



VIDEOAGE

INTERNATIONAL

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Despite Riches, Quality Channels Hitting Snags

By Dom Serafini

The successful business model created by cable and satellite channels is bringing the companies that own them billions of dollars in profit and a large catalog of high-quality programs.

Actually, what drives the financial growth of these channels is the quality of the shows which the channels leverage in order to get more money per subscriber from providers. And yet, this *El Dorado* could represent the tip of the bell curve, marking the beginning of the end of the same model that created it. Curiously, while this drama unfolds, companies are flooding the markets with even more new channels, especially sports channels, like Clint Eastwood's Back9Network golf lifestyle channel.

For the TV provider sector, churn is



no longer even contemplated, the four Horsemen of the Apocalypse are:

* Cord-nevers: Young people who don't subscribe to a cable or satellite TV service when they move out of their parents' house. If they want to watch a particular show, they stream or download it.

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MIP-TV at 50: Remembering Good Ole Days



To celebrate MIP-TV's 50th anniversary, *VideoAge* (present at the market since 1982) called on a few former — and some current — TV executives who led the industry during its "golden era." Distributors and buyers alike recall what MIP-TV was like in those early years.

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Second Screen to the Rescue



Nowadays, traditional linear television is battling fragmentation, disruption, reduced revenues, legal, technological and regulatory challenges and increased costs. But have no fear, what technology taketh, technology giveth. If new technology spearheaded a plethora of problems for the TV screen, new technology is now coming to the rescue with a second screen.

As 2nd Screen Society's Chuck Parker explained, traditional television could recapture viewers' attention by engaging them through a second screen, be it a smartphone, a tablet or laptop.

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RAY DONOVAN

"You think you're the first person I've dealt with who woke up in bed with a dead body?"

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Channels' fortunes and high quality shows still hit snags

MIP-TV reminiscences for the good ole days 50 years ago

The second screen is coming to the first screen's (linear TV stations) rescue

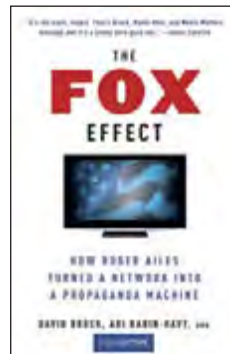


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My 2ø

How we miss those pinky-ring, puff fold, collar pin-wearing U.S. domestic syndicators

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More Changes at Hollywood's Rag

Under new owner Jay Penske, *Variety* ceased publication of its daily edition last month, and now puts out a weekly print edition on Tuesdays. To save the beleaguered trade, no fewer than three editors-in-chief were named: Claudia Eller, who came over from *The Los Angeles Times*, plus insiders Cynthia Littleton and Andrew Wallenstein. Former editor Tim Gray moved over to special projects.

Variety originated as a New York-based weekly publication in 1905, expanding to a Hollywood-based daily edition in 1933. In 1987 it was purchased by Reed Elsevier.

Penske Media Corporation (PMC) — which owns publications/blogs like *BGR*, *Deadline*, *Hollywood Life*, *HollyBaby*, *ENTV*, *MovieLine*, *TVLine*, and *OnCars* — acquired *Variety* from Reed Elsevier in 2012 for a reported \$25 million, but it was maintained as a separate profit center outside PMC. Financing was provided by Third Point, a hedge fund founded by investor Daniel S. Loeb.



HBO Europe's First Major TV Series



Tereza Polachová (executive producer), Antony Root (executive producer and HBO EVP), Ondrej Zach (SVP of Programming)

Presented in Prague, Czech Republic, at the end of January, *Burning Bush* is the first major local production of HBO Europe. It is a three-part miniseries created for HBO by Polish director Agnieszka Holland that reconstructs the story that has left a deep mark on the Czechoslovak society and, more broadly, in all the countries of Eastern Europe.

Burning Bush focuses on the personal sacrifice of Prague history student Jan Palach who in September 1969 set himself on fire in protest against the Soviet occupation of Czechoslovakia (the so-called "Prague Spring"). Dagmar Burešová, a young female lawyer (played by Tatiana Pauhofová, shown below), became part of his legacy by defending Palach's family in a trial against the communist government.

"To open a line of large-scale production in Europe, we chose a story with universal values of truth, humanity, honor, justice and courage," said Antony Root, executive vice president of HBO Europe, during a preview presentation to 167 journalists from many Western and Eastern European countries.

The Burning Bush press conference took place at Prague's Lucerna Kino, followed a few days later by the Premier Gala Event, held at Prague's Slovansky dum and then a reception at Obecni dum. (By Enzo Chiarullo in Prague)

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(Continued from Page 4)

Thai TV Gets New Channels

Thai TV audiences were recently introduced to three new channels — KIX, Thrill and Celestial Classic Movies. Last February, the three channels became available on Cable Thai Holding's (CTH) platform, which reaches over 3.5 million TVHH in Thailand.

The channels come from one-year-old company Celestial Tiger Entertainment (CTE).

KIX, which is dedicated to action entertainment across all genres, is offered in CTH's basic pack. Thrill — a channel focusing on horror, thriller and suspense — and Celestial Classic Movies — which specializes in Chinese film — are both carried in CTH's premium packs.



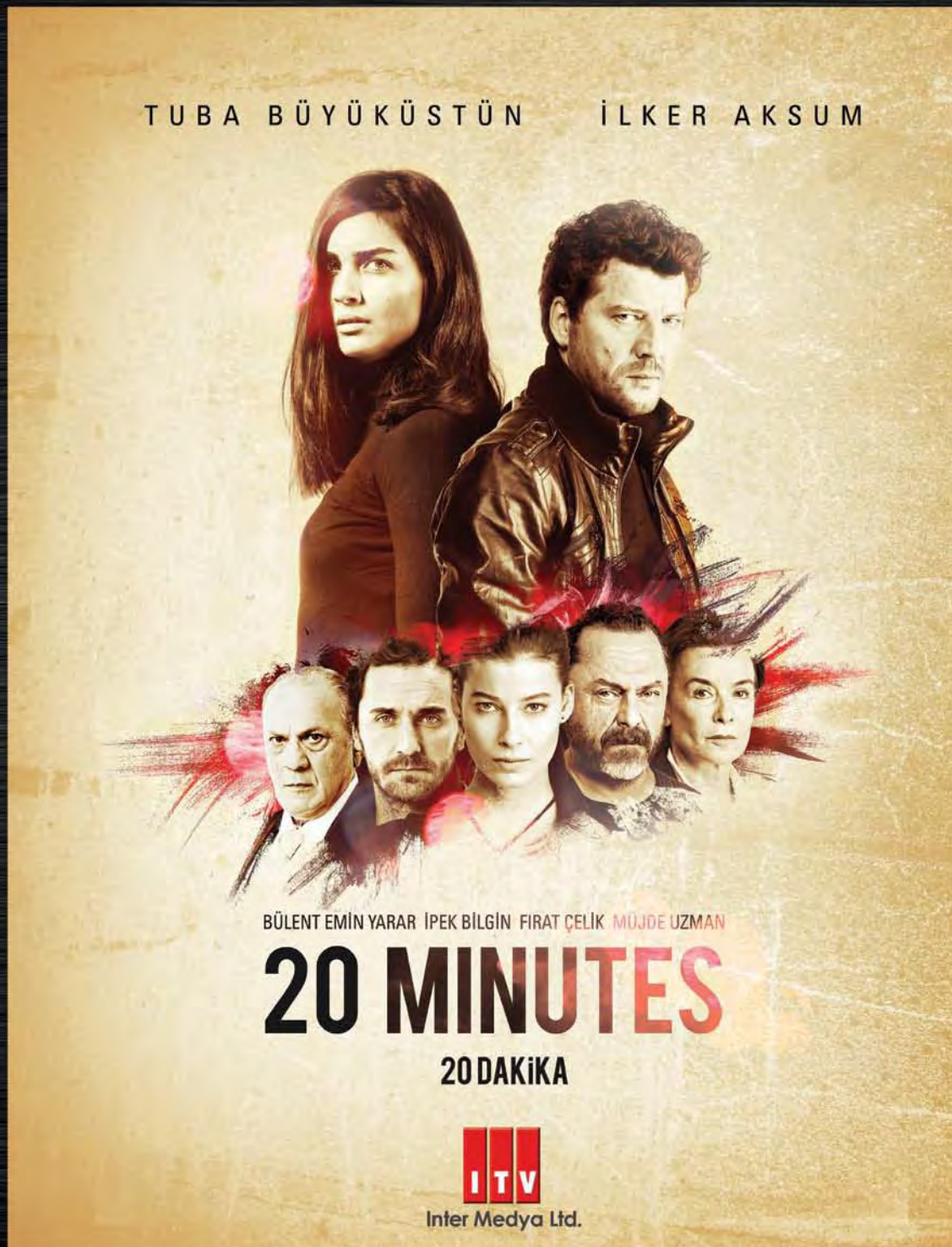
B'casters Ready For Challenges

Last year, four terrestrial broadcasting organizations and several broadcasting associations formed the "Future of Broadcasting TV" (FOBTV) initiative with its secretariat based in Shanghai, China. Broadcasters included Canada, CBC, Brazil's GloboTV and Japan's NHK. Among the associations were NAB and EBU. Subsequently, many others joined in and signed a memorandum of understanding that set the goals for the initiative.

According to a statement issued by FOBTV, broadcasters around the world face numerous challenges on technical, business and regulatory fronts: Spectrum is being sought after for broadband by technology providers, putting pressure on the broadcast industry to improve spectral efficiency. The style of media consumption is changing drastically with time-shifting, place-shifting, connected and multi-screen services.

FOBTV requirements reflect the broadcast industry's commitment to take advantage of future broadcast systems. Requirements will be developed with cooperation among broadcasters, communications companies and manufacturers of broadcast equipment and all types of receiving devices. Next generation systems include the following requirements:

- * Mobility — broadcasting to devices used on the move.
- * Configurability — the ability to dynamically change transmission parameters.
- * Adaptability — intelligent receivers that can adapt to changes in transmission.
- * Scalability — video quality such as resolution and frame rate.
- * Higher-resolution systems, and consumer-friendly services for those who require special needs.
- * Collaboration between broadcast and Internet content providers to provide attractive services.
- * Critical role played by broadcasters in times of emergency.
- * Unnecessary spectrum consumption fuelled by competition should be avoided.
- * Possibilities of cross-sectorial, cross-border and cross-regional cooperation should be explored.



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(Continued on Page 8)

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(Continued from Page 6)

Letters to the Editor

I really enjoyed learning about *VideoAge* at NATPE. I hope our paths cross again soon.

Angela Ober
Dead Wrong TV, Charlotte, NC, USA

Your reporting [at NATPE 2013] was a delight. Thank you for taking a different angle in our interest. Good work and interesting article.

Lanny Huang
Promo Group TV, Hong Kong

Correction

In the January 2013 issue of *VideoAge*, the assistant CEO of MDA (Industry) was incorrectly named. It should be Yeo Chun Cheng, instead of Cheng-Chun Yeo. Chun Cheng is his first name, while Yeo is his last name.



WCP Safe As a Swiss Bank

Recently, Starz, Sierra-Engine and Electus joined other major producers, distributors and broadcasters participating in a test with World Content Pole (WCP).

World Content Pole is a Swiss company offering an approach to cloud-based B2B content management and distribution. WCP is powered by Swisscom, the Swiss national telco and provider of secure data services for the Swiss banking system. “World Content Pole simply bridges the gap between commercial licensing and technical transactions,” explained Maurizio Zuccarini, founder of World Content Pole.

According to Chicca Pancaldi, VP Worldwide Sales for World Content Pole, “WCP radically changed the way to store, transcode and deliver content.” WCP acts exactly as a bank. Just as online banking simplified secure B2B financial transactions, WCP simplifies B2B content licensing and technical logistics. It’s an online service under licensor exclusive and complete control.” Expanding on the bank metaphor, Pancaldi explained, “When you do a wire transfer, you simply access your online banking and transfer your money from one bank account to another bank account. WCP works exactly in the same way: You store your mezzanine files and all your collaterals on your WCP account and send out screeners and deliver content transcoded — according to the licensee’s technical requirements — to another WCP account.”

Zuccarini added, “WCP is not an improvised service like some others that are now on the market. We at WCP have been perfecting the service for the past five years, not only in terms of security, but also to make it very user friendly.”

“Gary Marenzi, who’s now our senior board advisor, helped identify the needs of both content owners and broadcasters alike. Nevertheless, we continue to research, develop and release more services every day,” said Pancaldi.

“By the way, opening an account on WCP is free,” Zuccarini said.



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FOX News Succeeds with Believers and Fills a Niche

The making of a U.S. TV propaganda machine, with help from one politically connected TV president

The *FOX Effect: How Roger Ailes Turned a Network Into a Propaganda Machine* (Anchor Books, 329 pages, \$15), is a case study of FOX News's journalistic bias written by journalists David Brock and Ari Rabin-Havt.

The authors cite research collected by Washington, D.C.-based Media Matters for America, a news watchdog agency founded by Brock where Rabin-Havt is the executive vice president.

The book is a quick read, and it is enjoyable, mainly because the readers most likely to pick it up will easily agree with the authors' intent: Proving that FOX News is a thinly veiled conservative propaganda machine.

