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French broadcaster TF1 order a local version of Yoav Gross Productions Israeli sitcom **LITTLE MOM**



ITV Studios launches quiz format based on the **QUIZ CLASH** trivia app

A deal to send BBC Worldwide's *Great Bake Off* to Turkey's Channel 8 means the format is now in 15 territories

\$ Low



Rock music and reality TV star Gene Simmons head to Cannes to launch music competition format **COLISEUM** with Sierra/Engine



Warner Bros. launches clip-based quiz format *They Are Just Like Us* in which contestants guess animal noises

Australia's Network Ten continues the revival in fortunes for ITV Studios Global Entertainment format *I'm a Celebrity... Get Me Out of Here* by ordering a local run



US **BIG BROTHER** gets two season order from broadcast net CBS, extending its run through 2015 and 2016

Brazilian channel Globo orders a local version of Banijay International-sold musical gameshow format *Celebrity Ding Dong*

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TBI's at-a-glance guide to the biggest deals in international format television

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Talpa brings in bankers to weigh sale offers – formats company expected to fetch up to US\$1 billion. Meanwhile, Talpa-backed SBS6 gives reality show *Utopia* an open-ended run



Global Agency sell Turkish drama *GAME OF SILENCE* to NBC in scripted formats deal



New formats giant Core-Endemol-Shine to be run by former BSKyB executive *SOPHIE TURNER LAING*



Mixed fortunes for *RISING STAR* as format is cancelled in the UK before launch and cut short in Germany. Performs strongly on launch in France

\$ High

US cable net TNT orders new social experiment format *Escape Your Life* from Kinetic Content



Startup distributor Lineup Industries brings buzzy bullying format *THE BULLY PROJECT* to market



Sweden's SVT launches *POLITICS AND LIFE* interview format in which a psychotherapist sits down with a politician

Concept

Ireland's RT...appoints Janet Frawley head of formats, commits to formats farm initiative

FremantleMedia International and Sony Pictures Television Networks drum up a pan-Asian version of reality format *Got Talent*



MasterChef's secret sauce

MasterChef recently broke the 50-territory mark for local versions. TBI spoke to the people making, distributing and broadcasting the show about the ingredients that have helped it become the preeminent global cooking show

Not every hit international format comes with a grocery bill, but broadcasters ordering *MasterChef* will need to spend between £300-£450 (US\$485-\$730) in the UK and €10,000 (US\$12,600) in France and Spain per episode for ingredients. The disparity in the shopping bill reflects the differences in versions of the show around the world. The UK version, adapted from the 1990 original and relaunched on the BBC in 2005, has prime-time production values, but looks intimate next to the scaled-up *MasterChefs* in Australia and elsewhere.

This scalability and flexibility is one reason

for its success. There are several others cited by executives, hosts, broadcasters and contestants when asked why what looks like a straightforward cooking competition has become such a hit.

Food (if not cooking) unites everyone, and *MasterChef* is also an aspirational show. Successful contestants – there have now been over 10,000 around the world – open restaurants, publish books, make TV appearances and get jobs in the food industry.

“It’s more than a food format, it’s an aspirational show and shows how people can change their lives,” says Joe Bastianich, a judge on the US version on Fox. “For some people the food is irrelevant and it’s just about the people,

and for others it’s all about the food and the process,” he adds, highlighting another key element of the show: the storytelling as viewers get to know and love/hate the contestants. In Australia, one season even had a wedding, with the couple going on to open a successful Melbourne restaurant.

The audience is arguably more likely to veer towards love than hate with contestants on *MasterChef*. The overall tone is supportive. “There is very careful casting of judges who want people to succeed: the show has a positive message,” says Shine International CEO Nadine Nohr.

Assaf Gil, producer of *MasterChef Israel* echoes these sentiments and says the judges

on his show adopt an attitude that is more ‘We are willing to learn’ than ‘We know everything, impress us’.

Nohr, is understandably pleased to have *MasterChef* in her unscripted locker. “It’s a very crowded market for cooking, and *MasterChef* is the mother of cooking formats,” she says. “It keeps selling into new territories, and the rate of re-order is amazing. That’s because of the strength of the format and the nurturing it gets from the Shine Group in terms of remaking it and remaining true to its essence.”

It also naturally mirrors the society of the territory airing the show. The food cooked reflects classic national dishes and newer ones inspired by immigrants and different cultural groups. There is also jeopardy, as the contestants turn out food that varies from Michelin quality to inedible.

Bastianich hosts the US version alongside Gordon Ramsay and Graham Elliot, and the same trio fronts *MasterChef Junior*, also on Fox. “It’s the biggest competition reality show on TV and the biggest food show on TV,” he says of the US *MasterChef*. “It has become part of the conversation,” As the restaurateur-judge, it’s Bastianich’s job to talk up his own show, but his claim bears scrutiny: season five consistently won the all-important 18-to-49s, ranked as the top show across all demos, and peaked with over six million viewers.

As well as his US judging duties, Bastianich appears in the Italian version, which has run on Cielo and Sky Uno, both of which are 21st Century Fox channels.

Regionally, the growth of the format in Latin America has helped it hit the 50-territory mark, with versions now in Argentina, Brazil, Chile and Colombia. The format has been sold into 52 territories in all, with Bangladesh and Lebanon yet to make their versions. Most international versions are into multiple seasons, and the format has a huge 83% recommission rate.

The group that is at an earlier stage, with one season aired, includes Albania, Brazil, Colombia, Germany, Hungary, Iceland, Morocco, Pakistan, Slovakia and Turkey. At the other end of the scale, territories that have had five seasons or more include Australia, Sweden, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Sweden and the US. The UK is the most seasoned *MasterChef* territory, with the show stretching to 11 seasons.

In many territories, *MasterChef* had a first-

mover advantage and been the first cooking competition series to go out on mainstream TV in peak time. Spain is a good example and Carlos Mochales, director of entertainment at TVE, says he ordered a local version of the show to stake a claim in primetime cooking.

“*MasterChef* is a fantastic format that had

not been aired in Spain,” he says. “In fact, there were no other cooking talent shows airing, and this gave us the opportunity to be the first in the category.”

The first season averaged an 18.6% share for TVE, with the final taking 33.1%. The broadcaster also has *Junior MasterChef*. As a



MASTERCHEF AUSTRALIA IN THE RATINGS RACE

MasterChef has been a huge success for Network Ten in Australia, but having hit the ratings highs it then started to fall away, sparking some serious thought about the format.

“Given a food/cooking show of this nature had never been attempted in primetime, we needed to introduce it as ‘event television’, and this influenced the approach we took with style and presentation,” says Shine Australia boss Mark Fennessy of the scaled-up Ten version. “The network took a huge risk and was a laughing stock when it was announced, but the rewards for that risk are evident.”

Initial ratings were modest, before taking off and hitting an unprecedented level. The finale of season two was the third-most-watched show ever in Australia and forced a national election debate to be rescheduled for fear no-one would tune in while the cooking series was on air.

The success, however, didn’t go unnoticed by Ten’s peers. Seven brought in *My Kitchen Rules*, and under pressure from Ten, Shine altered the *MasterChef* recipe and the format was changed. The result was that season five was a ratings disappointment and, Fennessy accepts, went “off-brand”.

The reaction, the Shine Australia boss says, was to go back to basics. “We successfully argued for a return to ‘authentic’ *MasterChef*. We ramped up casting like never before and dispensed with the noisy characters, tricks and gimmicks. We also had active consultation on the network marketing campaign and on-air promos, so the message to the audience was seamless. It worked. The word on the street was that ‘*MasterChef* was back’, and the ratings began to build once again. Going forward it will be more of the same and then some.”

The upshot is that having looked like coming to the end of its extraordinary run, the resurgent format seems set to air for more seasons. “If we can collectively resist the temptation of increasing the hours or running too many variants, it’s got at least five years and probably more,” Fennessy says.

public broadcaster, Mochales says TVE also considered the show a good way to showcase and generate interest in Spanish cooking. “We saw in *MasterChef* a great potential to boost cooking as part of Spain’s national brand,” he says.

