

Information Report - Media

Television and BBC

In March 2011 we went on a class-trip to London for six days. Milena, Daniel and I worked on the theme "Media". In London we divided up our themes into "The Royal National Theatre", "Television and BBC" and "Local Entertainment".

I will concentrate on television in Britain and the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC).

One day we had a backstage tour in the BBC television Centre with two guides whose names were Kevin and Kay. They showed us different parts of the Television Centre and we received a small insight into the processes in a TV-studio.

Most of the report's information is based upon the BBC Television Centre itself, but it also contains some information from the BBC's homepage and wikipedia.com .

The purpose of this report is to inform about the following aspects:

- television in general
- BBC and its history
- BBC Backstage Tour

Television in general:

Television is a well-known mass media which has been available since the late 1920's.

In the United Kingdom the first British television broadcast was made by Baird Television's and was transmitted over the BBC radio transmitter.

Since the founding of television a lot of things have changed: firstly, only some rich people and families could have a television at home. However, television became a media which was placed in homes, businesses and institutions. Notably, television is used for entertainment and news.

Since the 1970's there has been a further technical development. First, there were video cassettes, then laserdiscs and today everyone uses DVD's or Blue-Ray Discs.

BBC and its history:

The British Broadcasting Corporation or as it is known BBC is a public broadcasting service in the United Kingdom which includes radio, television and other media.

What is more, the BBC is one of the largest broadcasting companies in the world. All in all, 23.000 people work for the BBC.

The British Broadcasting Company was founded on 18th October in 1922 by John Reith, Cecil Lewis, Arthur Burrows and Stanton Jefferies in London. It was founded as an independent radio station. On 14th November in 1922 the first radio show by the BBC was broadcast from a studio in London. A few days later they transmitted from Birmingham and Manchester as well.

The founder wanted to create a radio station and a TV-channel which informed and entertained the people. Furthermore, they wanted to be independent of the government and advertising.

In 1927 the British Broadcasting Company changed its name to the British Broadcasting Corporation.

On 2nd November in 1936 there was the first regular TV broadcasting by the BBC.

The BBC World Services broadcasts in 33 different languages around the world. Because of that the BBC quite successful and recognized. Although their vision is "to be the most creative organisation in the world".

BBC Backstage Tour:

In the BBC Television Centre in London visitors can gain an insight into the BBC's daily routines. Firstly, it can be said that the BBC Television Centre is an impressive place to be.

In the Television Centre producers, TV-presenters cameramen and a lot of other people are work every day for an informative and entertaining TV-programm. 20% of the 3000 employees from London are working just in the field of news. BBC enable the people to watch news on TV twenty-four hours a day. Furthermore, they also give weather information or news about the stock market. What makes this aspect so important is the fact that BBC is a very serious and reliable news station which has correspondents in nearly every country of the world.



BBC Television Centre

It also can be said that BBC uses a lot of modern techniques like Ceefax *¹, modern camera techniques or the green screen.

In the light of the evidence drawn from the BBC backstage tour, it can be said that the BBC uses the green screen for the weather information. The presenter stands in front of the green screens and explains the weather forecast.

Later the producer exchanges the green screen for the map with the weather forecast. What makes this aspect so interesting is the fact that the TV audience does not notice this exchange and the techniques which make these TV programmes possible.



A luxurious dressing room

Another interesting aspect is that the BBC has got a lot of famous and popular visitors like Jennifer Lopez, Mariah Cary, Elton John or U2. It can be said that these celebrities have got the chance to get a dressing room for relaxing or preparing for their appearances in the TV-show. On the one hand there are simple dressing rooms which only have some sofas. But the stars have the chance to be on their own . On the other hand there are some dressing rooms which are very luxurious. Those have got their own shower, a television and some other luxurious things. Because of that the celebrities can relax without any worries.

*¹ = BBC's teletext information service

Finally it can be said that BBC has a lot of possibilities to produce successful TV shows like “Doctor Who“.

What makes this aspect so impressive is the fact that BBC has got some big production rooms which are normally grey.

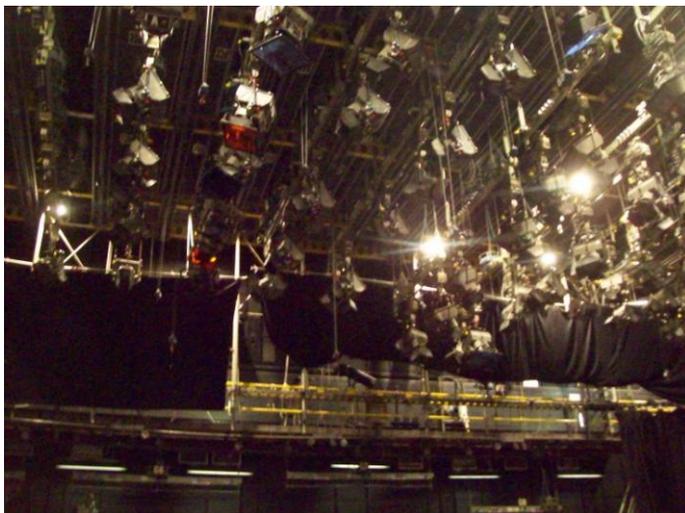


One of the big production rooms

But if they plan a new show, they will paint the floor with a special kind of colour and they will use some props and lights to create a new TV studio with a good atmosphere. The next day they clean the room and they can use it for another production which has got a quite different appearance than the other one the day before.

The producer could use the same room day after day, but the audience does not recognize that it is always the same room.

What is more, the BBC producers use a lot of modern cameras which are of a quite good quality. That is one reason for the success of the British Broadcasting Corporation.



In the production room there are a lot of cameras on the ceiling because the producers need a lot of different cameras.

On the whole you can say that BBC is one of the most important and influential broadcasting companies in the world. The reason for that is that the British Broadcasting Corporation has got a lot of modern technical devices like Ceefax or the green screen. An impressive aspect is the fact that there are a lot of people behind the scenes who make TV possible.

The most significant aspect appears to be the fact that BBC uses some production rooms which are very big. They have the possibility to change this room every day and to use this room for quite different kinds of productions.

In general it can be said that the British Broadcasting Corporation is an independent company. On the one hand they are independent of the government which means that they are not controlled by politics like the Prime Minister. The BBC have the chance to report critically on political decisions and the audience has got the possibility to get an unaffected reporting. Therefore the TV audience can form their own opinion which is very important. On the other hand the BBC is independent of advertising which means that they don't get money to advertise products. They haven't got to focus on single products in one of their shows. In conclusion this independence gives the BBC the possibility to be critical and honest. As a result the audience is well-informed. The BBC's mission is "to enrich people's lives with programmes and services that inform, educate and entertain". Finally, the BBC achieves its goal.

It also has to be mentioned that the BBC gives groups the chance to take a look inside the BBC Television Centre, but what appeared us as a negative point is that there is no possibility to have a look inside the real television studios.

Finally it can also be said that BBC entertains the groups during the backstage tour because the students have the chance to create their own TV-show. This show includes a news-flash and quiz which is done by the students themselves. Furthermore, two other students work "behind" the scenes by playing jingles or video shots at the right time.

In conclusion it can be said that the BBC backstage tour was an impressive and interesting part of the class-trip.

Quellen:

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/>

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/BBC>

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Television>