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ACADEMEDIA AND MTG TEAM UP FOR EDUCATIONAL VENTURES VIA TV AND NEW MEDIA

AcadeMedia, Scandinavia's leading educational enterprise in new media and information technology, and the MTG company Viasat, responsible for the distribution of TV3, ZTV, TV1000, and other channels, plan a joint initiative for distance training via TV and new media.

The venture, which the companies hope will become the leading provider of distance training in the Scandinavian market, will include specially made training programs transmitted over Viasat's existing TV channels and over the Internet.

The collaboration will begin Friday May 28 with a training series intended for the graphics industry, advertising agencies, and publishers that was created by AcadeMedia's subsidiary MacMeckarna. The series deals with new software in the field, including discussions of the programs' advantages and disadvantages by instructors from MacMeckarna and the industry.

To complement the series, an interactive meeting place will be opened on-line at http://kunskap.nu, where participants can review sections over the Internet, download exercises, access additional illustrations, and carry on discussions with instructors and other students.

Viasat will be responsible for transmission over the same satellite transponders that carry ZTV, so that the training programs will be available to four million viewers in Sweden from the very start. Consequently, this is an unrivaled format in terms of distribution, affording excellent opportunities for companies that choose AcadeMedia's and Modern Times Group MTG AB's training system in the future.

"AcadeMedia and MTG will be able to create a lot of new, beneficial, and cost-effective kinds of training this way," says Claes Magnusson, knowledge manager at AcadeMedia and one of the driving forces behind the project.

"We are pleased to have the opportunity to work in partnership with MTG and Viasat on the development of new media and information technology. Their long-term experience and solid knowledge of what options are already available and workable today convinced us to choose this route for our future educational initiatives," says Jörgen Bladh, president of AcadeMedia.

"This Scandinavian collaboration, with a partner like AcadeMedia, adds a new dimension to MTG and Viasat. For some time now, we have wanted to broaden the use of our distribution platforms, and this venture allows us to demonstrate that interactive training fits perfectly into our existing distribution options," says Peder Ramel, president of Viasat.

AcadeMedia and MTG now offer all of Sweden's companies, colleges, and organizations entirely new options for cost-effective training for their own employees or for customers, regardless of the field.

During the past few years, AcadeMedia's subsidiary Gravity has produced more than 400 different training projects distributed on CD-ROM, DVD, or over the Internet. The company serves a clientele including Ericsson, IKEA, Gambro, Pharmacia, Aftonbladet, the Federation of Swedish Industries and Trelleborg.

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"By collaborating this way, we are also demonstrating that training via TV, for example, does not require a new, digital terrestrial network. We are convinced that companies prefer a form of distribution that already exists and works, and for which the programs can already be received by millions of viewers all over the country," notes Pelle Törnberg, president of MTG.

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Modern Times Group MTG AB has seven business areas: Viasat Broadcasting (free-to-air and pay TV channels in nine countries), Radio (seven networks in five countries), New Media (the Everyday interactive TV portal, Internet portal, Mobile portal, and teletext services), Publishing (financial news and information services), Modern Interactive (home shopping, e-commerce, and logistics), SDI Media (subtitling and dubbing services), and Modern Studios (content production and library).

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