The dilemma for the producers and broadcasters is which version of *MasterChef* to format. Macarena Rey, executive producer of the TVE version, says it went down the US route. “It has a similar thrilling rhythm, and we travel to wonderful and spectacular places to have our offsite challenges,” she says.

Individual territories add their own twists, and these elements can also travel. Rey says in Spain, the producers introduced a way for eliminated contestants to return, with their fellow participants deciding who could come back based on a blind taste of their dishes. The Spanish also brought in an element introduced in the Israeli version of the show, ‘macro casting’, whereby hundreds of chefs compete to enter the competition proper.

The series global producers get a chance to



Junior MasterChef Spain

sample the formats served up by their compatriots at a twice-yearly *MasterChef* Exchange. And when a new version is picked up, there are numerous forebears to choose from. “It doesn’t always get taken back to the

first version,” says Shine’s Nohr. “For example, we used the Italian version as a point of reference for the Albanian version.”

The judges also help the show evolve, Bastianich explains. “The applicant pool gets bigger, and they learn how to play the game and how to win, so we [judges] have to keep up,” he says. “Me and the other judges think about new challenges, so the contestants should expect the unexpected.”

Half the 52 *MasterChef* territories have now ordered one of its spin-offs. *Celebrity MasterChef* is in 15 territories, *MasterChef All Stars* in four and *MasterChef: The Professionals* in two. The most popular of the other shows in the franchise is *Junior MasterChef*, which is now in 18 territories.

One challenge with *Junior MasterChef* is that of filming with youngsters. An episode of *MasterChef* generally requires a two-day shoot, with one challenge filmed per day and two per instalment of the show. Typically, that involves eight cameras filming for 9-to-10 hours a day. Those kind of time demands cannot be placed upon kids, meaning *Junior MasterChef* often has shorter runs, limiting the volume Shine has for tape sales.

The show, which is still for a mainstream audience, offers a *MasterChef* “double whammy”, Nohr says. “It’s *MasterChef* plus the heartwarming power of kids. If you have the original, there is that knowledge and relationship with the judges, and you know the them in their more daunting mode. Seeing them then interact with the kids provides an interesting new dynamic.” **TBI**

MASTERCHEF ISRAEL SERVES UP A RECORD

Cooking and a country’s national dishes are engrained in its identity and in multicultural societies *MasterChef* reflects these differences, a point best illustrated by *MasterChef Israel*.

It launched on Channel 2 in 2010, winning a 38.6% average share. The recently aired third season kept up the ratings momentum with the finale, which, in a twist on the original format, is live, winning 1.4 million in April. That made it the most-watched show ever in the country, with more than half of Israelis watching.

The Israeli show is made by local indie Gil Productions. Assaf Gil has an interesting perspective given that his prodco makes the Israeli versions of numerous international formats, including ITV Studios’ hit international food-based format *Come Dine With Me*.

He says that ahead of season one, his production team looked at the UK, US and Australian versions and went to France to see the then fledgling French version being made. The Israeli version ended up most closely aligned to the *MasterChef Australia* format.

“We were intent on doing something big for primetime, with some of the spirit of the Australian version but also taking things a few steps further,” Gil says. “We are a country of migrants, and there are so many different cuisines here coming from European Jews and Jews from Arab countries. We had participants from different backgrounds and saw it as a way to talk about culture. We brought all facets of Israel together through the medium of food, but the show is not just about food.”

The inclusive casting has seen Orthodox Jews compete against Arabs, and Nof Atamna-Ismaeel, an Arab-Israeli with an ambition to open a Jewish-Arab cooking school, triumphed in season three. “It was very emotional, and we want it to be emotional,” says Gil.



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Hot food formats



Epic Meal Empire builds on Harley Morenstein's YouTube show *EpicMeal Time*

The evolution of food programming mirrors the wider food world. Fusion offerings, franchise-building and digital are shaping how producers and distributors dish up cooking formats and how viewers around the world consume them. Stewart Clarke finds out what's hot

Food shows and formats are evolving, but what remains constant is the demand for cooking-based content. "Cooking sits in there as one of the global things in the market, there is a perennial desire," says Mike Beale, director of international formats, ITV Studios Global Entertainment. "The likes of *MasterChef* and *Top Chef* track each other, because broadcasters all want a major cooking brand."

Joining the menu of major formats are newer offerings such as *The Taste*, the Red Arrow-distributed cooking competition show that is on ABC in the US and has recently been sold to Fox International Channels in Latin America.

Hat Trick International's Sarah Tong agrees there is ongoing demand for cooking from buyers, but notes that it takes different forms. "Worldwide, people say they are looking for food and cooking, and sometimes that means

'chop and chat' shows and other times lifestyle series or food and travel," she says. "There are lots of sub-genres beneath 'food'."

Israel has become a recognised formats powerhouse, and the country's producers are cooking up food shows. Amid the recognition for *Rising Star*, it is Shine's *MasterChef* that holds the record for the most-watched show ever in the country. Now, Gil Productions, which produces *MasterChef Israel*, has an

original show that will launch at MIPCOM.

Help, I Can't Cook debuted in September on Keshet in Israel and won a whopping 44% audience share. The format has celebrities who can't cook locked in a 'Culinary Academy for Beginners' where, over three weeks, they attempt to pick up some kitchen skills, taking on tasks along the way. "It's almost the anti-*MasterChef* because the contestants have no clue and the cooking in the show is very, very basic, for example cooking an egg," says Gil's founder, Assaf Gil. "It's a comic reality show."

New companies are alive to the foodie-format opportunities in the market as well. Julie Bristow was well known as a formats buyer for Canadian public broadcaster the CBC, but struck out on her own with Bristow Global Media. The fledgling company has developed a new food format in association with Jamie Oliver's *Fresh One*.

Pressure Cooker is a primetime cooking competition series for W Network. The format sees pairs of celebrity chefs and home cooks competing to cook dishes. The home cooks select and uses ingredients from conveyor belts at timed intervals. "There is nothing in the market that takes a home-cooking scenario

and introduces the kind of time and pressure the conveyor belt brings," Bristow says.

BBC Worldwide will sell the format (*Fresh One* is backed by FremantleMedia, but it only distributes shows featuring Jamie Oliver). Bristow says the finished version will head to US cable, and the format would work well as a carousel production, with different versions produced from a central hub.

Another format that could be made locally from a central hub is *Ultimate Braai Master*, which hails from South Africa. From Cape Town-based producer Cooked in Africa Films, the format sees amateur chefs compete against one another in outdoor cooking challenges. All3Media International picked up the format rights earlier this year.

As new shows emerge, some of the existing ones are reaching the end of their cycle. Shouty chef Gordon Ramsay's *Hell's Kitchen* is coming to the end of its run on Fox in the US and Channel 4 in the UK. "I've had a phenomenal 10 years making 123 episodes, 12 seasons, shot across two continents, watched by tens of millions of people and sold to over 150 countries," Ramsay wrote on his website in June. "It's been a blast, but it's time to call it

a day. I'll be continuing with my other shows," he reassured fans. Meanwhile, the format endures, and ITVSGE's deal with SCTV in Indonesia, which came soon after Ramsay's announcement, marked the first time *Hell's Kitchen* had been commissioned in Asia.

Asia and Latin America are seen as increasingly fertile ground for food formats. ITVSGE's Beale says the regions are key distribution targets for *Come Dine with Me*. "They are the next goals," he says. "With the rise of the dinner party and food becoming more cosmopolitan and global, we will see a second wave of *Come Dine With Me* format deals as local social and economic conditions change."

Content companies in Latin America, meanwhile, want to be food-format sellers as well as buyers. *Kitchen to Fame*, from Mexico's Comarex, is a stripped format in which 14 cooks tackle international cuisines while living together and facing eliminations. "They live in the school, and the audience sees them challenged and how hard it is," says Comarex CEO Marcel Vinay. The distributor will launch the paper format at MIPCOM, and Vinay says the company has spoken to potential buyers in



Keshet International will launch *Help, I Can't Cook* at MIPCOM

Asia. He notes the product-placement potential for cooking implements and goods.