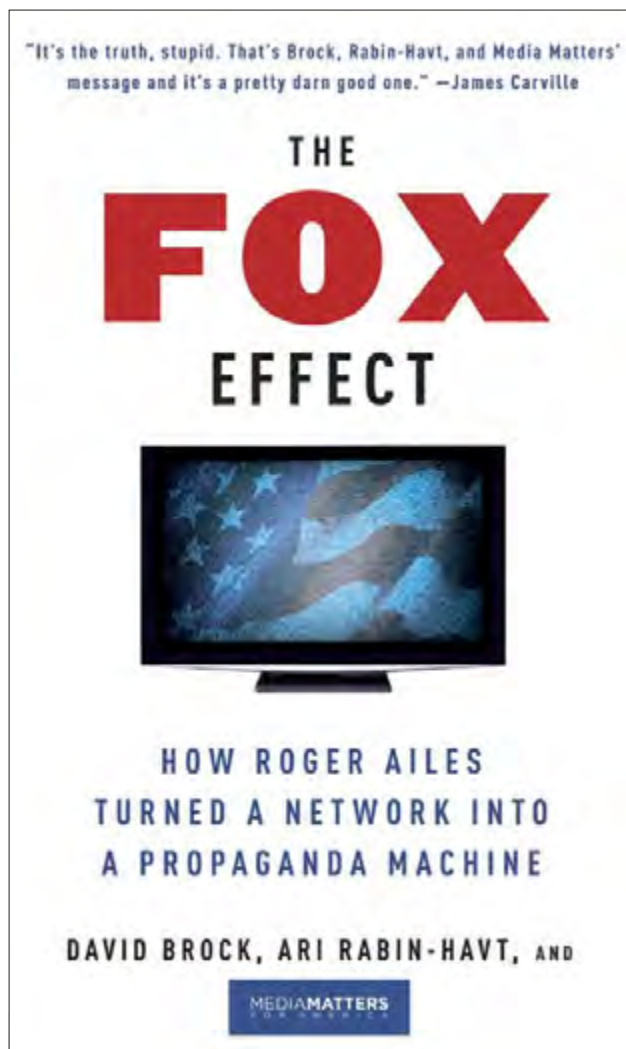
Though commendable in scope, the research falls mostly flat on the ears of habitual viewers of Jon Stewart's *The Daily Show* on Comedy Central, which regularly pans the conservative network for its poor journalistic standards.

The book, however, is a useful reference tool, providing many specific, well-researched examples as to how FOX is a powerful arm of the U.S. Republican Party, most alarmingly in its attacks on Media Matters itself.

The story of the creation and development of FOX News is an interesting one, and the book is always most captivating when it is narrating interpersonal history of the key figures within the network. The network's founder, Rupert Murdoch, looked for a market ripe to be exploited, and as he is wont to do, found the right people to do it. To this day, FOX News is the one and only conservative news channel, and it has become the largest news channel in terms of absolute ratings.

At the head of this operation is Roger Ailes, depicted here as the closest possible real-life equivalent to Malcolm Tucker, the fictional take-no-prisoners P.R. guy in the BBC comedy/drama *The Thick of It*. A conservative stalwart, Ailes held several posts within Republican campaigns and administrations, all connected to media relations. Notably, in 1971 the Nixon administration granted Ailes an office in the executive building right next to the White House, where he worked as a sort of a "political troubleshooter." He also worked for George Bush, Sr. during his presidency, and Rudolph Giuliani during his tenure as Mayor of New York City. Quotes from media outlets that worked with Ailes during his political activism characterize him as an effective and energetic — albeit aggressive and sometimes vindictive — spin doctor.

The book strongly insinuates that Murdoch himself has taken issue with the way the channel



seems to dictate the sensationalistic populism that has become the signature of the Republican Party's right wing. This has left moderate conservatives powerless to do anything but follow FOX's line as it uses misleading reporting and questionable source material to shape the news to Ailes's agenda, or indeed fabricate news stories when in fact there are none.

Program hosts who are either unbridled radicals or influential leaders of the Republican Party further exacerbate this. The authors' claims are supported by extensive research and inter-network as well as cross-network comparisons, bringing to light a specific formula that FOX News uses to sell half-truths as "news stories" and shame everyone else for ignoring them.

With much pomp and circumstance, the book repeatedly shows how FOX News is, in effect, a political entity of its own, giving massive exposure to fringe groups (such as the Tea Party) and forcibly making room in the mainstream media narrative for fringe issues (such as President Obama's birth certificate). All for the sake of what?

The answer is evident even as Brock and Rabin-Havt attribute it to Ailes's desire to play

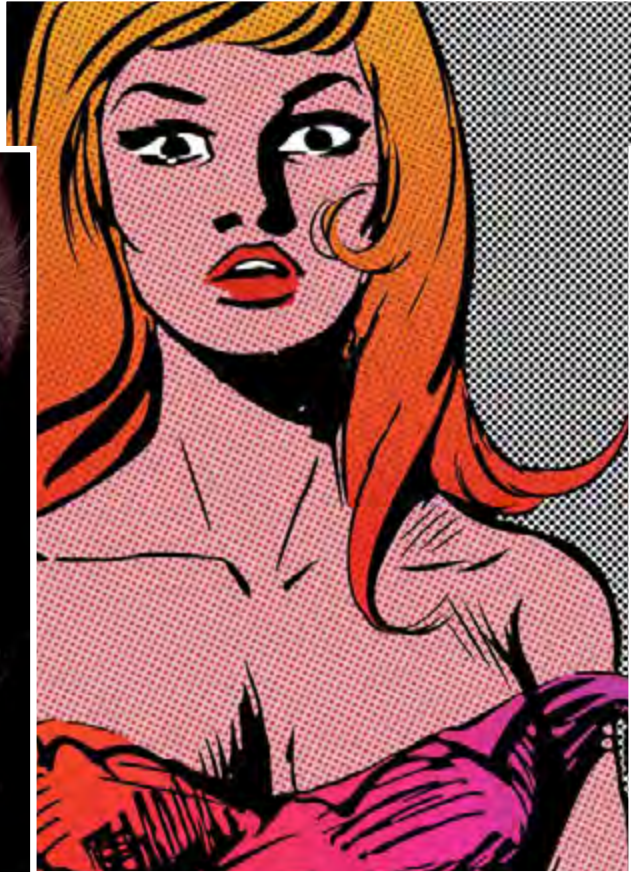
puppet master to the Republican Party. Ratings are only discussed as testaments to the great reach FOX News enjoys. But nowhere do they acknowledge the sources of its ratings success. The mainstream operator in a niche market, FOX News has captured the entire conservative viewer base by pandering to the least common denominator, presenting content that is agreeable to their target audience but void of credibility to the left and center. The authors show how Republican performance seemed to improve in districts soon after FOX News began to air, but is FOX's misleading promise of "fair and balanced" reporting to blame? More powerful than the channel's cartoonish reporting is its monopoly on televised conservative opinion.

The authors show how Republican candidates flock to FOX looking for maximum exposure and the freedom to blatantly advertise their PACs (or Political Action Committees, which unlike individual contributions, have no spending cap). Would they still do so if there were a more credible way to speak directly to their base? In fact, would Republican candidates have ever taken refuge in the audacity of the Tea Party's radicalism if FOX weren't the only place offering them shelter after their 2008 defeat?

The network itself has dismissed Glenn Beck and Sarah Palin. The authors attribute this to personal clashes with Ailes, but it is far more likely that even FOX News understands that a minimum of credibility is necessary for a news channel, especially if that lack of credibility is making advertisers pull out, as was the case with Beck's program.

Brock and Rabin-Havt take issue with FOX News' undeniable bias, and so have many individuals within the media. *The Daily Show* hardly goes a day without ridiculing FOX. The network is indeed ridiculous to everyone but its viewers, who will never be swayed by the meticulous research of a watchdog agency or the biting observations of a comedian. What might convince some of them, however, could be an intelligent, honest and less sensationalistic place to turn for informed but staunchly conservative opinions.

In the meantime, FOX News has no obligation apart from that of guaranteeing an audience to its advertisers. After all, if entertainers like Will.I.Am and Young Jeezy can brainlessly rap about President Obama's virtues because their audience laps it up, can't FOX News apply the same commercialist principles to its reporting? **YS**



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Activity, Attendance and Costs Climb for Mart's 50th

By Sara Alessi

This year, NATPE was held for the third consecutive time at the Fontainebleau Resort in Miami Beach — where it will remain in 2014 as well — at the end of a sunny and warm January. This time the organization celebrated the 50th anniversary of its inception, even though the market itself has only been staged for the past 35 years.

For the occasion, the market was hopping with parties and stars such as Larry King, Arsenio Hall and Jason Priestley. But these weren't the only things keeping the market hopping — plenty of attendees made their way to Miami Beach with buying and selling TV content on their minds. According to the *Miami Herald*, some 5,000 attendees from 60 countries took part in the market, marking a 19 percent increase in overall attendance compared to last year.

On the exhibition floor, in poolside cabanas and hotel suites, *VideoAge* caught up with a number of exhibitors during and post-market, asking them to weigh in on just how successful it was.

Valerie Cabrera, EVP of Entertainment One (eOne), reported that the company was very busy this year. "All of our schedules were full, however we were able to accommodate a few additional appointments on the ground," she said from her Beverly Hills office. Plus, Cabrera found that in general, "market sales were up from last year."

"NATPE was definitely more active in 2013 — both for Starz Worldwide Distribution and the conference at large," concurred Gene George, Starz's Beverly Hills-based EVP. "The greater overall activity was due in part to the increase in attendance," he said.

Starz brought its full sales team to NATPE this year, and their schedules were "fully booked. Along with our usual meetings, we also met multiple broadcasters from France, Spain and Scandinavia," George noted.

Melissa Wohl, SVP of Worldwide Distribution, and Diana Zakis, VP of Worldwide Distribution for the U.K.'s Content Television and Digital, both reported that "Meeting schedules are always packed, especially with U.S. and Latin American buyers, but this year we also had meetings with a



PE Media's Pepe Echegaray and Raul Escudero, Peace Point Rights' Eric Muller and Les Tomlin

number of new channels, as well as an increased number of digital platforms." In fact, Content's TV and digital executives from both their London and Los Angeles offices conducted more than 150 meetings at NATPE this year.

"Despite the fact that everyone had full schedules, we were able to accommodate some walk-in meetings. One of the great things about attending these markets is the opportunity to meet new clients and to introduce our product," Wohl and Zakis said. The team was kept busy with buyers from Latin America (the pan-regional channels and free-TV channels from various countries, along with digital platforms), the U.S. and U.S. Hispanic, Canada, Spain, France, Germany and the Middle East.

Esperanza Garay, SVP of Sales and Acquisitions for Latin America at Miami-based Telemundo Internacional, reported that her "schedule was completely full without a break all throughout the market" and because "NATPE is only three days long, and customers' time is very restricted, [it was] only possible to hold half-hour meetings with each company." She did not have time for walk-ins.

This year was a milestone for Toronto-based Peace Point Rights, which exhibited with a stand for the first time (Peace Point Rights is the distribution arm of Peace Point Entertainment and was launched in March of 2012). "Although we've attended many times, this was our first time exhibiting, and we found it to be fantastic. The show floor was extremely busy," said president and CEO Les Tomlin.

"We had three sales people in Miami, and our schedules were filled, plus we also had some great walk-ins. There are always walk-ins, so the quality of them is important, and we have deals already pending from many of those meetings," Tomlin said, adding that he and his team met with pan-regional Latin American clients, U.S. Hispanic buyers, and buyers from Chile, Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, Mexico, Panama and Australia.

"Our review of the whole market was very positive, and we're happy to be doing a significant amount of business out of it. It was overall a very positive experience," he said.

The cost of NATPE continues to increase at an alarming pace, and it's not just the cost of badges, suites and stands.

According to Power's Miami-based senior representative for Latin America, Pepe Echegaray, the market was successful because the U.K. company was on hand with a slate of finished programming, whereas last year much of its slate was still in production. "When you have the programs finished [as opposed to in production], clients really go for them," he said.

Plus, he was confident that "the economy in most of the Latin American countries is improving and stabilizing, so people have a good budget for 2013 and are ready to make decisions and buy product. This was better than last year because at that time, people didn't know how much money they had [in their budgets] and needed to wait for the L.A. Screenings [to make decisions]. This year was very positive and I hope it continues that way and nothing upsets the trend we're seeing at this point."

Echegaray added that, "In the suites, we don't usually get many walk-ins, but since clients came to meetings early, and walk-ins came in ready to buy, I had plenty of time to see them, even though we had a solid schedule." Going into the market, he had 32 scheduled meetings, and began meeting with clients on Sunday afternoon, the day before the market actually started. He also conducted meetings on Thursday, and was booked through Wednesday, the last day of the market.

Echegaray also said he thought the elevator situation had improved over last year, and Peace Point Rights' Tomlin concurred, saying, "being on the show floor negated the elevator issue."

eOne's Cabrera agreed that while "the elevators were still an issue [it wasn't] as bad as in previous years and both buyers and sellers seemed to be able to work around it quite nicely."

Yet, Content's Wohl and Zakis both found that "the elevators in the Tresor Tower were still problematic, with long wait times at certain points during the day, affecting our meeting start time and causing delays." But, they tempered their comment, adding, "we enjoy being in Miami for NATPE; it has become a lively market to start off the year and the Fontainebleau is a good venue."

