

Press Release, 3.10.2007

Martin Wüthrich takes over as Head of SUISA's Communication Department

SUISA has appointed a new Head of Communication: on 1 November 2007, Martin Wüthrich will take over from Roy Oppenheim who is retiring.

SUISA, the Swiss Society for the Rights of Authors of Musical Works, has appointed a successor to Roy Oppenheim. Martin Wüthrich (41), the new Head of Communication, is a recognised expert in field of new media. An active musician, he was previously Cablecom's Press Spokesman and before that Head of Communications for sunrise, the mobile phone provider. Martin Wüthrich graduated from Zurich University with a Master of Arts and is a registered professional copywriter and a member of script, the Swiss Copywriters Association.

Roy Oppenheim joined SUISA as Head of Communication in 1999. He has defended authors' interests vis à vis the authorities, political circles and the public with great expertise and commitment. He has made a major contribution to increasing public awareness for authors' rights and collective rights management. He was particularly active in championing artists' positions in the recently completed revision of the Swiss Copyright Act. Until his retirement, he was Chairman of the Communication Committee of CISAC (Confédération internationale des Sociétés d'Auteurs et Compositeurs). Roy Oppenheim is to step down on 1 November 2007.

Martin Wüthrich intends to pursue SUISA's targeted communication policy. SUISA has to cope with fundamental changes in the copyrights landscape. The licensing system for cross-border uses (internet etc.) is in upheaval. CD sales have plunged dramatically in the last five years. Illegal uses of musical works, through P2P networks in particular, show no sign of easing off. Even the blank media levy, since 1993 a proven method for compensating private copying on blank storage media, is increasingly facing public rejection. Communicating the message that innovation drives today's information society and that both old and new media only exist through the content they disseminate – and the producers, writers, composers and performing artists that create it – remains an essential task. The protection of intellectual property rights is crucial to the artist's livelihood.

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