Also fusing food-format and classic reality formatting is MTV's *House of Food*, which follows in the best traditions of the cable

channel's reality shows by putting a group of young, attractive participants together in a house and watching the fun unfold. The foodie twist is that the residents are culinary students competing for a leg-up into the food

business. "It's a young-skewing twist on a traditional cooking show, putting cooking into a *Real World*-style house," says Caroline Beaton, senior VP, international programme sales, Viacom International Media Networks.

Beaton adds that there is a move away from celebrity chefs and towards injecting humour into food formats, with *Bake Off* a good example. The UK-originated format ostensibly tasks amateur bakers to test their skills against each other, but is overseen in the UK by comedians Mel Giedroyc and Sue Perkins, lending it a fun air amidst the competition. The show is made by Love Productions and the format has been sold widely by BBC Worldwide outside the US, where Love itself brokered a deal with the CBS network (this show is called *The American Baking Competition*, because baking brand Pillsbury owns the 'Bake Off' trademark). Like *MasterChef*, there is a version for young bakers, *Junior Bake Off* which notched its first format sale, to Thailand's Now 26 channel, in June.

Asian food formats are also coming to market. From South Korea, *Crazy Market* tests contestants' food knowledge against experts' in a series of challenges. Korea's CJ E&M has optioned the series to Ballandi Multimedia in Italy. Also out of Korea, *The Kitchen Musical*, is in a category of one as a cooking-based scripted musical format. The Small World IFT-distributed show, a musical drama set in a restaurant, originated in Singapore and aired in numerous Asian territories. It was in line for a US network bow, with ABC piloting a version from *Friends* co-creator Marta Kauffman, but didn't make it to series, meaning the format is back on the market.

Small World IFT will launch a new food format at MIPCOM, *Chef at Your Door*. It was created by Germany's Tresor and has been gaining traction with Gulli in France, TVP1 in Poland and Inter Channel in Ukraine among the buyers. The format pitches two families (each with a chef) against each other in a cooking competition, with the results judged by other neighbours. Small World IFT's Tim Crescenti says it is more than just a 'food show'. "The families cook and learn together," he says. "It's more lifestyle than cooking; it's not foodie, it is mainstream."

A common theme is that distributors seek to open up a greater range of slots by identifying their food format as a broader proposition in genre terms. *Come Dine With*



DIGITAL AND HIPSTER FARE PREPARED FOR CANNES

One new cooking-formats buyer and seller is FYI, the A+E channel that took the place of Bio. The lifestyle channel is a natural home for foodie fare and one of its shows is *Epic Meal Empire*, which highlights the increasingly well-worn route from online to TV. YouTube food star Harley Morenstein, aka the 'Sauce Boss', and his friends hit the road to make visually spectacular recipes. Morenstein built a big following online with his *Epic Meal Time* show, and had already made the move to TV with *Epic Chef*, his take on the likes of chef-battle formats such as *Chopped*.

A+E's programme sales unit will be shopping *Epic Meal Empire* at MIPCOM. Ellen Lovejoy, vice president, content sales, says: "A lot of cooking shows have been studio-based, – *MasterChef*, *Top Chef* and others – but we wanted to get out of the studio and do something unique, have a different take on the tried-and-tested competition show."

The show fits with a new wave of irreverent, young-skewing food formats. "It skews young," Lovejoy says. "You don't need a subscription to [high-end food and entertaining magazine] *Bon Appétit* to be a foodie. We're looking at what's good online and taking it to linear. It's a great place to source talent and test creativity."

In the hipster world, food has become a big deal and food formats have emerged as a battleground for the eyeballs of hip young tastemakers. MTV is among those going after a young demographic with food formats. Viacom International Media Networks' new offering *Snack Off* (pictured) is inspired by classic food formats – but turns it the template on its head. In each half-hour, three amateur chefs cook epic late-night snacks. The prize is having a recipe published in the *Snack Off* cookbook and a golden spork [spoon and fork] necklace.


The show, which launched on MTV US to 1.7 million viewers, is one of VIMN's big MIPCOM launches. "It's taking a cooking-competition format and doing the opposite," VIMN's Caroline Beaton says. "It's late-night, irreverent and trashy. You could say it is the antithesis of *MasterChef*." Accordingly, the challenge is not to turn out restaurant-quality food. "It's more about the best thing to do with cheesy Wotsits after midnight," Beaton says. She thinks the show will go on late-night slots on cable and free-to-air channels. "Format buyers are very keen on cooking formats with a twist," she says.

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Me is at the top of this food-but-not-food category. The format sees members of the public, and in some cases celebrities, put on and rate each other's dinner parties. "It doesn't present itself as a cooking show, it's a people show first and foremost," says Beale.

Food formats are fitting into the wider format categories, such as the talent or dating show: dating and food seem to work well together, for example, and Hat Trick has sold UK-originated *Dinner Date* to Seven Network in Australia and Direct 8 in France among others. Along with its new format, *Win It Cook It*, in which contestants compete for ingredients before they start cooking, *Dinner Date* can be a weekly show or stripped, giving the broadcaster the same flexibility as with a *CDWM*.

CDWM has also embraced romance with *Come Date With Me*. ITVSGE bills the show as a combination of the snooping and sniping of *CDWM* with a classic dating-show format, and it has so far gone out on Channel 4 in the UK, on Canadian specialty channel W Network and in Australia on Network Ten. The big established food formats are clearly becoming franchises, and *CDWM* has other spin-offs in its portfolio. There are celebrity and couples versions and, Beale reveals, talks about a 'professionals' edition.

Executives identify cooking-based quizzes as a gap in the food-format market, although there are some shows in this category such as *Chef des Chefs* from Belgian prodco KNTV for RTL Belgium. The format sees contestants quizzed over their knowledge of dishes, ingredients and cooking methods. DRG has



Comarex's paper format *Kitchen To Fame*

picked up international rights.

Looking at the restaurant business is another obvious direction for cooking shows to move. *Kitchen Nightmares* pioneered the format and *MasterChef* also has cooking business credentials as contestants go into professional kitchens in later rounds.

Restaurant Startup is produced and distributed by Shine for US news and current affairs net CNBC. It has *MasterChef US* and *Italy* judge Joe Bastianich and fellow restaurant owner Tim Love pass judgment on teams that want to launch their own eateries. "I was involved in the development and wanted to bring to the screen what I do in real life in the restaurant business, it's a back-door [for the viewer] into the industry," Bastianich says.

Kabel Eins' German daytime format, *Mein Lokal, Dein Lokal*, also looks at the restaurant business. It is shopped internationally as *My Restaurant Rocks*. The show sees rival eateries compete to be the best in the region. Red Arrow sells it and recently licensed it to TFi in France, which will name its version *L'Addition, s'il vous plait*.

In the food/lifestyle category, Hat Trick has the Keo Films-produced *River Cottage* franchise, which features British chef Hugh Fearnley-Whittingstall. With personality-driven shows, tape sales are easier to sell than a local version, although Hat Trick International does market *River Cottage* as a format, and Lifestyle Channel commissioned *River Cottage Australia*. The Keo and ITV Studios-produced series saw Fearnley-Whittingstall and Tasmanian chef Paul West set up a sustainable farm.

Another food format with a social conscience is *Dining with the Enemy*. The Nordic World-distributed format has a well-known war correspondent and a top chef host a meal for guests from opposite sides of some of the world's most deep-seated wars and conflicts, including Palestine, Afghanistan, Rwanda and Burma.

Travel Channel ordered an English-language version earlier this year. French-language Canadian network TV5 Quebec has also ordered a local version of the format, which has been optioned by Red Arrow-owned producer Sultan Sushi in Belgium.

Hungry food format buyers aren't leaving the table just yet. **TBI**



Come Dine With Me remains a massive hit for ITV Studios



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Ob doc formats dissected



Timber Kings

The observational documentar – or docu-soap – has brought big characters and a window into weird and wonderful occupations to screens around the world. But how formattable are these shows – and is the genre on the wane? New research conducted by Eurodata TV for TBI helps to dissect the ob-doc genre

Observational docs have provided broadcasters around the world with affordable ratings-winning fare in increasing volume in recent years. Eurodata TV’s analysis of the genre for TBI provides an interesting headline statistic: the overall number of ob-docs produced in the major TV territories declined last year.