However, one issue that left a bit of a sour taste in Echegaray's mouth was the exorbitant costs of the Fontainebleau. For example, it was impossible to purchase a glass of house wine for less than \$21, he said.

"The cost of NATPE continues to increase at an alarming pace, and it's not just the cost of badges, (Continued on Page 16)



Gaumont International Television's Tim Farish, Richard Frankie, Erik Pack and Globo TV's Paula Miranda

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Bubbly Saves the Day For NATPE

To draw more traffic onto the market floor (and help everyone relax after long days of buying and selling), NATPE hosted Happy Hours each evening, offering participants complementary red and sparkling wine.

But booze wasn't just flowing on the market floor. Lines still formed throughout the day at the elevator banks as attendees waited to ascend the Tresor Tower lifts for meetings with exhibitors in the suites, and to keep participants happy while they waited, organizers offered sparkling wine and sparkling water at certain points of the day.



Activity, Costs Up at NATPE

(Continued from Page 14)

suites and stands, which all went up, but it's the cost of the Fontainebleau," said Echegaray. "It's becoming such an expensive venue, and the cost of everything is escalating to a point where people are shocked." This includes the cost of food, drinks and valet parking.

Of course, Echegaray recognized that "NATPE can't control [the price hikes at the Fontainebleau], but the client base can by saying that if the prices continue to rise, they will not stay at the Fontainebleau, and will instead stay elsewhere." He added that the NATPE organizations should do what it can to "try to bring the costs down, to control the costs." As Echegaray said, the "cocktail parties on the floor and welcoming cocktail parties all helped somewhat" because exhibitors were able to bring their clients to those events for a drink. "But when you sit down [at the bar] to have a glass of wine with a client, that high cost is ridiculous," he said.

Yet Echegaray remained positive, saying, "The organization was very friendly and very informative, and right there ready to assist you, and most of the hotel staff was very attentive. The cost is my only complaint."

While Peace Point's Tomlin agreed that the costs at the Fontainebleau are high, he acknowledged that "Miami is expensive at the best of times and worst of times. You get used to an 18 percent tip added to every receipt — that's just Miami." He also noted that no one from his company stayed at the Fontainebleau. "We were at the Grand Beach, and we quite enjoyed it," he said.

Regardless of the costs, everyone seemed to be happy with the sunny locale.

"We look forward to Miami again next year," said eOne's Cabrera. Starz's George concurred because "the location seems to be a good draw for the expanding European buying base."

Rod Perth, NATPE's president and CEO, has confirmed that the market will once again be held at the Fontainebleau in Miami Beach, January 27-29, 2014. 🇮🇹



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Istanbul TV Market Rebuilding Ottoman Cultural Splendor

DISCOP West Asia was in full swing early last month in Istanbul. Market organizer Patrick Zuchowicki of Paris- and Los Angeles-based Basic Lead, announced on the first day of DISCOP West Asia (formerly known as DISCOP Istanbul) that the third annual event saw a 20 percent increase in attendance as compared to last year, bringing the total to 748 attendees.

Stands and meeting stations were very busy from day one. Distributors confirmed packed schedules and the same was true on the buyers' side: Mohammad Ahmadi of Afghanistan's Elena Productions said that he met with several Turkish and Latin American distributors to shop for new series. Despite censorship issues, regional TV stations (about 50 in Afghanistan alone), driven by viewer demand, are airing commercial content. Unfortunately, at times it's done without acquiring the rights, and content piracy is a big issue in these territories. In order to save money, many stations dub the acquired product themselves.

Reportedly, total acquisitions of foreign programs for the region in 2012 added up to U.S.\$200 million.

The conference portion of the event kicked off with a two-part session on drama production and distribution in Arabic countries in the morning, followed by conferences on formats and co-productions in the afternoon. The conference venue was moved to a spacious ballroom in the Dolmabahce wing of the Ceylan Intercontinental Hotel, next to the market registration area.

Nabil Kazan, a pan-Arab advertising pioneer, introduced the seminars and emphasized how there has been a 100 percent increase in production of Arabic drama from 2010 to 2012, that the market has also seen 160 new Arabic satellite TV channels in the past two years, and that 80 million Arabic households now have access to satellite. A new trend in the area is to acquire popular novela formats (successful examples being *Ruby* from Televisa, Telemundo's *La Patrona*, Comarex's *La Otra Cara del Alma* and Caracol's *La Ruta Blanca*) and adapt them for the Arabic market.

Telemundo Internacional's Xavier Aristimuño was part of a panel that analyzed TV content



Televisa's Cristina Gonzalez, Silvia Garcia, Mario Castro

development and co-production with Latin America. "Telenovelas and drama series no longer have geographical or cultural borders, and the format and co-production thematic is essential in today's global television. Our presence in Istanbul reflects our commitment to continue working on such projects," he said in a release. Panelists discussed the growing trend of establishing strategic alliances between Latin American and West Asian producers.

Telemundo's Melissa Pillow, for one, was pleased with the market, and said that her company's decision to send two people (she and Katarina Etchison) instead of just one this year was warranted in order to better handle the busy meeting schedule.

And of course, what would a show business event be without some parties? The opening night cocktail party, sponsored by Kanal D, was followed by an Orange Party sponsored by ATV. Late night on Wednesday was the Hangover Party, sponsored by Global Agency.

One logistical snafu concerned the large construction in Taksim Square, right next to the market venue. The unregulated traffic was oppressive, and it was very difficult to walk anywhere to or from the hotel without risking being run over.


Another interesting thing to note is that



Caracol's Berta Orozco

although the euro is widely accepted (even by taxicabs), people prefer paying in Turkish lire because they can get better exchange rates.

And there seemed to be a bit of a TV market rivalry brewing in Istanbul (though it didn't have anything to do with the event itself). Staff from a new Istanbul TV event (ITVF — Istanbul TV Forum & Fair) was at DISCOP West Asia trying to recruit participants for their own event, which is being scheduled for June 20-22, 2013 at the Halic Congress Center and conflicts with NATPE Budapest. However, DISCOP executives were trying to persuade ITVF organizers to cooperate with a joint event, rather than have two competing TV markets in Istanbul.

And on the subject of NATPE Budapest, several small- and medium-sized distributors are unhappy with the fact that NATPE Budapest — now being organized by NATPE and not Basic Lead — keeps attracting most of the U.S. studios, changing the nature of the market. The smaller companies fear that buyers will screen new U.S. TV season fare instead of indie product. This issue could also affect Eastern European attendance at the L.A. Screenings, if the companies choose to save money on travel and wait for the studios to come to them in Budapest. **MG** 



ITV's Can Okan



Telemundo's Karina Etchison, Melissa Pillow



Azteca's Adela Velasco, Martha Contreras

Sneak Preview of Hot New U.S. TV Season

By Lucy Cohen Blatter

Casting is done and shooting underway for the U.S. networks' fall 2013, winter and spring 2014 commissioned pilots.

We'll have to wait until the week of May 13 — the networks' advertiser Upfronts — to find out the fate of these pilots, but for now here's what we know for sure: there are nearly 100 pilots in the running, with NBC coming in at the most with over two dozen. Two pilots have already been ordered to series: An NBC sitcom starring Michael J. Fox that's loosely based on his life and Fox's live-action Seth MacFarlane comedy *Dads*.

As usual, this year the L.A. Screenings will follow the Upfronts. It'll all kick off on May 16 with Fox's general screenings and Paramount and Lionsgate's screenings for the Latin American contingent (see the full calendar at: videoageinternational.com/screenings).

Among the comedy pilots that have been ordered, the vast majority are single-camera (even CBS, which has resisted the genre in the past is embracing it with seven out of 12 sitcoms being shot as single-camera).

And many are inspired by true life, often those of the show's producers and/or writers. In addition to the aforementioned Michael J. Fox comedy at NBC, there's an NBC comedy pilot presentation based on the life of Jessica Simpson, ABC comedy *How the Hell Am I Normal?*, based on the dysfunctional childhood of writer Adam F. Goldberg; an untitled ABC comedy from John Leguizamo based on his life as a husband and father and fish-out-of-water in Manhattan; CBS's untitled Jim Gaffigan comedy based on the comedian (and father of five) and an untitled John Mulaney/Lorne Michaels comedy at NBC that's loosely based on the life of stand-up comic John Mulaney, among others.

As for the dramas, the genres really run the gamut. There are the futuristic ones — including the CW's *The Selection*, set 300 years in the future, as well as some anchored way in the past, like the CW's *Reign*, about Mary Queen of Scots.

There are also a handful of already established brands being revisited. In addition to remakes of series from Israel, Argentina, England, Australia, and other countries, there are based-on movie series like *About A Boy* for NBC, *Beverly Hills Cop* and *Bad Teacher* for CBS. ABC's *S.H.I.E.L.D.*, which will be produced, written and directed by Joss Whedon, is based on the secret intelligence organization that's appeared in countless Marvel comics.

Of course there are the spin-offs, too: *NCIS: Red* (spin-off of *NCIS: LA*) and *The Originals*, a CW spin-off of *The Vampire Diaries*.

And what would pilot season be without some cop dramas? There's CBS's aforementioned

Beverly Hills Cop, and a whole slew of them on Fox, including *Gang Related*, about a gang member who infiltrates the San Francisco Police Department, *Human*, which gives a futuristic spin to the drama, taking place in a world where cops have been paired with robots. Fox also has a cop comedy, now untitled, from Dan Goor and Mike Schur.

There are also soaps — like ABC's *Gothica*, which is set in present day but incorporates legends like Dracula and Jekyll and Hyde as well as ABC's *Betrayal*, about a photographer having a torrid affair with her husband's professional rival; and the medical dramas — like ABC's *Big Thunder*, set in the 19th century, CBS's *The Surgeon General*, about the U.S.'s most prestigious medical job and NBC's *After Hours*, about army doctors.

Call it the *Homeland* effect, because this year we're seeing lots of drama pilots that focus on the U.S. government, including CBS's *Hostages*, about a political conspiracy that leads a surgeon and his family into a hostage situation; CBS's *Intelligence*, about the U.S. Cyber Command, a unit created around an agent with a special gift; Fox's *Boomerang*, about a family of assassins for the U.S. government and *The List* about a U.S. Marshal on the hunt for the person who killed members of the Federal Witness Security Program; and an untitled Rand Ravich project that follows an idealistic Secret Service agent who finds himself at the epicenter of an international crisis when the president's son and friends are kidnapped. For more, see the full pilot list on the right.



Seth MacFarlane's first live-action sitcom, *Dads*, has already received a six-episode order from Fox

2013-'14 Pilots

U.S. network pilots commissioned for the new season

ABC COMEDY

Back in the Game

A recently divorced single mother moves in with her estranged father, a former baseball player.

Bad Management

Set in a luxury department store, a female boss finds her ways challenged by the boss's son's plans to sex up the place.

Divorce: A Love Story

Based on an Israeli format about a recently divorced couple who can't stay out of each other's lives.

How the Hell Am I Normal?

Inspired by writer-producer Adam F. Goldberg's dysfunctional childhood, set in the 1980s.

Keep Calm and Karey On

Karey is the clean-nosed black sheep in a family of petty thieves, addicts, and narcissists — but when her brother is sent to prison, she must raise his kids.

Middle Age Rage

A fed-up middle-aged mom begins to speak up and demand respect.

Mixology

Set in the sexy world of New York City nightlife, the show chronicles the exploits of singles looking for love — over the course of one night.

Pulling

Based on a British series, about three 30-something women living the lives that they want (not the ones society tells them to have).

Spy

Based on a British series, the father of a highly intelligent and verbal son — who also happens to be his complete opposite — inadvertently takes a job at the Secret Service.

Super Fun Night

Revolves around three nerdy female friends and their quest to have "super fun" every Friday night.

Trophy Wife

A former party girl falls for a man with three manipulative children and two difficult ex-wives.

Untitled John Leguizamo Project

Based on the actor/comedian's life. A Bronx-born man with Latin roots marries into a more privileged lifestyle.

DRAMA

Betrayal

A female photographer begins a torrid affair with a lawyer for a powerful family who turns

(Continued on Page 20)

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HD

MUSICAL COMEDY

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TELEFE



HD

GRADUATES ROMANTIC COMEDY

180 X 1 TV HOUR
TELEFE/UNDERGROUND/ENDEMOL



HD

TELENOVELA

APROX. 150 X 1 TV HOUR
TELEFE/LCA PRODUCCIONES



HD

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2013-'14 Pilots

out to be defending a murder suspect whom her husband is prosecuting.

Big Thunder

A brilliant, late-19th-century New York doctor relocates to a frontier mining town run by a powerful but mysterious tycoon.

Doubt

A charming former cop and low-rent lawyer uses his street smarts to work the system for his clients.

Gothica

A sexy gothic soap set in modern day that incorporates the legends of Dracula, Jekyll and Hyde and Dorian Gray, among others.

Influence

Two brothers head a unique agency designed to attack their clients' problems using the real science of human motivation and manipulation.

Killer Women

Based on Argentinean series *Mujeres Asesinas*, the drama revolves around the only woman in the Texas Rangers.

Lucky 7

Seven employees of a service station in Queens find their lives changed in unexpected ways when they win the lottery.

Murder in Manhattan

A dramedy about a mother-daughter amateur sleuthing team.

Reckless

After his wife is unjustly imprisoned during a political uprising overseas and his legal plans to free her are stymied, a man turns to less-than-legal options.

