

## **Cellcast Group appointed by Dubai TV to provide voting solution for *Najm Al Khaleej* television series**

**Facilities cover 15 countries across the Middle East, the Gulf States and North Africa**

LONDON : May 23, 2005 – The Cellcast Group today announced that it has been appointed to facilitate and manage voting for the full series of the new TV Talent show *Najm Al Khaleej* (“Star of the Gulf”), transmitted on Dubai TV’s U.A.E.-based satellite channel to the Middle East and North Africa.

The singing talent search series was launched by Dubai TV on April 29, and will culminate in a grand final on July 8. The series is modelled after the internationally renowned American programme, *Nashville Star*, now in its third season on USA Network, and whose copyright has been acquired by Dubai TV.

“The twenty contestants for *Najm Al Khaleej* were drawn from 800 applicants from the UAE, Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Iraq, Oman and Yemen” said Adel Omar, Production Manager at Dubai Television. The “Star of the Gulf” will be chosen by the regionwide TV audience voting via SMS, IVR and Internet, together with a judging committee comprising three celebrated Gulf entertainment stars. The winner will receive a grand prize of Dh1.5 million (US\$400,000).

Cellcast’s interactive voice response (IVR) and SMS solutions cover the selection process and elimination series in fifteen countries across the Middle East, the Gulf States and North Africa.

Dubai TV chose Cellcast based on the company’s track record in managing similar projects in the Middle East and North Africa, most recently Fremantlemedia’s hugely popular *Pop Idol* format which has been aired for two consecutive years on the Lebanese-based Future Television satellite channel.

“We are proud to have been selected to facilitate the audience participation in this exciting new series,” said Pascal Dufour, Business Development Director, Cellcast Middle East. “We have developed considerable expertise working with multiple GSM and fixed-line operators in the region, and the particular network infrastructure and technical interface constraints.”

“The considerable voting revenues generated by participation TV formats such as *Najm Al Khaleej* provide an excellent example of how Cellcast is working with broadcast partners to capture new sources of income in an increasingly competitive advertising and consumer market”, said Andrew Wilson, Joint Chief Executive at the Cellcast Group.

The Cellcast Group's applications and programming are widely distributed on major channels and platforms worldwide, including Sky TV in the UK; Canal +, France 2 and 3 in France; Future TV in the Middle East; Star TV in India; and across China and South-East Asia on AsiaSat 3S

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*The Cellcast Group is a leading global provider of interactive mobile content and participation television applications in the fast-growing multi-platform digital entertainment sector. The Group directly serves both industry and consumers through leveraging TV as a contextual platform to drive new revenue streams in an environment transformed by the accelerating convergence of television, IT and telecommunications.*