Across a spread of markets including Australia, France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Spain, Sweden, the UK and the US, 128 new ob-doc formats rolled out between September 2013 and June 2014 (see fig. 1). The figure is up on the previous year, but is a notable decrease on the 168 recorded in the September 2011 to June 2012 period, which was also when *Duck Dynasty*, the A&E show and ratings king of the genre, launched.

The data for the most recent period puts the number of launches just behind the 130 for September 2010 to June 2011, although ahead of the 100 recorded the previous year.

Eurodata consultant Julia Espérance admits she is surprised by the decrease, but says next year’s figures will need to be digested before we can say the ob-doc/docu-soap genre has peaked.

She says the narrative structure of shows in the genre has become similar in recent years, with the big-character, crazy jobs-style of ob-doc format to the fore.

There have been increasing efforts to format popular ob-docs in recent years. The likes of A+E are leading the charge, which makes sense given the huge success such shows have had on the group’s US nets, and also its large footprint of international channels, which includes A&E, History and Lifetime.

History’s show *Pawn Stars* has transferred to A&E and History channels in Australia, South Africa and the UK. A&E’s *Pickers*, about a family that buys and sells collectibles, has been remade in Australia for A&E and in Canada for History.

The likes of TruTV’s ob-doc/reality show *Storage Hunters* have also travelled from the US to the UK, in this case to digital channel Dave, which ordered a local version. BBC format *Junior Doctors* also travelled, heading to RTL5 in the Netherlands.

However, the locally specific nature of many hit ob-docs makes formatting them a challenge – there are not many bearded duck-hunting-product manufacturers worldwide, for example, making local versions of *Duck Dynasty* unlikely.

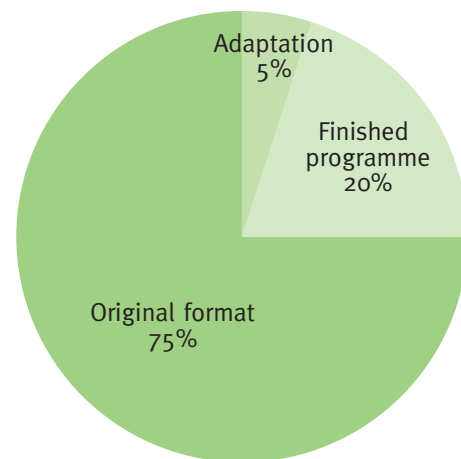
Of the ob-docs on air in the major territories, 5% were formats last year (see fig. 2). Most, 75%, were locally originated and a fifth were acquired from distributors.

FIG. 1 :NUMBER OF TITLES LAUNCHED



Sources: Eurodata TV Worldwide / NOTA International TV Trends / Relevant partners

FIG. 2 :FORMAT TYPES



Sources: Eurodata TV Worldwide / NOTA International TV Trends / Relevant partners

FORMATS UPDATE DATA

“It is a local genre of programming and local programming is strong,” says Esperance. “[But] these shows can be quite hard to duplicate. Some are clearly about a specific community or religious group.”

Accordingly, some of the new hit shows lend themselves better than others to remakes. Looking at the new shows that most strongly outperformed their slot average, *Timber Kings* on Scripps/Shaw channel HGTV in Canada won out ahead of the US History channel’s *Down East Dickering*.

There are clear leaders in terms of the channels actively pushing ob-docs. In the US, the A+E channels with *Duck Dynasty* and TLC with its *Amish* franchise are category leaders. Bravo also features with its *Real Housewives* franchise.

The latter is one that has proven to be formattable, with Australian pay TV platform Foxtel having *The Real Housewives of Melbourne*, which has since been sold back into Bravo in the US by its distributor (and Bravo owner), NBCUniversal. A UK version has now been ordered by ITV for its new female-skewing digital channel ITVBe. In the UK, BBC One and Channel 4 are the ob-doc leaders and Channel 4 has scored a rating hit with fly-on-the-wall school series *Educating Yorkshire*, which is becoming an *Educating...* franchise with follow-up *Educating the East End*. **TBI**



Pawn Stars UK



The Real Housewives of Cheshire

TOP 5 MOST PROLIFIC COUNTRIES IN TERMS OF CREATION

Rank	Country	No. of occurrences
1	United States	114
2	United Kingdom	87
3	Netherlands	53
4	Germany	45
5	Sweden	34

TOP NEW LAUNCHES (SEASON 2013- 2014)

Country	Channel	Original title	Launch date	Timeslot	Program Av shr (%)	All individuals	
						Channel Av shr (%)	Added share
Canada	HGTV	<i>Timber Kings</i>	05-01-2014	Primetime	4.2	1.2	250%
US	History	<i>Down East Dickering</i>	02-04-2014	Primetime	1.7	0.5	240%
US	Oxygen	<i>Preachers of LA</i>	09-10-2013	Primetime	1.3	0.4	225%
Norway	TV2 Zebra	<i>Nattarbeiderne</i>	27-11-2013	Primetime	5.3	2.0	165%
Norway	TV2 Zebra	<i>Fjorden Cowboys</i>	05-02-2014	Primetime	4.5	1.7	165%

Sources: Eurodata TV Worldwide / NOTA International TV Trends / Relevant partners

Methodology: Best-performing new programme premiere in terms of market share, compared with the slot average

Period: September 2013-June 2014

Genre: Docusoap

Countries studied: Argentina, Australia, Belgium South, Belgium North, Brazil, Canada, China, Colombia, Denmark, Egypt, Finland, France, Germany, India, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Lebanon, Mexico, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Quebec, Romania, Russia, Spain, South Africa, South Korea, Sweden, Turkey, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom, United States and Venezuela

Finished formats are excluded.



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FORMATS HOT PICKS

TBI runs down the best formats awaiting buyers at MIPCOM this year

THE SHOW: *Heaven or Hell*
THE PRODUCER: UFA Productions
THE DISTRIBUTOR: FremantleMedia International
THE BROADCASTER: ProSieben (Germany)
THE CONCEPT: Quiz show in which contestants can use a trip to 'Hell' as a lifeline

Heaven or Hell has caused a stir in Germany and the crazy challenges that contestants take on – or endure – while in 'Hell' have been grabbing column inches. It has also caused a stir in the ratings, being ProSieben's biggest entertainment launch of the past year and adding 50% to the free-to-air broadcaster's viewers in the 14-to-49s.

The edge the show has is part of its younger-skewing appeal, says Rob Clark, director of global entertainment development at FMI, which is launching the format at MIPCOM. "It obeys the classic gameshow rules, but is also very shocking," he says. "Old people won't like parts of it, but it's not meant for them."

The shocks come when contestants take a trip to 'Hell'. The set is divided into Heaven

and Hell areas and quirky multiple-choice questions face the contestants when they are in the heavenly zone, which is suitably decorated in soft tones and bathed in white light.

If they are not sure they know the answer that will see them progress up the money ladder, they have a lifeline in the option of descending to Hell.

While there, they are faced with tasks and challenges such as having their head shaved, being painted a funny colour or drinking or eating something that would not ordinarily be ingested.

If they succeed, the head back to Heaven and proceed up the money ladder. Given the comedic twist, the show is not centred on a huge cash prize (in Germany it is €50,000).

Created by FremantleMedia's German prodco UFA, ProSieben has ordered a second season of the German *Heaven or Hell*. "Imagine *Who Wants to be a Millionaire* had a baby with *Jackass* – that is this show," Clark says, adding that it also has elements of *I'm a Celebrity*, *Get Me Out of Here* and *Distraction*. "It's a well-structured game, but instead of a lifeline, contestants have the opportunity to go to Hell in lieu of answering."

The German version runs to two hours, but the format could be adapted for different slots, with one potential buyer discussing stripping it.