The Returned

The people of Arcadia find their dead loved ones returning as if not a day has gone by.

S.H.I.E.L.D.

Based on Marvel Comics's secret intelligence organization that has appeared in countless titles.

Venice

A soap about two rival families: the haves and the have-nots of Venice, California who battle for control (and the forbidden romance that ensues).

CBS

COMEDY

Bad Teacher

Based on the 2011 film about a less-than-virtuous woman who becomes a teacher to find her next husband.

The Crazy Ones

A father-daughter workplace comedy set in the advertising world.

Ex-Men

A young guy finds camaraderie living among the more experienced guys he meets in a short-term rental complex.

Friends with Better Lives

A group of 30-something friends each think the other has it better.

Jacked Up

A recently retired baseball player has trouble adjusting to retirement.

The McCarthys

A family comedy about a loud, sports-crazed Boston clan.

Mom

A newly sober single mom tries to pull her life back together in California's Napa Valley.

Super Clyde

Centers on a meek, unassuming fast food worker who becomes a superhero.

Unauthorized Greg Garcia project

A recently divorced man's life is complicated when his parents decide to move in with him.

Untitled Jim Gaffigan project

The semi-autobiographical comedy revolves around the stand-up comic and his five kids.

Untitled Julie Rottenberg and Elisa Zuritsky project

Based on an Israeli format, a married mom struggles to balance family, life and work.

Untitled Tad Quill project

A recently widowed father raises his 12-year-old son while jumping back into dating.

DRAMA

The Advocates

A lawyer and an ex-con team as "victim advocates," going to the very edge of the law to right wrongs.

Anatomy of Violence

A criminal psychologist with an expertise in sociopaths partners with a female detective with whom he has a past.

Backstrom

An offensive, irascible detective tries, and fails, to change his self-destructive behavior.

Beverly Hills Cop

Continuation of the movie franchise, focusing on Axel Foley's police officer son who's based in the tony California neighborhood.

Hostages

A Washington, D.C., surgeon is thrown into a political conspiracy (and her family into a hostage situation) after being chosen to operate on the president of the United States.

Intelligence

Centers on U.S. Cyber Command, a unit created around one agent with a gift: a microchip implanted in his brain that offers him access the entire electromagnetic spectrum.

NCIS: Red

Spin-off to popular series, follows a mobile team of agents who are forced to live and work together as they crisscross the country solving crimes.

The Ordained

The son of a famous political family leaves the priesthood and becomes a lawyer to prevent his politician sister from being assassinated.

Reckless

A sultry legal show set in Charleston, SC, where a gorgeous Yankee litigator and a Southern city attorney struggle to hide their intense attraction while clashing over a police sex scandal.

Second Sight

A gothic psychological thriller about a detective with an autoimmune virus that causes hallucinations reflective of his subconscious. Catching the killer depends on his insight.

The Surgeon General

A medical show centered on America's top doctor.

CW

DRAMA

Blink

A dramedy about a family patriarch in a coma-like state who can't speak or move, but can see and hear. His narration and fantasy sequences offer context to the family's stories.

Company Town

Chronicles the aftermath of a scandal at a Navy base that touches the lives of both civilians and military personnel.

The Hundred

Set 97 years after a nuclear war destroyed civilization, 100 juvenile delinquents are sent back to Earth to investigate the possibility of re-colonizing the planet.

The Originals

A spin-off of the CW's *The Vampire Diaries* revolving around the Original family in New Orleans.

Oxygen

Nine secret aliens are integrated into a suburban high school.

Reign

The tale of Mary Queen of Scots' rise to power when she arrives in France as a 15-year-old, betrothed to Prince Francis.

The Selection

Set 300 years in the future, a working-class young woman is chosen by lottery to participate in a competition with 25 other women for the Royal Prince's hand.

The Tomorrow People

Based on a U.K. series, young people across the globe represent the next stage in human evolution, with special powers to defeat the forces of evil.

FOX

COMEDY

Dads

From Seth MacFarlane, it centers on two successful guys in their 30s whose lives are turned upside down when their nightmare dads move in with them.

Enlisted

Follows three very different brothers working together at a small army base in Florida.

Friends & Family

Adaptation of BBC series *Gavin & Stacey*, about a couple trying to maintain their long-distance relationship while combining their polarizing families' lives.

The Gabriels

Centers on a neurotic family of introverts that tries their best to fit into their small Midwest town where everyone knows each other.

I Suck at Girls

A story about a boy becoming a man, and a man becoming a father, in a time before coming of age was something you could Google.

To My Future Assistant

Revolves around assistants at a big New York law firm who band together to cope with their obnoxious overbearing bosses who challenge their sanity on a daily basis.

Two Wrongs

Two star-crossed lovers, Nick and Jenny, must contend with friends and family who don't think they're right for each other.

Untitled Dan Goor/Mike Schur project

Revolves around a diverse group of detectives at a New York police precinct.

DRAMA

Boomerang

Focuses on the drama surrounding a family of assassins for the U.S. government.

Delirium

Set in a world where love is deemed illegal and is eradicated with a special procedure.

Gang Related

A gang member infiltrates the San Francisco Police Department's Gang Task Force.

Human

An action-packed buddy cop drama set in the near future, in which all LAPD cops are partnered with highly evolved human-line androids.

The List

When members of the Federal Witness Security Program start getting killed, a U.S. Marshal leads the hunt for the person who stole "the list" — with the identities of every member of the program.

Rake

Based on an Australian series, about a brilliant but self-destructive criminal defense lawyer named Keegan Joye.

Sleepy Hollow

A modern-day supernatural thriller based on the legend of Sleepy Hollow, in which Ichabod Crane partners with a local female sheriff to solve the town's mysteries.

Wild Blue

Ensemble about the working men and women on board a U.S. aircraft carrier.

NBC

COMEDY

About a Boy

An adaptation of the novel and film about the relationship between an immature bachelor and the young boy who moves in next door with his odd, single mother.

Assistance

Revolves around Nora, an idealistic assistant who attempts to find balance in her life while juggling the demands of a larger-than-life boss, "work husband" and real fiancé.

Brenda Forever

Stories from the past and present of Brenda Miller's life are interwoven to create a portrait of how a chubby, awkward, but incredibly confident 13-year-old grew up to be a 31-year-old who still does her own thing.

Family Guide

After his parents' divorce, a son idolizes his blind father and is bemused by his mother's newfound adolescence.

The Gates

Based on the British comedy of the same name, the show is set at the gates of an elementary school and revolves around the parents and staff who navigate the social minefield twice a day.

Girlfriend in a Coma

After a long coma, a 34-year-old woman wakes up to find out she has a 17-year-old daughter from a pregnancy she was unaware of.

Holding Patterns

Ensemble comedy about a group of friends whose lives completely change after they survive a plane crash.

Joe, Joe and Jane

Centers on a children's book author caught in an ongoing tug of war between two needy, flawed people: his wife and his co-author/best friend.

Undateable

A "bromantic comedy" about a couple of friends who are terrible with women, whose lives are altered when a confident guy enters their world.

Untitled Greg Daniels/Robert Padnick project

Revolves around the trials and tribulations of dating in your 20s as told through a group of friends.

Untitled Jessica Simpson project (pilot presentation)

A comedy loosely based on the pop/reality star's life.

Untitled John Mulaney/Lorne Michaels project

An ensemble comedy loosely based on the life of John Mulaney, about a guy who writes jokes for a game show.

Untitled Michael J. Fox project

(pictured below)

Inspired by the former *Family Ties* actor's life, Fox stars as a husband and father of three with Parkinson's disease who goes back to work as a news anchor.



Untitled Owen Ellickson/Greg Daniels project

A talented musician adjusts to his new life as a middle school music teacher.

Untitled Victor Fresco/Sean Hayes project

Centers on a guy who must figure out how to parent his 14-year-old daughter — who just moved in — while juggling a temperamental new boss at work.

Welcome to the Family

A white family and Latino family are brought together by their children who fall in love and quickly have an unplanned pregnancy.

DRAMA

After Hours

An ensemble medical show following Army doctors working the late shift at a San Antonio hospital.

Believe

An unlikely relationship develops between a young girl with emerging powers and a man sprung from prison who has been tasked with protecting her.

The Blacklist

A master criminal turns himself in and offers to give up everyone he has ever worked with, but only if he can work with a newly minted FBI agent with whom he seemingly has no connection.

Bloodline

An orphaned young girl is caught in a struggle between two warring families of mercenaries and killers, set against the backdrop of modern suburbia.

The Gilded Age

A period drama about the millionaires of 1880s New York, by the creator of *Downton Abbey*.

Hatfields & McCoys

Places the legendary family feud in modern day Pittsburgh with the wealthy Hatfields facing off against the working-class McCoys.

I Am Victor

Revolves around a high-powered divorce attorney named Victor Port with a unique view of relationships.

Ironside

A remake of the 1960s series about a tough, sexy but acerbic wheelchair-bound police detective who runs a team that solves the most difficult cases in the city.

The Secret Lives of Husbands and Wives

A drama about the secrets exposed after a murder in suburban California.

The Sixth Gun

Based on a supernatural Western graphic novel it revolves around six mythical guns, each with its own other-worldly powers.

Untitled Rand Ravich project

An idealistic Secret Service agent finds himself at the epicenter of an international crisis when the president's son and his schoolmates are kidnapped. 🇮🇹

The Second Screen Comes to the First TV Screen's Rescue



Chuck Parker is the 2nd Screen Society's chairman

The 2nd Screen Society was formed in Port Washington, NY, last June, and it now counts 40 members with Guy Finley as its executive director and Chuck Parker as chairman. It has produced a 252-page report available for \$2,995, while a 95-page executive summary goes for \$495.

According to The Consumer Lab 2012 report from Ericsson, 62 percent of viewers watch TV while using a second screen. In a report, the 2nd Screen Society put that figure at a more modest 40 percent.

Now, if indeed the report that 62 percent of TV viewers watch television while using tablets, smartphones or laptops is correct, one might think that it doesn't say much for the quality of the programs viewed. If one observes how children and young adults consume television, when watching something that interests them, they focus solely on the program. When, on the other hand, they slouch on the couch with the TV tuned into a program they do not particularly like, they immediately go into the second screen mode.

Not so, said Parker, pointing out that the Super Bowl game on CBS last February represented the most social TV telecast so far, with a total activity of over 52.5 million performed by 24 million people. Some 56 percent of these "engaged" viewers were male and 44 percent female, using mobile devices (88 percent) and the Web (12 percent).

During the most recent Academy Awards ceremony, the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences and ABC Network provided second screen viewers with "Oscar All Access" digital offerings accompanying the live broadcast.

Also recently, Fox Broadcasting Company (FOX) launched a new syndication network that will distribute FOX's custom sync-to-broadcast

Traditional television could recapture viewers' attention by engaging them through a second screen, be it a smartphone, a tablet or laptop.

experiences — currently available exclusively in FOX NOW apps — to other second screen TV app providers.

So, not only is the second screen necessary to recapture viewers, but it represents a growing source of revenues with \$490 million a year invested globally so far, reaching an estimated \$5.9 billion by 2017 monetized both by advertising and mobile commerce.

Often, the second screen is said to be the 21st century version of reading a newspaper while watching TV. But Parker rejects that analogy because reading newspapers "is flat," while engaging with a second screen is "like reading changing headlines or three different articles."

However, one could define the second screen as the second phase of the interactivity (now called "engagement") envisioned for just the TV screen, which was seen, as recently as two years ago, as the center of multimediality. If the surveys are accurate, watching television has



Guy Finley, executive director of 2nd Screen Society

once again become a "social activity," although of a different nature than the traditional family viewing of decades ago. Today's TV social activity is on an individual level, interacting with other individuals through a second screen, including social media networks, such as Facebook and Twitter. It is possible that, nowadays, a family could watch the same television program, while each member is engaged with their own personal device.

With the second screen, viewers also give "multitasking" a new connotation, since they read, write, listen and watch, supposedly at the same time. Unreal as it seems, the second screen is indeed real, and broadcasters are starting to take advantage of it in shows' production stages, if not even at script levels, with specialized teams that integrate second screen non-linear features into the process to provide engagement bait. And this can be done even with old library material for any genre, including drama, especially if the program is character-driven. Naturally, the question of standardization is still to be resolved, since it involves several issues, such as experiences, connectivity and syndication of metadata, among others. ■

The Consumer Lab 2012 Report from Ericsson

According to the report, 62 percent of people use social networking sites and forums while watching TV on a weekly basis, and this number is growing. Of these people, 40 percent will be discussing what they are currently watching on TV over social networks.

Women are more likely to use social forums while watching TV. Indeed, 69 percent of women engage in this behavior, compared to 62 percent of men. However, of those, the men are more likely to discuss the things they are currently watching. This may be linked to the desire to discuss live sports events as they happen.

Mobiles and laptops are the devices most commonly used to discuss TV content and are now also becoming part of the home TV setup. They not only allow social interaction, but also enable Internet multitasking during viewing. This phenomenon is not just limited to young people — 30 percent of those aged 45-59 engage in social TV behavior at least weekly as well.

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Feature-Length Docs Take Flight at Toronto's Bloor

Toronto's 700-seat Bloor Hot Docs Cinema Theatre is the only venue of its size and scope in the world dedicated to the documentary. This groundbreaking Canadian venture has long been recognized as pioneering social documentary and *cinéma vérité*.

