is offer On Demand, through a special programmed linear channel and with easy navigation in a TV App.

Stingray Music Videos providers consumers with the latest and greatest chart topping music videos for free as part of their TV subscription. Subscribers can access the content On Demand or through a recently launched TV App.

Stingray Karaoke brings the fun of karaoke into the home. What better than to spend time with the family singing karaoke. The global phenomenon has gained lots of attention within the past few years and we are giving our subscribers access to songs they want to sing. The service is available On Demand, on mobile and though a TV App.

Stingray Lite TV is the only channel of its kind in the world. It is a true non-stop music videos channel. The linear channel features special programming segments and highlights the best of the best when it comes to pop music videos.

Stingray Ambiance is exactly what the name refers to. The linear channel and On Demand service offer a true walk through the day. Beautiful scenery is displayed on the channel, accompanied by natural sounds and harmonious music.

**The music market looks like being taken over by Spotify, Deezer, and the likes – what is the place of Stingray in this highly competitive market?**

Stingray is first and foremost a one stop shop for TV operators curating music and videos for TV listeners worldwide. We appeal to 90+% of the population. We are amongst the most listened to speciality channels on television. We adapt our content locally to operators and listeners. With TV everywhere, TV subscribers now have access to music on the go FREE with their TV subscriptions. No ads, no talk, just music. Our offering is quite different. We offer value added products to subscribers already signed up for a TV package. We do offer stand-alone products for those clients who wish to purchase products and take part in the Stingray experience.

**Can you tell a bit more about one of your products, which is quite unique, the Karaoke Channel?**

Stingray Karaoke is the product that we initially founded the company on. Stingray Karaoke is the world's largest catalogue of licensed sound-a-like songs. The service offers amateurs the opportunity to sing along to all their favourite tracks. New songs added to the catalogue on a monthly basis. Each original karaoke video offers high quality scrolling lyrics to help singers intuitively match the lyrics. The service is available On Demand, online, as a TV and mobile app and as a TV App on smart TV's.

**In some European countries consumers complain about the quality of digital radio – what are the technical parameters Stingray is using?**

Stingray is generally using higher bitrates for their audiochannels then the average digital radiochannel. Therefore the audioquality of our channels is higher. If the provider has sufficient bandwidth on his distribution platform we can provide even higher bitrates on request to serve our listeners with the highest possible quality.

**It looks like you have not all your products in all markets – how are you working to grow your reach?**

Our offering for TV operators and businesses worldwide has become so strong that we are the leading provider in many regions of the world. Our reach will grow both organically through new product innovation and as well through acquisitions.

In addition, we are looking towards expanding in areas of the world where we are not present. Namely, Africa, parts of Asia and the Middle East. We have representative working out of a multitude of cities around the world including; Tel Aviv, Amsterdam, Belgium, Germany, Miami, Los Angeles, Singapore and of course in Montreal.

**Is there anything else you want to add?**

Stingray's success cannot only be attributed to the rapid expansion but in our technical product innovation and our musical programming skillset.

The stingray team of engineers have developed award winning applications and have successfully launched some of the most advanced TV application with some of the world's largest TV operators.

The Stingray Music team is comprised of 60+ music programmers located across the world. They provide the life behind the music. Their expert curation and locally sourced content makes our offer much more pertinent to our global listeners. Stingray brings you All Good Vibes!

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