Clark notes that it is also an easy show to promote. "Broadcasters need something that stands out, that clearly says what it is, and this is easy to identify and to promote on and off screen."



THE SHOW: *The Secret Life of Students/Teens*
THE PRODUCER: Raw TV
THE DISTRIBUTOR: ITV Studios Global Entertainment
THE BROADCASTER: Channel 4 (UK)
THE CONCEPT: Ob-doc format that utilises cutting edge technology to show the secret lives of students and teenagers

The Secret Life of Students was an observational doc series that followed a dozen young scholars as they started at university, following their real lives and their online and social media lives.

It aired on Channel 4 in the UK and the free-to-air broadcaster is now readying a version of the show that will delve into the lives of teens will hit the channel in autumn or winter.

The shows are produced by Raw TV, the UK prodco recently acquired by Discovery, and ITV Studios Global Entertainment is launching the

The Secret Life of... as a format at MIPCOM. "The format is the D:Rig [advanced fixed rig] technology, graphics, the way stories are tracked and overall know-how; there's a lot of secret sauce being applied in the background," says Mike Beale, director of international formats at ITVSGE.

He adds: "The technology captures everything the participants do on their phone and social media, and there is also a complicated consent model."

Making the *The Secret Life of...* format

involves one part of the production team following the subjects and the other their digital lives and personas. There are certain regions and territories where Beale is particularly hopeful of a deal. "It will work well in northern Europe, and I think something in the US will happen," he says.

Buyers looking for an edgy, revealing format with some social experiment overtones should head for ITV Studios' MIPCOM stand, or possibly, given the nature of the format, hit them up on Facebook, Twitter or Instagram.

THE SHOW: *BFF*
THE PRODUCERS: Nordisk Film TV, Carlsberg
THE DISTRIBUTOR: Banijay Intn'l
THE BROADCASTER: TV2 (Denmark)
THE CONCEPT: Hidden-camera show in which friends are put through surreal challenges that test their fraternal sensibilities

'Carlsberg – probably the best lager in the world'... so goes the famous UK advertising slogan. Another Carlsberg beer slogan, this one from its home country of Denmark, was the inspiration behind Banijay International's MIPCOM leader.

"Carlsberg wanted to do something around the idea that it is the beer of best friends,

which led to the tag line, 'Best Friends Forever'," explains Banijay International's head of sales Sebastian Burkhardt. This paved the way for the development of *BFF*, which Banijay Group's Nordisk Film TV then sold to young male-skewing channel TV2 Zulu.

Burkhardt bills the show as "*The Hangover* come to life". The hidden-camera format sees one person arrange a series of madcap situations that force their friends to rescue or help defend their pal in various ways. Eventually, they are led to a venue where the friend and production crew reveal the prank. A section in which they share a beer – Carlsberg, naturally – follows before the episode closes.

"It has all the ingredients for success," says Burkhardt. "There are interesting scripted

storylines constructed for the format, which you can't control 100% but make for a really fun watch."

Banijay expects channels with young male audiences to show interest in the format.

"There have been a number of channels that have popped up over the last 24 months that really go after that high-quality young-male audience – DMax and TruTV [in the UK], for example – and there are not that many formats for them," says Burkhardt. "That's what makes this interesting; it's serving a relatively neglected audience, and there's definitely a niche for this type of programme."

Carlsberg contributed a large chunk of the production budget, but Burkhardt says. "I f you think it's going to be a half-hour Carlsberg ad, that's very much not the case".



THE SHOW: *Tumble*
THE PRODUCER: BBC In-House Entertainment
THE DISTRIBUTOR: BBC Worldwide
THE BROADCASTER: BBC One (UK)
THE CONCEPT: Celebrities perform tough gymnastic routines in competition reality series

Tumble is BBC One's latest attempt to overcome its long-running Saturday night primetime problem when ratings mammoth *Strictly Come Dancing* is on hiatus.

The gymnastics-themed competition series

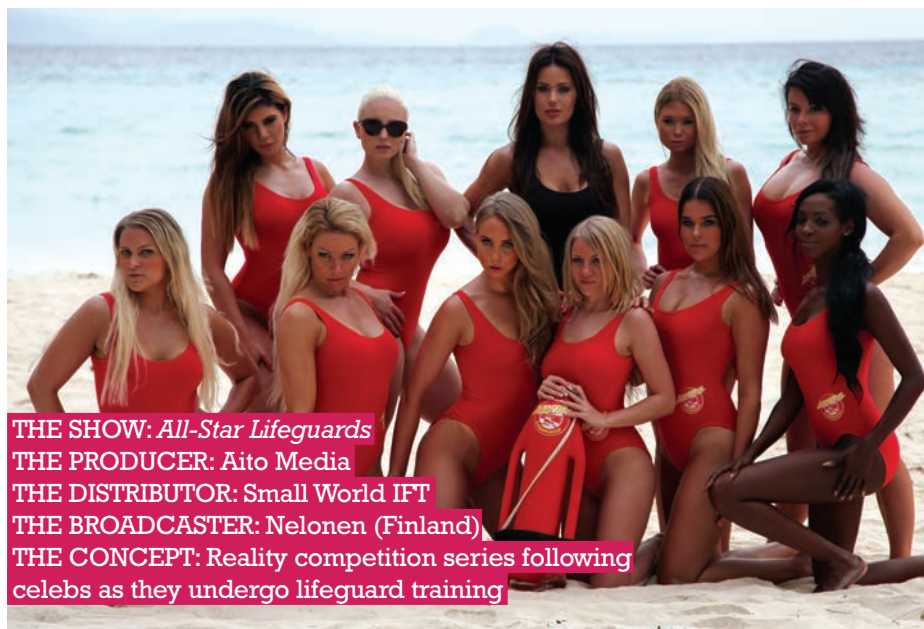
has had celebrities including *The Only Way is Essex* star Lucy Mecklenburgh and IBF Middleweight boxing world champion Carl Froch pushed to their limits in what the BBC's controller of entertainment and events Katie

Taylor described upon its announcement as "probably the most physically demanding show of its kind anywhere in the world".

Taylor says that carefully selecting celebs that can cope with the demands is therefore crucial. The BBC worked with British Gymnastics and the National Centre for Circus Arts to test potential contestants, but notes it is physical health – and not age – that is key (the British version included the 60-year-old presenter Peter Duncan, in a bid to ensure more of a family audience).

The UK version also included high-profile judges such as UK Olympian (and *Strictly* winner) Louis Smith and famous female gymnast Nadia Comaneci and an arena setting, but Taylor says the show can be scaled down to suit the needs of individual channels.

She notes that the "big investment" from BBC Worldwide, which came on board after the pubcaster's in-house format development created the idea, allowed the BBC to be ambitious in its scope. Though ratings did not nearly touch the 10 million-plus *Strictly* commands, "It is a first season we can be proud of", says Taylor. Ultimately, she adds, "*Tumble* aims to do for gymnastics what *Strictly* has done for ballroom dancing."



THE SHOW: *All-Star Lifeguards*
THE PRODUCER: Aito Media
THE DISTRIBUTOR: Small World IFT
THE BROADCASTER: Nelonen (Finland)
THE CONCEPT: Reality competition series following celebs as they undergo lifeguard training

All-Star Lifeguards is a new reality format rolling out at MIPCOM. Tim Crescenti's Small World IFT is bringing the show to market and he says it is "a celebrity-reality show in the spirit of *Baywatch*".

Created by Helsinki-based prodco Aito Media, Finnish broadcaster Nelonen launched the show in September, meaning some early ratings data for interested parties in Cannes.

The Finnish commercial broadcaster is

using the show to broaden the audience on its digital channel, Jim.

"It's sea, the sun and the beach," says Crescenti. "The participants are going through real lifeguard training and certification. It's a real learning process for them – there's more to it than seeing a Pamela Anderson-type contestant running along the beach." The show also follows the celebs' daily lives from their tropical beachfront base.

The original Finnish version of *All-Star Lifeguards* has all female contestants, but the expectation is a mixed male/female line-up in international versions.

One of the ten celebrity contestants gets eliminated weekly in the format, which Crescenti says has the potential to work as an international show filmed from a central production hub, in this case, in Thailand.