It was the National Film Board of Canada's first film commissioner, John Grierson, who reportedly coined the term "documentary," in a film review published in the *New York Sun* in 1926.

So Canada — with its Bloor Cinema — is a good place to start when talking about the current state of the feature-length documentary. Located in downtown Toronto, the Bloor was a tired movie theater playing second-run feature films until it was recently re-purposed into a documentary venue. The initiative was undertaken by Blue Ice Group producers Neil Tabatznik and Steven Silver, who financed the makeover out of love for the art form, and a sense that there was potentially a strong enough audience base in Toronto to support it.

The idea of a cinema house devoted to documentaries was treated with much skepticism when it was first announced, but the theater has defied doubters, becoming a Mecca for documentary lovers since it opened last spring. It has tripled its conservative break-even expectations and continues to grow its audience.

Oscar winner *Searching for Sugarman* had its Canadian premiere at the Bloor Hot Docs Cinema last year. The feature-length documentary has been a runaway success in Canada and other countries around the world. Like several other popular 2012 feature-length documentaries — *Marley*, *Ai Weiwei: Never Sorry*, and *Detropia* — it exemplifies the words of Montreal producer and distributor Daniel Cross, president of Eyesteelfilm: "Presenting quality documentaries to the audience in a theatrical setting validates the genre."

Robin Smith is the cinema programmer for the Bloor Hot Docs Cinema. He sees growing interest in the genre helped by festivals, but also by a desire of the viewing public to educate themselves. He paraphrased Bloor founder Tabatznik, saying that if you go to see a bad fictional film, you feel you've wasted two hours of your life, but the beauty of seeing a documentary — even a not-so-good one — is that you always walk out feeling informed at some level.

The Bloor is run by the management of Hot Docs, the annual public documentary screening and forum event, now one of the largest of its kind. It will celebrate its 20th anniversary April 25-May 5 and has been housed in the Bloor venue for many years. The success of its refurbished home indicates the potential for an expanded marketplace for feature-length documentaries. According to Smith, distributors are beginning to recognize this as bigger and better buyers for the genre start to emerge.

Hussain Amarshi, president of Mongrel Media, a Canadian film distribution company specializing in art house, foreign, and independent films and documentaries, says feature-length documentary

is very much alive and kicking. His company is releasing close to 10 a year and so are other distributors. "Sundance and the Toronto International Film Festival show a significant number of docs, there is year-round programming at the Bloor Cinema. These all indicate the health of this genre," he said. "Funding for these films, though, is precarious."

Cross's Eyesteelfilm deals in those productions "difficult to distribute," whether his own or others — titles such as *The Artist is Present* and *Five Broken Cameras*. He says his is a difficult business to grow, given the cost of prints and marketing in relation to the limited audience potential. Canada, particularly Quebec, is his main marketplace, but Cross has been able to place films such as *Last Train Home* and *Up the Yangtze* in the U.S. in PBS's POV slot. (*Ai Weiwei*, after its theatrical release, was also broadcast in the PBS *Independent Lens* slot.)

Veteran Montreal distributor Jan Rofekamp, president of FilmsTransit, says for a longform documentary to do well, there has to be a reason — some extra motivation — to spark public interest. If, for example, they are celebrity-driven, adds Eyesteelfilm's Cross, they are more acceptable to theaters, get a proper audience, and tend to make a splash. Serious documentaries don't find homes as easily.

Kevin Wright, SVP Programming, Astral Television Networks, offered a similar perspective. He said Canada's TMN (The Movie Network) pre-buys and acquires a select number of feature-length documentaries every year. "We are specifically interested in highly entertaining pop culture docs with broad audience appeal and potential for theatrical release. We also have an interest in entertainment-related docs about film and music. We are not interested in socio-political or current affairs style docs," he said.

Peter Raymont, president of WhitePine Pictures in Toronto, has produced a significant slate of feature-length documentaries, most recently *Genius Within: The Inner Life of Glenn Gould* and *West Wind: The Vision of Tom Thomson*. He sees a growing public interest in the genre, fueled by festivals, television, and exposure in small community theaters across Canada — theaters attended by people who care about the genre and like to see it on the big screen with good projection. The replacement of the 35mm projector with new digital technologies has facilitated this.

For Canadian producers like WhitePine's Raymont, the challenges involve accessing production funds via a broadcaster, and getting them to pick up anything that doesn't fit the one-hour slot. "It's a classic case of the public being ahead of the broadcaster," said Raymont. "With virtually no exceptions, no mainstream broadcaster anywhere will play a long-form documentary in primetime," said FilmsTransit's Rofekamp. *March to the Top*, commissioned by the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation's Documentary Channel, had its world premiere on that specialty channel at 90 minutes. A day later, on the main CBC network, it was in a



Robin Smith, cinema programmer for the Bloor Hot Docs Cinema

60-minute slot.


Yet, generally, the climate for making documentary films has improved since 20 years ago, says FilmsTransit's Rofekamp. There is now a strong international infrastructure for filmmakers, helped by thematic conferences and forums, a proliferation of film courses, and new platforms for exhibition. Canada is like Europe in that there are agencies for financial support, unlike in the U.S., though the Ford Foundation's JustFilms aims to support "courageous filmmakers" making socially-conscious films.

And on the television front, HBO has for years been a large scale and consistent supporter of a certain type of documentary for a populist audience, which, said Eyesteelfilm's Cross, has helped change the perception of the genre.

Despite the fact that marketing film has become more complex, new distributors are appearing, both internationally and in Canada, noted FilmsTransit's Rofekamp.

Toronto-based BAM Distribution is one, recently acquiring the feature-length entertainment documentary *B.B. King: The Life of Riley*. "In selecting documentaries," said BAM's Iain Taylor, "a key part of the process comes down to the ability to market them in a crowded, tight space, so they need to be differentiated by a well-known entity or issue, with a well-known presenter and testimonials from well-recognized sources." A case in point would be its acquisition of Canadian rights to *How to Make Money Selling Drugs*, the so-called "war on drugs" exposé that had its debut at the 2012 Toronto International Film Festival.

Another new Canadian entrant is Indiecan Entertainment, picking up Canadian rights to the music-based feature-length documentary *The Sheepdogs Have At It* for a planned spring and summer theatrical release across Canada.

Short documentaries may be stretched out, because the feature-length variety is considered more prestigious. Long-form documentaries may be cut down for expediency. But despite market vagaries, feature-length documentaries will continue to be made as long as producers have stories they want to tell, whatever length fits them best. **IB** 

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Channels' Riches and Quality Hit Snags with Reach and Uncertainty

* Cord-cutters: Subscribers who "cut" their cable and satellite services in favor of "cord-cutting services" such as Barry Diller's Aereo (for over-the-air channels) or Netflix (for streaming).

* Cord-rippers (also called Cord-shavers): Subscribers who still have some cable, but have reduced spending to a bare minimum.

* Dwindling sub base: In order to compensate for the loss of subscribers, providers are charging remaining subscribers higher rates. The critical point when rates will be too high to be sustained is expected to arrive in 2016.

But let's not get ahead of the juicy details. According to an article in *The New York Times Magazine*, a channel like AMC collects \$30 million a month in fees alone on a base of 80 million subscribers, which is good considering that their best shows have fewer than 3 million viewers. In 2012 NBC Universal's cable channels generated around \$5 billion, half of which was profit. Viacom's revenue is more than \$8 billion, with 49 percent profit.

The *Times* pointed out how channels that are offering a few hours a week of original programming are making larger financial demands on the cable and satellite providers. Channels like AMC now charge providers about 40¢ a month per sub, including millions who will never watch.

This newfound *El Dorado* has spurned a myriad of new channels, based on the same successful business model that involves the network (or brand), the distributor and/or the platform and the service provider (cable and satellite systems). These new channels are mostly developed by existing channel brands that, due to ever-growing audience fragmentation — including online disruptions — need to aggregate relatively bigger audiences. And this is done by creating even more channels (so that TV spots can run across multiple programs), for amortizing costs and seeking wider reach, because networks that reach 70 million homes can charge more for their TV spots than channels with fewer TVHH.

In the cable/satellite business, TV spots are sold on the basis of "best estimates" for cumulative (cume) audiences, and not for quarter-of-hour ratings as is the case with broadcast TV. But advertising, especially in Latin America, is not as important as it used to be; therefore, content providers and platforms are focusing more on



Jacques de Suze is a Washington, D.C.-based consultant

The key nowadays, especially for basic cable/satellite channels, is to transmit shows that are exceptionally good, so subscribers will actually complain if providers don't carry them.

piracy and, in particular, under-reported subs who, in the past, helped them provide extra eyeballs to advertisers.

One region where the cable/satellite channel advertising market remains robust is Asia Pacific, which compensates for the traditional low ARPUs. Last year, the region generated a reported U.S.\$33 billion in TV advertising, with an additional \$33 billion coming from pay-TV revenues.

According to Luca Cadura of NBC Universal Global Networks Italia, the quality of the brand and the strength of the channels' sales rep determine the advertising results. Other factors are the "target homogeneity and packages across multiple channels." In Italy, Cadura runs Studio Universal and Diva Universal channels.

The key nowadays, especially for basic-cable/satellite channels, is to transmit shows that are exceptionally good, so subscribers will actually complain if providers don't carry them. In effect, cable and satellite channels have developed a clever business model based on quality programs for a relatively restricted core group of viewers.

As far as the structure of the business model is concerned, a new network could find affiliates on its own even though, as a stand-alone channel it would be very difficult, with the exception of ethnic channels such as RaiWorld or ART America, which are premium, meaning that, in addition to the basic subscription charge, they require an added fee.

In many cases, an online live streaming alternative to cable/satellite carriage, like the Hallmark Channel's online subscription service, would be more practical. Another way is to forgo carriage fees from service providers, as Justice Central channel did. The risk for a stand-alone channel could be that the service provider might drop services that do not perform well with viewers, like Time Warner did with art channel Ovation. As A+E Networks' Steve Ronson commented, "Marginal channels can no longer survive."

But no matter how difficult it is to launch a new channel in the U.S., it is nothing compared to the U.K. where, according to Jacques de Suze, a Washington, D.C.-based consultant, even broadcasters such as BBC and ITV pay platforms such as BSkyB for carriage (and not the other way around).

Most likely, new channels would partner with a distributor such as Al Baraka's ReachMedia or



Luca F. Cadura, chairman, NBC Universal Global Networks Italia

a platform such as HBO, Turner, Viacom, Disney/ESPN, Fox, Liberty Global's Chello Media in Europe and Astro in Asia. Naturally, it is easier for service providers, such as Time Warner, to foster their own channels. For example, AMC's chairman is Cablevision's Charles Dolan.

Indeed, the top 10 U.S. service providers account for 90 percent of TV subscriptions in the U.S., and they have a list of just top 50 must-carry networks even though, of the hundreds of TV channels in the U.S., only 10 account for most of the revenues and audiences.

Nevertheless, due to the large number of channels they broadcast, distributors and platforms have more leverage power with service providers. Naturally, this strength comes at a cost, which is usually a minimum guarantee (that can vary from \$300,000 to \$500,000) from the channel, plus a percentage (e.g., five percent) of what the service provider will pay. For basic service, the provider will pay 3¢ to 7¢ per sub. Specialty channels get 25¢ to \$1 per sub. The platform can also provide uplink services and transponder space at a fee plus costs, in addition to handling ad sales, keeping commissions on the net that vary from 15 to 20 percent.

Usually a channel gets revenues from per sub, ad sales and VoD after the linear broadcast. For the latter case, in addition to MSOs, channels could make arrangements with such services as Apple, Hulu and Netflix. However, explained Victor Rodriguez, a Toronto and Miami-based cable and satellite consultant, MSOs don't usually permit the channels they carry to go outside their own VoD services. Though he added that a satellite provider, for example, will allow a channel to expand its reach through cable, after an exclusivity period (for which the provider pays a premium), because they all realize that's the only way for a new channel to survive.

Ethnic channels have several business models. RaiWorld's Giovanni Celsi explained that the most common model is to deliver the signal to the distributor, which pays for the uplink and transponder, and find cable and satellite affiliates. If, on the other hand, an ethnic content provider prefers to market the channel on its own, it has to take into account at least \$400,000 a year for transponder costs, in addition to other technical expenditures. Fortunately, in most cases, ethnic channels have little or no content costs, since they tend to utilize shows that they own.

In the U.S., the most widely used satellite

(Continued on Page 28)

Swiss Television Programs



In volo con un'Ape **Travelling on a Bee**

The author of this documentary has travelled along the Rhone river, from its source to its mouth, on... a three-wheeled Ape pick-up (Ape – pronounced ah-peh – is the Italian word for bee). On his 1,000 km long journey in Switzerland and France, he has come across people of different cultures and gained some insight into centuries of history.

Italian, English subtitled – 53' – 2012

Transumanza **Transhumance**

Ernestino and Renza have chosen to do without the comforts of a home in order to live 365 days a year amongst their herd, perpetuating a tradition which goes back several thousand years and is today threatened by encroaching concrete, pollution and declining valuation of wool and meat.

Italian, English subtitled - 65' - 2013

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(Continued From Page 26)

Chat with Steve Ronson, A+E Networks

“New [American TV] channels don't always have to originate from the U.S. In 2005 we launched Crime & Investigation Network in Australia and later expanded it worldwide, including in the U.S.

