

Fashion on the go

Michel Adam, president and founder of FashionTV, talks about the mobile app, Fashiontv+

Business-savvy Michel Adam's enthusiasm for diversification and competitiveness have led cable channel FashionTV — which he owns and has managed since 1997 — to becoming a much-talked-about global player.

Since FashionTV's inception, he has added to his lifestyle brand a diverse number of products, the latest designed especially for fashion aficionado and enthusiasts alike — an app called Fashiontv+.

It is a balmy midweek afternoon when *Life* caught up with the larger-than-life, Polish-born businessman in his hotel suite in the heart of Bangkok. With a firm handshake, he ushers us into the study and gets right down to business by sharing details about Fashiontv+, the latest addition to his FashionTV brand, with much zeal.

We are barely seated when the television magnate begins sharing about Fashiontv+, a free app with 12 around-the-clock channels geared to large audience.

Content provided includes channels named Fashion Paris, Midnight Secrets, F-Men, Hair&Makeup, FashionTV L'Original, Photoshoots, Fashion Films, Fashion Weeks, Fashiontv Global, Bridal Fashion, Model's Fitness and Top Models.

The channels are all streams and can be downloaded from the App Store and Google Play, and there are two packages to choose from.

Confident of having a successful product in hand, he muses: "There is a little of everything for our audience in here."

"Mobiles serve a multipurpose function today, so our app will bring fashion entertainment a step closer to home. With the F-Men channel, I hope we are offering another side of entertainment to our women audience, who often complain that FashionTV is catered more towards a male audience, due to presence of scantily clad models on the catwalk [laughs]. This said, I would like to add that Fashiontv+ channels are designed for the entertainment of the entire family."

Dressed in a simple yet eye-catching long white shirt, with an embroidered letter *F* with golden glitter on it and loose trousers from his clothesline, Adam believes in keeping fashion simple. While he isn't too much into brand names when it comes



Michel Adam.

to clothes, his shoe selection tells a different story.

Adam's growing business empire covers every lifestyle aspect one can imagine; hotels, cafes, clothes lines, property development — to name just a few. He admits that much of his success is due to having the right people for the right jobs. From an outsider's point of view, the man has

mastered the art of keeping ahead of the competition.

To understand the challenges Adam has faced to reach to where he is today, one has to go back in time to when he first started FashionTV.

It was the late 1990s, and he had begun a cafe business in Paris. The circumstances that followed very much set in motion a

career move that would lead to Adam pioneering the fashion-television industry.

Right off the bat he takes us back to the time when Thailand was still a relatively emerging tourist destination with the French.

"Thailand was very popular back then, so we had set up projectors in our cafe to show all the popular beach destinations

and tourist attractions, all to get patrons into a holiday feel," recalls Adam, who once had a garment business in Thailand.

"Soon afterwards, we had designers request to use our facilities for their after-parties, which turned out to be successful because we catered to their requirements — we had all the mechanical equipment available for such events. Back then

fashion on television was focused more on clothes than models, so I came up with the idea to do something different — yes, focus on the models.

"By focusing on the models, we touched on something nobody was doing at the time. People are interested in models as much as they are on the clothes. Top models are huge celebrities and the public wants to know them, so when we started our 24-hours FashionTV channel, the feedback from the public was positive."

One of the challenges that arose from his new venture was getting his team to edit a lengthy 20-minute catwalk clip down to three minutes.

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"It was a mammoth task, as we had to edit to primarily make it look alluring, attractive and sexy. Back then people were also not internet-savvy, and rapid distribution of information was not well-received. So in the midst of such worries, we were able to compact the highlights in the allotted time."

With every new venture comes a set of challenges, Adam says, so weathering them takes perseverance and a determination to succeed.

Speaking in retrospect, he says: "We were able to work through the glitches, and our shows began to get noticed. I believe FashionTV was well-received because it was a new product back then, similar to MTV — short clips featuring various dimensions of fashion, style, beauty, fashion trends and more."

"FashionTV's success was short clips with good music and beautiful girls, and fashion shows with clothes that the public can easily [find] at their local department stores."