"Options have been taken in France and Denmark, and there is real interest from buyers," he says. "We can turn this into a turnkey format, which will reduce some costs, but we do want to shoot for big stations with *All-Star Lifeguards*."

THE SHOW: *Not a Star (Yet)*
THE PRODUCER: Wu Tong, Zhejiang
THE DISTRIBUTOR: Keshet Intn'l
THE BROADCASTER: Zhejiang TV (China)
THE CONCEPT: The children of celebrities partner with stars to compete in a studio singing competition

Keshet International is better known for selling formats into China than taking them out for global distribution. With *Not a Star (Yet)*, however, the company is “breaking the mould”, says KI’s general manager, distribution, Keren Shahar. There’s good reason for her confidence: it has averaged an eye-watering 200 million viewers over three seasons in China, and the show is on to a fourth season that’s set for summer 2015. “It’s fair to say it’s been something of a phenomenon,” says Shahar.

The format (which the Keshet exec says is “actually more than a talent show; we see it more as a variety show”) sees the children of celebrities performing on stage with stars of their choice. Their unusual backgrounds often

leads to “emotional and insightful stories” that sit alongside the performances, says Shahar.

“It’s also a very interesting change in dynamic to witness the celebrities in a supporting role, rather than on the stage and some touching and intimate moments between the families which get captured on film,” she adds.

Keshet will sell the show on the premise that any cultural differences apparent in the Chinese show can be bridged, and that formats are now coming from all over the world. “Today, maybe more than ever, our buyers do not really care where a good format comes from – it just has to have a brilliant concept behind it,” says Shahar.

She sees it as “the perfect weekend primetime show for commercial and public channels. That said, it holds a particular appeal with younger audiences who may watch pay TV channels.”

Not a Star (Yet) is the first fruits of a wider partnership between Israeli content firm KI and broadcaster Zhejiang. “We thought it was the perfect property to launch our collaboration,” says Shahar.



THE SHOW: *Farmer in the City*
THE PRODUCER: Strix Television
THE DISTRIBUTOR: DRG Formats
THE BROADCASTER: TV2 (Norway)
THE CONCEPT: Farmers attempt to teach urban families how respect for agriculture can make their lives better

“There is a thirst and an appetite from international buyers for formats in which we see beautiful rural settings that celebrate farming and the natural world,” says DRG Formats’ managing director Andrea Jackson, referring to *Farmer in the City*.

The format debuts in Cannes, with DRG

having both a promo and full episodes from its run in Denmark, where it has been playing in an 8pm Thursday slot on Norwegian commercial channel TV2 to slot-leading ratings.

Farmer in the City follows three farmers as they enter cities to meet families with

“terrible” attitudes to good food and healthy living. Gardens and fridges are investigated before the farmer sets the family tasks such as creating a chicken coop or growing their own food, with a larger task following. Later, the farmer returns to see if the intervention has led to lasting change.

Developed by Strix Television, the show was based on a local commercial for a farming co-op that suggested recent Norwegian generations have lost the ability to live off the land. “We thought this would be a great concept for a TV show and started developing a format around it,” says Strix producer Sebastian Sandsgaard.

TV2 commissioned the series just weeks after Strix’s pitch in April. Production began in June, and the first episode launched to a 23% market share in August, which Sandsgaard says was “by far the best result for any of the commercial channels in the time slot”.

“In terms of budget, you can scale it up or down easily,” says DRG’s Jackson. “There’s a versatility there, which is very important. It has broad appeal and will work in many markets.”



THE SHOW: *Trash or Treasure*
THE PRODUCER: Mastiff
THE DISTRIBUTOR: Zodiac Rights
THE BROADCASTER: TV4 (Sweden)
THE CONCEPT: Antiques-themed game show format in which contestants guess the value of objects to win a cash prize

MIPCOM will mark the second major market for which Zodiac Rights has a big new TV4 number for international buyers. Following adventure-survival show *Dropped*, *Trash or Treasure* is one of the Swedish commercial channel's key autumn season launches and has appropriately had a large marketing push, says Joel Karsberg, Zodiac Americas chief creative officer and chairman of Zodiac Media's International Development Board. The format comes from Mastiff, which was previously led by Cem Yeter, who has moved with Karsberg to LA in a bid to drive Zodiac's unscripted formats into new territories.

The premise sees two contestants tasked with ranking the value of eight objects displayed in a studio gallery. An expert, who has helped select the antiques, tells them everything about the piece – except the value, which varies from between US\$50 and US\$50,000. The objects are ranked, and at the end of the show, the contestants are left with just one. Its value is revealed and the cash equivalent handed to the player.

"The show is quite simple: it's about gut feeling and knowing how to assess objects," says Karsberg. The format was developed after Mastiff identified the strong demand for antiques- and collection-themed formats such as the *Storage Wars*, *Pawn Stars* and *Antiques Roadshow*-style programmes.

"We've seen the pawn phenomenon and tried to take it to a different venue," he says. "You can adapt this show quite easily – it depends on the objects in the gallery."



THE SHOW: *The Singer Takes It All*
THE PRODUCERS: Initial, Remarkable Television
THE DISTRIBUTOR: Endemol
THE BROADCASTER: Channel 4 (UK)
THE CONCEPT: Interactive singing format in which viewers vote whether to save contestants in real-time

Endemol UK prodcos Initial and Remarkable are known for creating inclusive formats with a cheeky edge. The pair's latest entertainment format, *The Singer Takes It All*, is no exception. "Anyone that has sung karaoke can imagine standing up there and belting out a song to win cash," says Endemol UK's creative director, David Flynn.

The format sees singers perform songs while standing on an 18-metre track that moves directionally depending on the reaction of the viewers, who vote in real-time via a downloaded app. If the performers receive too many negative votes, they are cast backwards off the show, while a run of positive scores will see them hit the 'Gold Zone' and return to sing again. The contestants who stay in the game longest move forwards to a final in which they can win up to £15,000 (US\$24,300).

"Being able to affect the show means voting is a much more interesting experience than ever before," says Flynn, who notes the app-voting process was actually the starting point of the format's development.

While ratings for the show over the traditionally quiet summer on Channel 4 this

year were average, engagement with the app was "unprecedented", Flynn says, far outstripping the initial figures of Endemol's play-along hits *The Million Pound Drop* and *The Bank Job*. While *Million Pound Drop*'s record engagement figure was 12.4%, *The Singer Takes It All* saw 15.7% of its average 905,000 debut-episode audience vote.

That the tech works with an "iconic" moving track means, Endemol says, *The Singer Takes It All* is the first show of its kind in which viewers really feel they are having a direct impact on the outcome of the show. Overall, the app was downloaded nearly 584,000 times in the UK.

Furthermore, contestants were selected by singing into their phones, with a separate app vote deciding who would appear on the following episode. "We're so used to casting the characters on our shows that this was scary," says Flynn. "What we found was it meant we didn't get a cast of the usual reality TV wannabes."

This means "it's a much warmer and more relatable atmosphere than you normally get on singing talent shows", he adds.



THE SHOW: *Ex on the Beach*
THE PRODUCER: Whizz Kid Entertainment
THE DISTRIBUTOR: Viacom International Media Networks
THE BROADCASTER: MTV (UK, US)
THE CONCEPT: Young singletons living and partying together and dating each other are surprised by the appearance of vengeful and/or lustful exes

With its young audience, dating and reality shows are a good fit for MTV, and its programme sales department will launch a new show in this genre in Cannes.

Ex on the Beach is a dating-reality show with a twist – the toned young contestants are

enjoying getting to know each other in a paradise location when their exes start turning up to the party, in some cases with an axe to grind and in others still holding a candle for their former love.

The mixed group, which is based in a villa,

go on adventures together and one-on-one dates, with the added element the surprise entrance of the exes brings.

“This was the first MTV UK show picked up by [MTV in] the US,” says Caroline Beaton, senior VP, international programme sales at Viacom International Media Networks. It started in the US in June.