The success of a channel today depends in part on owning the content for both linear and non-linear services, for the purposes of successful negotiation of distribution agreements and more importantly for the consumer experience. Having at least three or four successful channel bouquets provides leverage with service providers in terms of carriage and the package the channels are placed in.

The cord-cutting, cord-ripping issues in the U.S. are a result of increased competition from non-linear services such as Netflix, Amazon, PIV, and Hulu to name a few. The U.S. market is particularly vulnerable due to the highly penetrated and relatively expensive (ARPU) pay-TV market. The same situation exists in the U.K., while in other parts of Western and Eastern Europe, pay-TV penetration is relatively low; therefore, there are more opportunities to grow, despite competition from online platforms.

In Asia we find a similar situation with low pay-TV penetration, while in Latin America, there remains significant opportunity for increased pay-TV penetration, however only in select countries (maturity of pay-TV varies).”

Channels' Riches, Quality Hit Snags

(Continued From Page 26)

provider for ethnic channels is Dish Network. Distributors handle ad sales (a 50-50 split on net with the channels) and leave avails for local TV spots. Revenues from subscribers are usually split 50-50 between the distributor and service providers. In turn the distributor splits its portion of revenues with the content provider (channel). Other models are for the distributor to pay the channel a fixed amount (let's say \$1 million per year) or a flat fee for sub (e.g., 25¢).

The aforementioned issues facing cable/satellite TV (i.e., increased subscription costs and people leaving their systems in favor of online) represent a threat of astronomical proportions to the industry. Cable bills have more than doubled over the past decade. Subscribers currently pay \$90 billion a year for their services. But researcher SNL Kagan noted that 85 percent of U.S. households paid for TV service in the third quarter of 2012, down from 87 percent penetration in the third quarter of 2009. SNL Kagan estimated that 4.3 million people relied on Internet video instead of paying for TV, projecting that number will more than double by 2016.

In 2004 the debate about ending the current practice of offering bundled package versus a la carte service went before the U.S. Congress. Today it is resurfacing even though service providers are looking at ways to unbundle sports programs that are driving up subscription costs. Officially, the industry is fighting this provision. According to A+E Networks' Ronson, “A la carte is not a model that will benefit consumers and content providers.”

However, the cable/satellite service providers are not standing idle — they are starting to react. Singapore's StarHub, for example, has introduced a “pay-as-you-watch” service for viewers who do not want to commit to a subscription. Plus, satellite is growing, especially in Europe, where it now reaches 84 million TVHH, surpassing the number of homes reached by cable and over-the-air TV. Similarly in Asia, satellite TV grew by 15.19 percent in 2012 compared to the previous year, reaching a total of more than 262 million subscribers. 🇮🇹

For more on channels — Canadian this time — turn to Page 30.

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New Canadian Channel Initiatives Have Power

Given some recent news, we've found ourselves asking: "Why are Canadian media heavyweights reemerging in the cable channel business?"

First, well-known media veterans Robert Lantos and Victor Loewy — joined by a host of experienced industry players — have applied to the CRTC, Canada's regulatory body, for a license for *Starlight: The Canadian Movie Channel*.

Headed by Norm Bolen, former Canadian Media Production Association president and one-time Alliance Atlantis executive, the proposed channel aims to address the long-standing problem of getting Canadian audiences to watch and appreciate locally-produced films, to assist in the financing and distribution of these films, and to provide increased opportunities for talented filmmakers in Canada. "This channel will provide a home for Canadian feature films currently orphaned in the broadcast system," said Bolen, "and will make these films readily available to the Canadian mass audience."

The Asper family's long association with CanWest Global ended with the sale of the broadcaster a few years ago. Leonard Asper, then its president, moved on, taking an ownership stake in *FN (Fight Network)*, a channel focused on combat sports such as mixed martial arts, boxing, and kick-boxing.

His latest endeavor is *The League*, a channel devoted to fantasy sports leagues, where viewers will be able to act as owners — able to create, monitor, trade and discuss their fantasy picks and drafts with others also playing fantasy sports.

He sees the channel business as a good business, provided its investors clearly understand that it is intangible, volatile, and that human judgment is involved, but that the chances for good returns are there "if you get it right."

His goal is to assemble a manageable group of six or eight niche channels aimed at the male demographic in the men's sports and lifestyle genre, using cable to anchor multiple platforms. His plans go beyond Canada: The *FN* channel will be available in two European and two African countries by the end of 2013, and in the U.S. he owns *The Pursuit Channel*, a hunting and fishing channel.

Peter Palframan, CEO of Magic Lantern Media, shares Asper's love of TV, sports and business: "It was easy to make the decision to get back into it with a new channel — it's a creative, entertaining, fascinating and exciting industry with really interesting people and personalities, all of which we loved and which made it such a fun place to work for so many years."

Ron Keast and Palframan, long-time colleagues from their days at TVOntario, recently got together to launch *Academy Television*, a service offering a wide range of accessible learning opportunities, particularly for pre-high school and high school-aged students, but also for learners of all ages.

"We realized that a real national educational and learning channel was missing from the



Leonard Asper of *Fight Network*, *The League* and *The Pursuit Channel*

current channel offerings. All the existing so-called learning channels have increasingly moved to more general interest and populist programming," said Palframan.

They plan to deliver a learning experience that is entertaining and interesting, often almost without people even realizing it. "Then it's doing something worthwhile, life enhancing and perhaps even life changing — and that's a good thing," said Palframan.

Both Palframan and Keast have been involved in the television and media business — particularly in the educational arena — pretty much all their working lives. Keast was the general manager of English Programming at TVOntario in its early and formative years. Then he was president of Vision TV, heading up the small team (which included Palframan) that launched and established it as a viable and profitable operation. Later Keast took on the role of president of Access Television in Alberta.

For *Academy Television*, like all fledgling licensees, the issue is persuading the large cable companies such as Bell, Rogers, Shaw, and Telus to carry them. After carriage, the next hurdle is growing subscribers.

In 2009, ZoomerMedia Limited, a company established by Moses Znaimer devoted to serving the interests and needs of Canada's 50-plus viewers, acquired *Vision-TV* and *ONE: The Body, Mind and Spirit Channel*. Znaimer, the internationally-renowned Canadian broadcaster and media pioneer, was involved — until his departure in 2003 — in the development and oversight of a large portfolio of CHUM Ltd channels. ZoomerMedia also owns *The Beautiful Little Channel* (formerly *Classical Digital*), a service devoted to classical music videos and related fine arts programming. With the remake of Canada's Bravo from an arts service into a drama format, a window of opportunity exists for arts-related services.

Michael MacMillan, former executive chairman and CEO of Alliance Atlantis Communications,

has resurfaced too, stepping up his return to broadcasting with an array of acquisitions. His Blue Ant Media has taken a controlling interest in GlassBox Television, which operates *BITE Television* and *Aux*, plus six other channels not yet operating. Blue Ant also owns and runs the *Travel and Escape Channel*, the cottage lifestyle company *Cottage Life Media*, and *High Fidelity HDTV*, which includes specialty channels *radX*, *HIFI*, *Oasis HD*, *eqhd*, and three other channels not yet operating. Recently added to his growing stable is *Bold* (formerly *CBC Country Canada*) acquired from the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation.

Blue Ant Media's main focus is on lifestyle and non-fiction content for a wide range of platforms, ranging from print magazines to the old-fashioned TV set. Its strategy is to create and grow a media company based in Canada with three main aims: to look ahead to being active in the international market, to create and own content for its channels and for export and to act as a leader in lifestyle and non-fiction programming.

Jay Switzer, former long-time president and CEO of CHUM Ltd, became a small investor in a refinancing phase of the aforementioned GlassBox, and joined the board as its chair, a position he held until MacMillan acquired the company. Switzer sees MacMillan's business as a growing indie in the reality/non-fiction space, just as his *Hollywood Suite* is active in the drama/movies arena.

"We have a lot in common," said Switzer "as we fight for carriage and better marketing in a world of giant vertically-integrated phone and cable companies."

Commenting on why some of his media colleagues have returned to the channel business, Switzer said, "I believe there is great opportunity in the Canadian media space for nimble, creative independent companies, especially as larger vertically integrated firms occupy more of the sandbox. Scale may be important for some defensive reasons, but large scale doesn't give you any advantage with innovation or creativity. This has been our growing success with our recently launched multi-platform *Hollywood Suite* (Warner Films, MGM Channel, Sony Movie Channel, AXN Movies)."

MacMillan echoed Switzer's sentiments. "We believe it's a great time to establish and grow a new kind of media company in Canada," he said in a statement.

Switzer summed it up: "The need for independent Canadian voices and choices becomes more urgent — in terms of Canadian media policy and choices for consumers — as fewer larger self-dealing media companies remain. Yes it is increasingly difficult for us to nurture independent voices in a media landscape where the distribution so vital for your success is controlled by your competitors. But that makes the success all the more sweet." **IB** ■



VISIT US AT BOOTH R31.37

Veteran Seller-Turned-Buyer Offers MIP Tips

By Isme Bennie

I went to my first MIP-TV in 1981, but that was preceded by umpteen Canpros and NATPEs and INPUTs, also by EBU Screenings in tandem with MIFEDs (how I loved Milan!), a Prix Italia or two, and U.S. public television marketplaces.

I have been employee and employer; owner, manager and general manager, vice president, and president, not necessarily in that order, as I have attended all these venues.

I have been lucky, in fact blessed, to be able to earn a living and conduct business in interesting, beautiful and diverse settings around the world, and to deal in subject matter — now called content — that has continually been varied, whether I was buying or selling it, so work was never boring.

While business travel has been rewarding and interesting, and I have made friends from all over the world, it has also had its downsides: long journeys at the back of the plane, jet lag, struggling to get up in the mornings to go to my first appointment, being put up in third-rate hotels, chasing missing

materials, carting heavy loads, trudging around with wet feet, dealing with difficult people in different languages, being “on” all the time...

I’ve learned a lot from the experiences. The first time I went to a market on my own, as the sole owner of my small company, a colleague stopped me in the hotel lobby as I was checking in and invited me to join her group for dinner. I asked her afterward why, and she said that if she saw anyone looking lost or alone on the first day, she made a point of including them in her dinner plans. I have done this ever since.

Being part of a team on the road has made me particularly aware of the dynamics involved, whether it was within my own team or as part of somebody else’s. Traveling has its stresses, but that’s no reason to behave badly. Even though we work in an ego-driven environment, the world doesn’t need horrible bosses.

- One touchy area is getting there. Consider taking a different flight if your team cannot travel up front with you, and that’s likely to create embarrassment or hard feelings. What about inviting members of your team to join you in the first or business class lounge? Or in your car service if there is space?

- On arrival, make sure everyone is in decent accommodations. I have ended up in some awful hotels myself: at the first London Market I could lie on the small bed and touch both walls of the room, and at one MIP-TV I ended up in a hotel that certainly wasn’t in Cannes as advertised!

- Make sure that no one is alone for dinner, and find a moment to advise the best places to eat, drink, shop, or visit.

- Make sure the per diems or allowable expenses are appropriate to the venue (I remember one rainy night in Monte Carlo encountering two young colleagues who didn’t have the cab fare to get back to their somewhat distant hotel).

- Advise also on the general department and dress code that will make the event comfortable for all.

- Don’t go off with the “A” guys and abandon the rest. It’s not high school! It’s awful. I’ve been there! Include team members at social events whenever appropriate and introduce them around.

- Share the stash. There are only so many baseball caps, mugs, pens, t-shirts and DVDs one person can have.

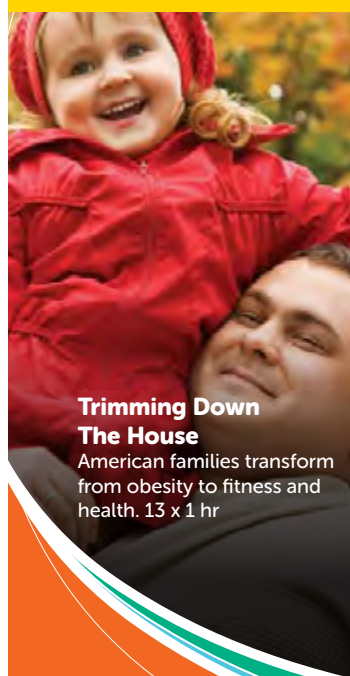
- Be on time, same as everyone else.

- Buy treats.

Much of the above is self-evident, but thoughtfulness, fairness and graciousness permeate it all. It starts with operating somewhere between formal and familiar and sorting out potential issues before they happen.

It’s not that hard to be nice. It just means taking a step back and examining your management style, and applying what you wish for yourself to others. ■

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Rai World MIPTV 2013 – Stand R30.03



MIP-TV at 50: Remembering The Good Ole Days



Photo of Irv Holender taken in 1967 with U.S. musician Melvin Howard Tormé, nicknamed The Velvet Fog

The unpronounceable “Marché International des Programmes de Television,” mercifully abbreviated to MIP-TV, was started in Lyon, France in 1963 by Bernard Chevy — then a charismatic 40-year-old publisher — three years after MIFED, the world’s first audiovisual market, was started in Milan, Italy. The first MIP-TV was attended by 119 companies from 19 countries.

