



Think about it

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Published on May 29, 2008

It's a "brave new digital world" out there, a perfect time to tap into every available outlet to spread knowledge, share ideas, and make people think, according to the chief executive officer of TVOntario.

Lisa de Wilde, who was appointed CEO of the province's educational television broadcaster in 2005, was in Cambridge last Friday to discuss how the world of digital media is playing a role in changes at TVO.

"Digital technology is changing everything about media..." said de Wilde.

The way TVO creates, produces and delivers its programs are evolving and transforming in order to meet a greater audience, said the CEO.

"Our mandate is not the highest (rating) numbers, it's quality."

More interactive online content, including podcasts, is helping to equip adults, parents and children with alternative platforms to access TVO's educational content, she added.

"And our specialty is making people think," said de Wilde, later adding that's why TVO's slogan is: Makes you think.

Podcasts are downloadable audio files that allow people to listen to things like lectures or debates that a person may not attend but wants to hear.

Discussion created through panel discussions seen on *The Agenda with Steve Paikin*, TVO's popular current affairs program, are now taken a step further with online audio and video podcasts by Paikin, along with his own online blog.

Mayor Doug Craig, along with local leaders in business, technology and education attended the "interactive session" at Cambridge's civic administration building, where de Wilde discussed the reasons behind forming partnerships with the province's municipalities and regions.

With the provincial government funding about \$50 million per year, Ontario taxpayers each contribute about \$3 annually to keep TVO up and running, noted de Wilde. The remaining \$10 million needed to operate is found by way of sponsors and donations.

The passionate-sounding CEO said it takes more than one entity to keep citizens engaged, and that's why building or creating partnerships with the province's business, education, and technology sectors is another key to ensuring TVO's programs make people think.

"I'm asking you to help me take that message further," de Wilde said to the small crowd.

During the "interactive" portion of last week's session, Claudette Millar - former Cambridge mayor and acting



Lisa de Wilde, CEO of TVO, leads an open discussion at city hall as Mayor Doug Craig (right) listens in.

regional councillor - noted that not everyone has access to the Internet. She stressed that those messages meant to engage citizens still need to reach those people who don't surf the web.

In response to Millar's concern, de Wilde noted that the number of people joining the online world is always growing, and that's part of the reason why TVO's material is growing.

TVO has operated for more than 30 years and currently airs more than 100 programs.

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