It did good business for MTV in the UK, where it started in April, Beaton adds, beating the likes of *Geordie Shore* and even reality shows such as *TOWIE* and *Made in Chelsea* on the free-to-air channels in the coveted 16-to-34s. It ranked as MTV UK’s best-ever launch.

The social-network-surfing demographic MTV reaches out to also embraced the show in the UK, with it registering 220,000 Facebook, 100,000 Twitter and 50,000 Instagram followers.

It was MTV UK’s top show throughout its eight-week run, with a peak viewership of 841,000. Some of the stars of *Geordie Shore* also appeared in *Ex on the Beach*. A second season is in the works in the UK, and VIMN will give the format its international debut at MIPCOM.

A Bear Grylls survival show is always likely to entice buyers to your stand. Shine International’s MIPCOM offering, survivalist format *The Island*, also comes with decent ratings from its run on UK terrestrial Channel 4 earlier this year and a second-season commission in the bag.

“The young audience it attracted was particularly strong, which, besides being very important for the channel, was very important for us because it’s such a hard audience to get on telly,” says Kelly Webb-Lamb, managing director of coproducer Shine Television.

The UK format took 13 modern men to an uninhabited deserted island in the Pacific Rim, handed them cameras to film their experience and left them to fend for themselves with no creature comforts. Some contestants had basic survival-skill knowledge, and three were trained cameramen in order to ensure there would be plenty of good footage, but none had experienced anything similar before.

“It definitely wasn’t reality TV; it’s completely different,” says Webb-Lamb. “Once the experiment got going, it was left to run. There are no challenges, no firings, no winner, and nothing about it signals the tent poles of a



THE SHOW: *The Island with Bear Grylls*
THE PRODUCER: Shine Television, Bear Grylls Ventures
THE DISTRIBUTOR: Shine International
THE BROADCASTER: Channel 4 (UK)
THE CONCEPT: 13 men armed with cameras and basic survival skills brave an uninhabited island

reality show.”

Channel 4’s first-season focus was on masculinity (which was criticised in some parts of the UK media), but the second will follow two completely separate islands – one male and one female. Webb-Lamb says this shows the format’s versatility.

She also points to the fact Channel 4 has

taken the risk of running what she describes “a survival show with a point of difference”, which should give buyers heart that local versions can work with or without the Bear Grylls name attached. “The boundaries are ultimately 13 men or women surviving without the trappings of modern life and filming themselves doing it,” she adds.



Dating shows have been a scheduling staple around the world for decades, but recent developments in TV and digital media have forced producers to spice up the genre, reports Andy Fry

Dating in the real world and on TV is changing. “I think the demand for dating shows is still strong, as you can see with titles like *Take Me Out*,” says Jane Dockery, Sony Pictures Television’s senior VP formats, international distribution. “But there has been a big trend towards

authenticity. Viewers want dating shows to reveal more about the people involved. I think that’s partly to do with the influence of reality TV and also the way people interact through social media.”

SPT owns *The Dating Game*, a classic US studio-based format that has been reversioned around the world, sometimes with the title

Blind Date. Aside from a brief revival in France a few years ago, the format has been largely inactive for a decade, but now it’s back, says Dockery. “We’ve done a deal with TV3 in Ireland, and we’re talking to other broadcasters,” she says. “The core mechanics of the show are strong, but we’ve placed more emphasis on the contestants’ stories.”



ITVSGE's *Stand By Your Man*



Viacom International Media Network's *Catfish*



All3 MediaInternational's *Sexy Beast*

For Dockery, this focus on stories is evident in the growing number of shows that come at dating from a tangent. “Channel 4 shows like *The Undateables* and *First Dates* are interesting because they approach dating from a different angle,” she says. “They aren’t gameshow formats, but they show how audience attitudes to dating have developed.”

Caroline Beaton, Viacom International Media Networks’ senior VP of international programme sales, agrees there has been a reality influence on the genre. “We’ve always

done dating: we were doing *Singled Out* before the formats boom and have a strong dating heritage,” she says. “There is no more obvious hunting ground for us than dating, but the genre has changed. Now we want to get to know the characters, warts and all.”

Beaton cites a few examples that underline the new attitude audiences have to dating. In *Date My Mom*, people choose their partners based on descriptions by their parents, and in *A Shot at Love with Tila Tequila*, men and women vied to be selected as the partner of a

bisexual woman. In *Catfish*, the focus is on internet romances where it turns out that one of the parties has been using a fake identity. “There are parallels with how reality TV itself has evolved,” Beaton says. “It’s more about casting and less about nuts and bolts formatting.”

While Dockery still sees room for classic formats like *The Dating Game*, she says SPT has been looking at the impact of digital on the sector, and also exploring the idea of third-party recommendations. “We have a new show

called *Hashtag Love* which we are bringing to market with NTV Japan. It's a studio-based show where contestants can't see their potential date; they have to make their decision based on tweets from the studio and living room audience. It's our way of trying to bring

that social media interactivity into the heart of a dating show format."

While contestant stories are important, the dating-show genre has two obvious stylistic strands. On the one hand, there are shows where the potential partners get to see each

other (*Take Me Out*, *The Love Machine*). On the other, there are shows where someone has to make a choice without seeing their proposed partner (*The Dating Game*, *Hashtag Love*, *Date My Mom*). The most extreme example of the former group is probably *Adam Looking For Eve*, an Eyeworks show that first aired on RTL5 in the Netherlands. Every episode starts with a man and a woman meeting for the first time on a tropical island, completely naked. After spending the night together, a third naked person arrives. To date, broadcasters that have picked up the format include RTL in Germany and Cuatro in Spain.

In the latter camp of surprise-based formats is Talpa's *Dating in the Dark*, in which three men and three women have to decide whether they fancy each other without the benefit of light. Picked up by ABC in the US, the show went on to secure deals in the UK, Brazil, Scandinavia, Turkey and Canada. A more recent addition to the market is *Sexy Beasts*. "This is a blind date show commissioned by BBC Three," says Sabrina Duguet, VP, international format sales at All3Media International. "The big difference is that it employs movie-style prosthetics so contestants have to prioritise personality over looks when they decide. Essentially it's a classic-structure dating show with an amusing twist that is targeted at a young audience."

For Duguet, comedy and youth are often core components of the modern dating show: "You have to keep up with youthful trends because they're a core audience for these shows. Comedy helps. Online dating is so prevalent in Western markets that you have to offer more fun experiences than those people can get themselves."

When you survey the wider market for dating shows, one thing that becomes clear is that dating hybrids are in vogue. Sticking with comedy, for example, Duguet cites *Meet the Parents*, which has gone to second season in Canada and is being sold elsewhere as a finished show. "This is a comedy hybrid where one contestant is set up to meet a fake family that behave outrageously. How does the unsuspecting contestant deal with it?"

With the rising popularity of cooking shows, the market has also seen hybrid shows like *Dinner Date* and *Taste of Love* emerge. The latter, which debuted on Channel 10 Israel, is now being sold internationally by Dori Media.



SCREENWATCH: *MARRIED AT FIRST SIGHT*

Married at First Sight is a show in which total strangers agree to marry on their first meeting, based upon the opinions of a sexologist, spiritualist, psychologist and sociologist. Explaining its origins, Red Arrow's managing director, creative operations, Michael Schmidt, says *Married at First Sight* "was created by Snowman in Copenhagen for DR3, which wanted it as one of the lynchpins of the channel".

According to Schmidt, "the scope of the experiment and the title create the marketing, and the show sells itself. We have sold a lot of versions, but we and the broadcasters cannot always advertise that in advance because it can affect the casting before it is produced."

Countries where the show has aired include Denmark and the US (for A+E) while ProSiebenSat.1 in Germany and Channel 4 in the UK are also known to have signed up. There is also reportedly "a big broadcaster in Russia".

Despite the shock value of the concept, Schmidt says: "It is actually very authentic. When you watch it, you realise it's about people with a problem. It answers a question everyone is concerned with: will I find the right partner?"

Particular challenges with a show like this include screening and selecting contestants. "We have no final say as to whether they stay married, which is hard for us as producers. Usually we are careful to have final say."