Chevy was originally involved in the publishing business and was best known for establishing the first book clubs in France. In 1950, he became editor-in-chief of *Official Toy* magazine in Paris, and was responsible for the creation of the International Toy and Game trade show. Chevy entered the television field in 1957, when he co-produced a children’s show, followed by five films on classical music, including one documentary about Isaac Stern and one about Arthur Rubinstein, for which he won an award.

Subsequently, in 1965, after a one-year hiatus, MIP-TV moved to Cannes, utilizing the town’s “old” Palais for the exhibition floors. In 1982 the much larger and successful market moved to the new Palais, while the old one became a hotel.

A lifelong bachelor (“If I were married, I could



Vladimir Frantar with Telepool sales executive Marlene Fritz on the Telepool yacht in Cannes at MIP-TV 1981. Buyers were invited for lunch and a short cruise.

never have done this,” Chevy told *VideoAge* in 1982), he cultivated the image of a mysterious and enigmatic figure who lived with his mother. Undocumented stories of his early life and anecdotes abounded, for Chevy was MIP-TV participants’ favorite topic of conversation after program sales. Getting old and without heirs (outside of his nephew), in 1987 he sold his markets organizing company, MIDEM, to the U.K.’s Television South (TVS) for £5 million. Two years later, TVS sold MIDEM to Reed Exhibitions (for a reported \$20 million), which renamed it Reed MIDEM. According to some accounts, the high resale value of MIDEM left Chevy upset. He returned to the publishing business with a free, airport-distributed magazine.

Curiously, up until 1978, MIP-TV did not have a large American presence and, 35 years later, even though American companies make up the bulk of the key exhibitors, some studios have left the market floor to concentrate on the L.A. Screenings, which starts in May, just a few weeks after MIP-TV.

Anita Erken attended her first MIP-TV in 1965 as sales director for Germany’s Betafilm and her last one in 2003. What she remembered most is that “16 mm filmprints were used for screenings in rooms that had to be reserved in advance. There were no badges. The names and photos of participants were posted on a big billboard. A red light next to the photo signaled that there was a message to be retrieved at a kiosk. Each stand was equipped with one telephone with the line always busy.”

Erken was scheduled to participate in MIP-TV’s 50th anniversary, but it had to be canceled due to a “minor operation” that will prevent her from traveling.

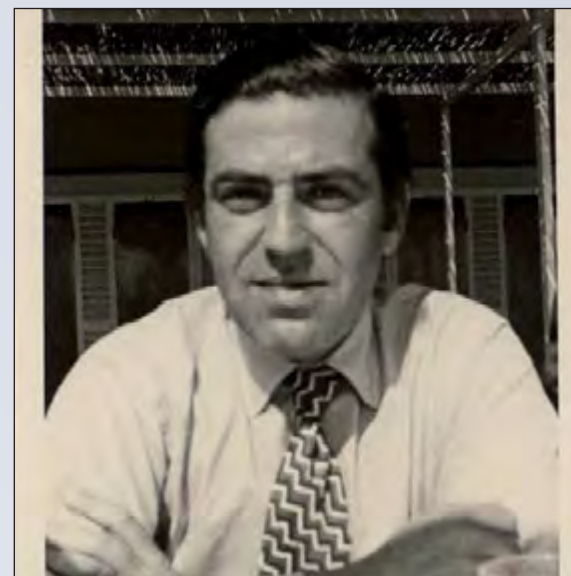
Irv Holender attended his first MIP-TV in 1967, representing Desilu Studios, as an invited guest of then-MIP-TV organizer, Bernard Chevy: “The event was in the building which later became the Noga Hotel. The prices were very attractive. The hotels were very reasonable. At the restaurants, an average meal cost U.S.\$10. The environment felt like you were at a family affair with the courtesy and friendliness of the organization and staff. You were treated as a professional with respect. The dress code was suits and ties: very formal.

“The event lasted six days and gave all attendees the time to cover the four-story building, and offered more quality time than today, running between the various floors and buildings.

“Most of the television networks were government-controlled and many broadcasting



France’s A2 press conference headed by Maurice Ulrich, president of Antenne 2 (second in from right), at the Montfleury Hotel at MIP-TV 1979



Herb Lazarus at the Carlton Beach during his first MIP-TV in 1968

only a few hours a day. As an American company, we began licensing films and series in very small quantities.”

Bill Gilbert attended his first MIP-TV in 1967. He had just left BBC where he was both a buyer and a seller and joined Rank Overseas Film. “We did not have a stand and the most memorable part of the day was meeting after dinner at the small bar at the Martinez Hotel.”

Herb Lazarus attended his first MIP-TV in 1968 for 20th Century Fox: “In Lyon [in 1963], I can be certain that no American studios were there. I do remember an MPAA export committee meeting, where we were told that ‘a market’ had started in Lyon and was moving to Cannes, and would we attend? All the companies sitting around the table said no until it came to Fox, which said yes, they would attend, and that’s when the other guys said ‘if Fox goes we will have to go as well.’

“The year was 1969 in Cannes for MIP. At 20th Century Fox, Alan Silverbach was the head of all TV Distribution, I was heading up International Distribution and Bill Saunders was our European manager. We decided to have a dinner for 40 of our clients at a restaurant in Antibes called Felix Au Port. Bill was the host. We got a bus to pick up our clients at the various hotels and gave them champagne and tidbits on the ride to Antibes. Fabulous dinner, the clients were happy. When it came time to go back to Cannes and Alan and I were getting the people back on the bus, two things happened. First, one of the guests told us that, while he had a great evening, he wasn’t one of our clients and he was supposed to be at a FIFA dinner instead, but had gotten on the wrong bus. Second, Bill was in the kitchen of the restaurant settling the bill when he got Alan and my attention and asked us to come to the kitchen. The



MIP-TV 1982: l. to r.: ITV Network’s buyer Leslie Halliwell, Larry Gershman then president of MGM/UA, BBC’s buyer Gunnar Rugheimer

(Continued on Page 36)

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MIP-TV at 50: Remembering The Good Ole Days



The old Palais, circa 1978. By 1980 some 3,000 people attended MIP-TV

bill for the dinner was 40,000 francs and Bill said he didn't have enough money with him and Felix did not take credit cards or a check, so could we chip in? I asked Bill how much he had and he said 1,500 francs. After screaming with laughter and asking Bill how he could invite 40 people for dinner without having enough money, he said he thought a credit card would be acceptable. Fortunately, Alan and I were carrying enough francs to help Bill out."

Pedro Leda's first MIP-TV was in 1969. At that time he was a movies and TV series Latin American distributor for a company he had formed in Argentina with partner Leon Darcyl. He first heard of MIP through his partner, who traveled to Europe often and even attended the first MIP in Lyon in 1963. "All activities were held in the old Palais, mainly on the terrace overlooking the sea. I remember that there were not too many exhibitors and buyers. Negotiations were very relaxed. Everybody had all the time in the world! I also remember meeting the nephew of the then French President Charles de Gaulle, who attended MIP perhaps on behalf of a French ministry or state television. He certainly was very tall and looked a lot like his uncle."

Norman Horowitz: "It was probably in 1971 that I attended my first MIP-TV while at Screen Gems (Columbia Pictures) with my two associates, Herb Lazarus (we worked together in New York City) and Kenneth John Page, who was based in London.

"To call the exhibition space at 'The old Palais' inadequate would be an understatement. To compensate for that we rented a salon at our hotel (The Carlton) and imported a Sony player and cassettes of all of our pilots for all of our 'important screenings.'

"All was well until we were asked to see the market director general Bernard Chevry. He said that he was happy that we rented space at the Palais but that many were complaining that we were taking people away from the market to the hotel.

"As I recall, MCA was also screening in the hotel and did not rent space in the market.

"We complained that the screening space at the Palais was horrid and he offered us his space for

the next market. We happily accepted and there was the proverbial 'dancing in the streets.'

"Everything was fine until Bernard, wishing to have the last word, told us as we were leaving something like: 'And just in case you change your mind about what we had agreed, I'll have you banned from the city and make it impossible to obtain hotel rooms.'

"We all had a history of being threatened by our clients, but none of us had ever been threatened by a supplier.

"We did not return to MIP-TV. We stayed out of the market until, as I recall, 1979. While it was lovely coming to Cannes, Bernard was not going to mess with us.

"At the same time, I'm ashamed to call what we did in Cannes 'work.' How bad could it be having a buffet lunch at the Carlton Beach Restaurant, eating the best food in the world and pretending that you weren't looking at the topless women?"

Giuseppe Proietti's first MIP-TV was in 1974 as a junior sales person for Italy's SACIS, the distribution division of Italy's RAI. "Most of all, I was overwhelmed by my accommodations at the Carlton, a hotel also famous as the site of the first meeting of the League of Nations in 1922, which is commemorated by a plaque. At that time SACIS did not have a stand, and we paid just for the badges, which were collected at the Malmaison, the building adjacent to the old Palais. In order to find buyers, I first studied their photos in the guide and, later, I tried matching the photo on their badges, by going up and down the stairs of the old Palais, carrying a stack of brochures. When a buyer was a top programmer, the brochure was the only thing needed to make the sale; junior executives, on the other hand, needed screening material, in the form of videotape reels that I would subsequently send to them. At times it was more economical to invite buyers to Rome for the screenings than to ship material. All the buyers were from state-owned organizations and most TV networks were in black and white."

Larry Gershman: "In the mid-'70s I was hired by Viacom as VP of International Sales three weeks before MIP-TV. I was fortunate in that I had inherited the number one or number two managing directors in just about every major territory around the world: Howard Karshan (Europe); Jiro Sugiyama (Japan); Benigno Nosti



Don Ciaramella, Cindy Crawford and Dick Lippin at MIP-TV 1993



Gathering at Sandy Frank's orphanage visit during MIP-TV 1979

(Latin America) and Bill Wells (Australia).

"They could not have been more welcoming to me. This was a new world for me — pun intended. MIP-TV took place in the old crowded Palais and the activity was frenetic. I went for a run on the Croisette very early in the mornings before at least one breakfast meeting, then onto our stand meeting all new faces, followed by a business lunch and then back to the stand. At least one meeting over drinks at the Majestic or Carlton, dinner (and every restaurant was a new great experience), back for drinks at the Majestic until 2 a.m., only to start all over again a few hours later.

"I loved it! This was an introduction by fire, but an introduction to what has been my life for all these years since. I cannot think of a better way to be introduced to the world of television and the wonderful people who occupy it."

Vladimir Frantar was a buyer of drama first for JRT (Yugoslav Radio and Television) and later for TV Slovenija: "My first MIP-TV was in 1975. I remember that in 1977 there was MIP-TV in April and, in the fall, Canada's CBC organized their Screening in Toronto in association with the British Global TV, where many European buyers were invited expense-paid. I was among them.

"At MIP-TV in the old Palais there were about four floors with small booths for meetings. At that time I dealt mostly with European companies, like BBC, Thames TV, Granada TV, ZDF, Telepool, TF 1, Antenne 2, France 3, RAI, Beta Film, etc. and some Eastern European companies (like Czech, Polish and East German TV), but we also started with American companies, like Fox, WB,

(Continued on Page 38)



MIP-TV 1998: Armando Nuñez Sr., Chris Zhang, Susan Elkington, Chris Philip, David Ellender

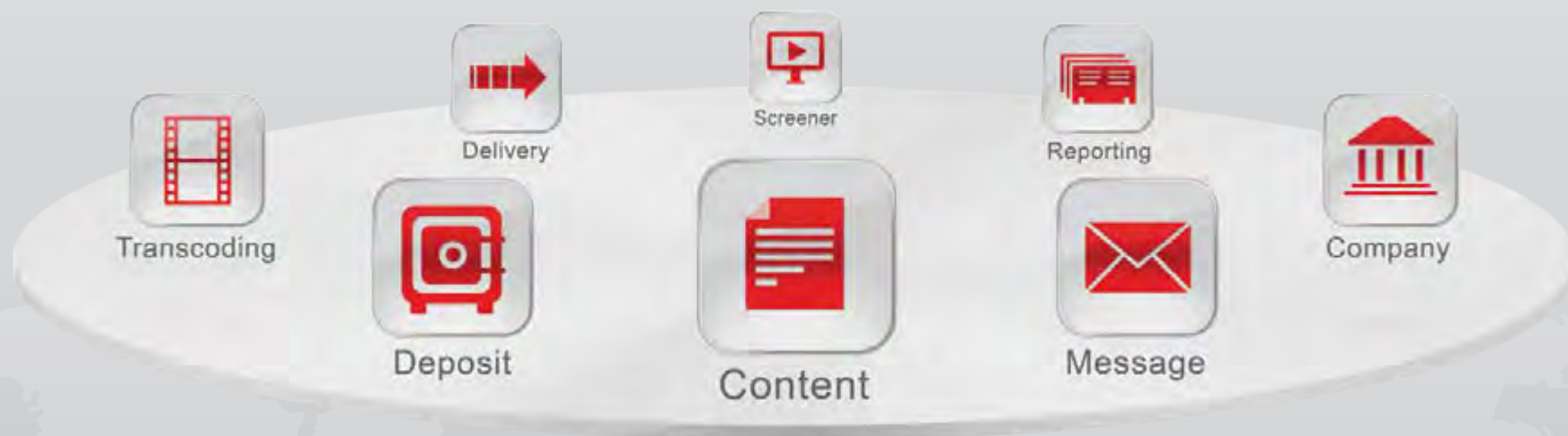


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MIP-TV at 50: Remembering The Good Ole Days



VideoAge's first Latin American gathering at The Sunset Marquis Hotel's tent at MIP-TV 1999

Paramount and Worldvision. We had meetings and screenings in the special screening rooms (by different types of programs), as there were no cassettes. It was much better when those big U-Matic cassettes appeared.