Echoing other shows with elements of surprise, recommissions are also an issue, says Schmidt: "DR is producing the second season now and moving it to their main channel DR1. The casting process is trickier the second time around because the cat is out of the bag and we will have to weed out some people, but that's not so different to season two of a *Big Brother* or *Survivor*." Schmidt says most Western countries could air a variation of the show, but it's a process Red Arrow is controlling very carefully. "If one country, however small, messed it up there would be repercussions everywhere, so we have to make sure each one doesn't change the brand," he says.



All3 Media- distributed Meet The Family

There is a similar trend with dating-reality hybrids. FremantleMedia, the company that took Aussie format *Take Me Out* into 28 countries, has had huge success with *The Farmer Wants a Wife*. All3Media International has *Mystery Millionaire*, a WE tv show about a millionaire who hides his cash to attract true love. In their own way, *The Bachelor*, *Ex on the Beach* and *Beauty and the Geek* are also variations on the dating-reality theme.

“We are always being asked for dating formats,” says Vasha Wallace, FremantleMedia’s senior VP global acquisitions and development. “But dating is a really hard area to get right. To be successful, the show has to be somehow true to life and feel organic; a viewer has to believe in it. We all want to believe in love in some way, [and] the secret behind the show is how you portray it. That can be through light-hearted humour as in *Take Me Out* or feel-good, warm-hearted, fish-out-of-water as in *Farmer Wants a Wife*.”

In Wallace’s view, *Farmer Wants a Wife* “is the world’s top dating show, having travelled to 30-plus countries. The series has always performed incredibly. Most recently the French version got 6.2 million viewers, making it [French network] M6’s highest-rated entertainment show so far in 2014”.

Over at ITV Studios, formats chief Mike Beale has *Secret Matchmaker*, the result of a

partnership with Reshet in Israel. In this show, experts from different fields select three potential suitors, who are placed in the participant’s workplace and everyday life. The big question then is whether they will fall in love. With its emphasis on social experimentation, it sits in a category with *Adam Looking For Eve* and *Married at First Sight* (see panel).

“A lot of dating formats are reality-based,” says Beale. “Studio-based formats feel few and far between.” For this reason, he is coming to MIPCOM with a studio-based format in the shape of *Stand By Your Man*.

In this show, made by ITV Studios for Channel 5 in the UK, four men compete to win the affections of the women in the studio audience. Once the women select their favourite guy, he chooses one woman from the audience to go on a date with.

One issue that is fairly prominent with dating formats is whether they work in conservative cultures. Clearly, the more raunchy shows, with scantily-clad bronzed bodies, face a problem. “But something like *The Dating Game* can be adapted in line with local expectations,” says Dockery. “And if we’re taking about a really sensitive market, we focus more on formats like *Mr and Mrs* and *The Newlywed Game*.”

In terms of dating format origins, the US,

UK, the Netherlands and Australia are responsible for a lot of the key shows, but they don’t have a lock on the market. “One of my personal favourites from our catalogue is classic entertainment dating show *Man o Man* [originally from Germany],” says FremantleMedia’s Wallace says. “It aired in 20 territories, and we are looking to update it following interest from broadcasters.”

In another shout-out for Japan, she also cites “*Love Table*, a hugely successful format from Asahi Broadcasting. It ran for many years in Japan and is now very much part of their cultural dating fabric. We piloted it earlier this year and have been pitching it, with a really positive response”.

Elsewhere, Australian pubcaster SBS has done well with Chinese dating format *If You Are the One*, while Turkey’s Global Agency has licensed *Love is Calling* to RTL in Germany. A daily studio-based show, Global Agency CEO Izzet Pinto calls it “a fun, vibrant show with big potential. I am sure after its launch in Germany it will thrive. It will air live, which makes it intriguing and exciting.” Leading French producer Herve Hubert has optioned the show.

In an interesting piece of cross-market collaboration, Global Agency has also picked up format rights to *Flirt or Fiasco* from Germany’s Constantin Entertainment. Constantin is making *Love is Calling* for Germany.

Finally, a survey of the genre wouldn’t be complete without a look at what is coming out of Israel. Avi Armoza, head of Armoza Formats, says his company has five dating shows on its slate, including *Approved For Love*, *Buzz Off*, *Guys in Disguise*, *Foreplay* and *Nobody’s Perfect*.

“We aim to have a variety of dating shows with distinct premises,” he says. “*Foreplay* is a studio-based gameshow that is about the choice between looks and personality. We’ve sold that one to Russia, Poland and Romania. *Approved For Love*, which has been picked up in Turkey, puts friends and family in charge of dating decisions. *Guys In Disguise* is a comedy-dating format where secret admirers take a girl out on a date in a weird costume. ProSieben in Germany has that one.”

He is also trying to work out “something that reflects the big shift towards online dating sites. We’re not quite there yet, but we think that’s going to be a big area.”

Will love be in the air at MIPCOM? **TBI**

LAST WORD



ED LOUWERSE

The consolidation, creativity and distribution challenge

The issue of consolidation in the television business has again come to the fore over the past months, with a collection of landmark deals being announced in quick succession. There is a rising tide of vertically integrated, multinational juggernauts, and the future for independent companies in both distribution and production has been the subject of much speculation.

One thing to note in the midst of this analysis is that consolidation and fragmentation of any industry is a cyclical and necessary process. This current climate of consolidation, however, comes at a particularly pivotal moment in the evolution of content consumption, perhaps that is why it has provoked such widespread debate.

Consolidation offers opportunities to smaller independents, although one also needs to understand major companies in order to capitalise on the areas that they may neglect or underservice.

The realities of the market make consolidated companies and independent ones two sides of the same coin. While there are undeniable benefits for producers looking to partner with the 'giants' of distribution, there are also significant drawbacks unavoidable with a consolidated outfit. It is in balancing out these drawbacks with alternative

options that independent distributors find their niche.

If a format is good it doesn't matter where it comes from, as long as it's nurtured and the execution is top class. This is fairly obvious, but the process can become more complicated in its distribution.

The links that major distributors have with sister broadcasters and producers can be appealing, however there are also pitfalls in this set up, as they are then locked in to these partnerships, and don't have the flexibility to work with the best possible people for each individual show.

The key is finding the right company to execute the production and to exploit the brand as best as can be done, and that could be an affiliate of a huge company in one territory, a channel with an in-house production unit or an indie in another.

Creative diversity is also vital to an industry's health, especially one which constantly competes for ever more contested audience time. Bigger companies are less likely to take creative risks, and instead focus on shows that feed their many production companies, which may be uninspired reiterations of what has been successful before.

Homogenous production rarely pays off, especially in formats where even though a concept is syndicated, its interpretation needs to be local in order to be relevant. For example,

[Talpa format] *The Voice*, besides being a great format, has been produced by the best producers in this genre in the individual territories. This would possibly not have been the case if it was owned and controlled by a major conglomeration.

Small company size also speeds up the decision-making process and allows faster market response, which is key to success in today's environment. The nature of independents mean they are also able to take creative risks, taking on bold programming that bigger companies might shy away from, like our recent acquisition *The Bully Project* from [Dutch indie producer] Skyhigh TV, which looks at restorative social justice in schools.

At Lineup Industries, our team's own experience at major distribution companies means we have been integral to the development and roll out of hugely successful formats like *Who Wants to Be a Millionaire* and *Deal or No Deal*.

Each of these we handled completely differently and yet they were globally popular. It's a matter of knowing what's best for each property. Because we take a curatorial approach, projects aren't immediately part of a huge and ever-expanding library, with internal competition before they've even reached broadcasters.

Independent companies are not without their own challenges, and not being able to put down huge advances or secure content into pre-agreed slots with broadcasters are among those. But, as is often said, nothing worthwhile was ever easy, and we see creative diversity, giving genuinely fantastic ideas a leg-up in an environment unhindered by the demands of larger companies, and making outstanding television as absolutely worth our while. **TBI**

Consolidation offers opportunities to smaller independents, although one also needs to understand major companies in order to capitalise on the areas that they may neglect or underservice

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