"I attended MIP only a few times in the old Palais, and then the new one was built. Overall, I went to MIP-TV and MIPCOM more than 50 times.

"Today, the MIDEEM organization has completely forgotten me but I'm happy that the TV Festival in Monte Carlo didn't forget me. Last year I was invited to be a member of the International Pre-selection Committee for drama and I am invited again this year.

"I used to be quite popular among the sellers. I remember that one BBC sales executive used to call me 'Mr. P,' which was, by her opinion, 'Mister Popular.' I was always on time to the meetings and was never promising something I couldn't do. I liked my work. It was my job and my hobby. [The TV station] is still sending me *VideoAge*, which I read with big interest, while I'm thinking of the 'good old times.'"

Charles Falzon's first MIP-TV was in 1978 as a seller for Canada's CBC covering the Caribbean, Latin America and South East Asia. "We were the new young people in town and facing the 'old-boy network' was really tough. I remember when a few buyers from South Africa's SABC came to our



VideoAge's pre-L.A. Screenings breakfast meeting at MIP-TV 1991



MIP-TV 1997: Greg Phillips with Anat Birnbaum

stand and, a few minutes into the screening, while I was happily waiting outside the room, they all walked out rather annoyed. Without realizing it, I had them screen an anti-apartheid music concert.

But the most memorable moment for me was in 1987 with my own company, Producers Group. While pitching a buyer, his chair was slowly sinking. In order not to fall, he held onto the wall, which collapsed. While this was going on, I kept on pitching."

Armando Nuñez Sr.: "My first MIP was in 1979. At that time I was at ITC in charge of sales for the Far East, Latin America, Canada and Israel. If I'm not mistaken, our small booth was on the second floor of the Malmaison, next to the old Palais. I remember my British colleagues warning me that the building had no air conditioning, but they said, 'our booth is next to two big windows,' which was nice early in the morning. At that time people were allowed to smoke everywhere, and they did, so the windows had to be kept open all the time."

Bernard Majani's first MIP-TV was in 1979. Today he's M6 TV's director of acquisition in Paris, but then he was in sales at Plateforme 2000: "It was the year we launched the French cartoon *Wattoo Wattoo*. We drove MIP-TV organizers crazy because we were putting stickers of the cartoon right on the photographs on the badges, rendering impossible the identity of the participants. The organizers made us stop, but at the end of the first day everyone knew *Wattoo Wattoo!*"

Michael J. Solomon: "My first MIP-TV at



20th Century Fox TV's press conference at MIP-TV 1997

We all had a history of being threatened by our clients, but none of us had ever been threatened by a supplier.

Telepictures was in 1979. Our stand was in the third basement of the old Palais. I remember nailing the Telepictures sign myself over a desk in a tiny space that had no room for chairs. The most decent product we had was *The American Film Theatre*, which was 14 features of plays which I thought I would never sell. Lo and behold, the head of film programming for the BBC came looking for us to license these 14 films, which I did and I thought I died and went to heaven. That sale literally started our journey to become a very major player in the world of international distribution."

Dom Serafini attended his first MIP-TV in 1979 as International Editor of *Television/RadioAge*. "My boss, Sol Paul, sent me to MIP with two specific orders: do not upset Sandy Frank, who ran his own company, and Telepictures' Michael Solomon. Frank bussed half of MIP to an out-of-town orphanage where he ceremoniously donated a large check. Solomon organized a press luncheon during MIP's busiest period and monitored who attended. Since they both were very large advertisers, no one could afford to miss them.

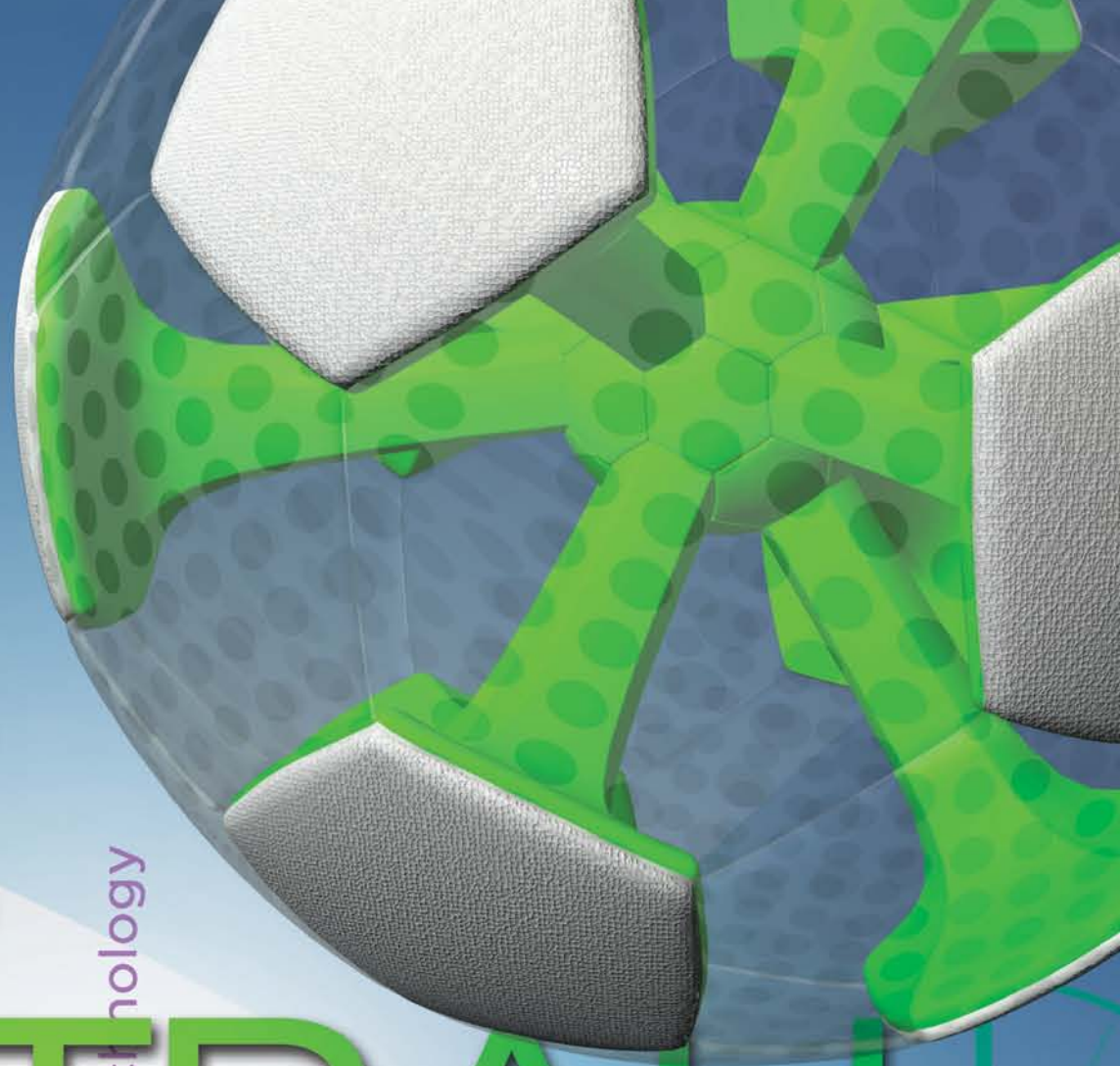
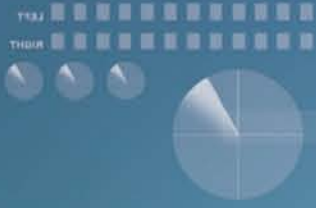
"When *VideoAge Daily* at NATPE ran an ad for the Monte Carlo TV Market in 1983, Bernard Chevry was so upset that he tried to ban me from MIP. What I used to dread the most, however, was meeting MCA's Colin Davis in the mornings. Inevitably, he carried a copy of *VideoAge Daily* at MIP streaked with a yellow marker. Puffing cigarette smoke into my face, he would proceed to analyze line-by-line every single article! 'Don't try to be *The New York Times*,' he used to say. Exasperated, I finally told him to just look at the pictures! To save money on ad production, in 1987 Davis sent a magenta color proof for a metallic silver ad. The printer matched the color and the ad came out reddish.

In 1989, Warner Bros. paid the expenses of having parts of *VideoAge's* MIP Issue reprinted overnight because the ears of Buster Bunny in the ad weren't spaced properly."

Dick Lippin of The Lippin Group: "For a guy who was born in Brooklyn and only dreamed about going to the South of France, setting foot in Cannes for the first time in 1983 was magical. I have been to MIP countless times, but every time I go it is like I have never been there before.

"In one very memorable moment at MIP 1993 I was with Cindy Crawford, and we were about to hold a news conference in the lobby of the Carlton Hotel to launch her new program. Boy, did we underestimate her popularity! The press conference was postponed because the crush of photographers and reporters was so great. We wound up being ushered into what was an oversized closet until it was safe to come out again." 🇫🇷

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Travelers Still Hating Airports

According to a CNN travel report, at the top of the 10 most hated airports in the world is Paris-Charles de Gaulle (CDG), followed by Los Angeles International Airport (LAX).

While *VideoAge* concurs that CDG is bad, it doesn't agree with LAX. Plus, there are far worse airports than CDG, one of which is Dallas-Forth Worth, where a light rain can cause unreasonable delays. CNN lists London Heathrow Airport (LHR) as third most hated. We'd move LHR to first rank. Travelers with connections should avoid it at all costs. Rome and Milan also have terrible airports, but over there they're accustomed to bad service. Finally, we'd like to name Tokyo's Narita Airport and Amsterdam's Schiphol as the most confusing with plenty of directions, but of little usefulness.

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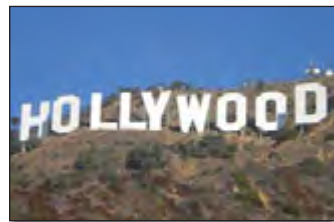
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My 2¢

If the international TV business has indeed changed so much over the years, why are we still confronting the same issues?



Pick up any TV trade publication from the past 30 years and you'll be reading about today's problems. Or flip through the story in *VideoAge's* January 2013 Issue concerning international program acquisition executives and sellers and you'll be reading about a recurrent problem.

By the way, this particular story made me realize how little coverage trade publications give to content buyers, busy as we are courting the favors of advertisers. And yet, theirs are voices that need to be heard, not only because by giving them coverage we can truly say we are the mirror that reflects what's out there, but also because buyers can offer new ideas for ways of doing business.

For example, reading the complaints from buyers that some international distributors don't understand their programming needs brought to mind the idea that one way to improve sales is to do what U.S. distributors used to do in the good ol' days of their domestic syndication business.

At that time, a syndicator was your stereotypical dapper traveling salesman (there were very few women then) who — in a suit showing off his handkerchief drooping from the breast pocket (the puff fold), a collar pin underneath the knot of the necktie and wearing a pinky ring — visited local TV stations trying to wiggle out with a 30-minute time slot from the program or station manager.

While senior syndicators made the calls to the top 10 markets, visiting cities like New York, Los Angeles and Chicago, junior sales people were given TV markets in the 120-plus range like Macon, Georgia, where the best restaurant in town was McDonald's. But there were perks for these newbies, because they traveled on generous expense accounts and could even add the dry cleaning bill for home window curtains to the company's bill.

Though cleaning window drapes was optional, no dapper salesman could go on calls without the videocassette of the show to sell and several charts, because the task on hand was to demonstrate to the TV station's program manager that the ratings of a particular time-slot could be improved with his first-run or off-net show.

In those days, the salesman was required to have memorized the station's non-network schedule (if an affiliate), its weak rating spots and its local advertising market. The type and content of the show he was selling

was incidental. The goal here was to demonstrate how the TV station could make more money with his show. Naturally, the license fee was in accordance with the time slot he was able to carve out, with access time (the period before primetime) demanding more money than a morning or afternoon slot.

International distribution, on the other hand, was born differently and basically never evolved. In the beginning buyers used to cherry-pick series episodes. Later they took full episodes, but never involved the seller in the scheduling process.

However, now that buyers around the world are seeking more involvement from

sellers in order to reduce costs and receive more targeted proposals, perhaps it's time for international distributors to borrow pinky rings from the old U.S. syndicators and start to sell time slots. In my view, the days of selling a show without knowing where it will end up are numbered. For example, if a station cannot renew a show at the original license fee by agreeing to a less prominent time-slot, the station could reduce costs and the distributor could make an easy sale.

Knowing the stations' needs will not only improve sales, but could also increase license fees, because it's one thing to schedule a show in the middle of the night and another to air it in primetime.

Dom Serafini

P.S. For those who like to wear a breast pocket handkerchief, the Edwardian-era stylebook required that it should not be worn with a tie, but with an open neck shirt. Modern stylebooks, on the other hand, state that a tie and a breast pocket handkerchief should never match. Finally, purists demand refraining from wearing a saw-tooth pocket-handkerchief, unless one is Prince Philip.

In my view, the days of selling a show without knowing where it will end up are numbered.



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