

# TBI Kids

Television Business International

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Thunberg Effect  
Kids TV goes green  
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## Greta's green wave reaches kids' TV

As Greta Thunberg hits the US and Noga Levy-Rapoport beats the drum for climate change, broadcasters and producers are taking notes and brainstorming how best to get the message through to their youngest audiences. Helen Dugdale reports

Junk Rescue empowers  
kids to be eco-warriors

**W**hile teen activists such as Noga Levy-Rapoport and Greta Thunberg take to the podium to shame those in power about what really needs to be done to tackle global green issues, it's the pre-school

market that broadcasters and producers are focusing their attention on when trying to educate the young audience about environmental issues.

Kimberly Dennison, VP of creative development at Gaumont Animation & Family out of the US, believes

now is a great time for kids' television to take up this mantle.

"Kids' media in general has a lineage of addressing environmental concepts. We think there's a great opportunity right now to speak to kids, especially in the global citizen arena, helping them to see the world from a global view and inspire them to get excited about what they can do locally," she says.

Terri Langan, head of Glasgow-based Hello Halo Kids, is behind the CBeebies show *Junk Rescue*, and is quick to sing the praises of the BBC.

"I think CBeebies does a great job. In the past year or so I have seen several of their brands doing episodes that highlight the need to look after the world we live in. *Go Jetters*, *Tee And Mo* and CBBC's *Newsround* have all been great at getting the sustainability message out there."

However, not everyone agrees. Ellen Solberg, head of content at pre-school SVOD Hopster, believes there is very little content that explores environmental issues for younger viewers.

"The issues I've faced finding this type of content for Hopster is that it isn't designed for pre-school as it's too factual and a little too heavy. We're looking for something that is going to tackle the subject and get them motivated about it and not scare them at the same time. So, we're now creating our own content," she reveals.

## **It's the way you tell the story**

For writer and TV producer Martin Baynton, founding partner at Pukeko Pictures and creator of the much-loved TV show *The Wot Wots*, programming that explores issues around the environment and endangered animals needs to be produced in a sensitive manner.

"We shouldn't be knocking kids over the head with it from a very young, crucial age. My approach is to help children celebrate animals and encourage them to fall in love with them, so they see them as equal members of planet Earth," he explains.

"Then, as they grow up, they will naturally start to think about the environment and the ecology that keeps those animals alive. With *The Wot Wots*, I wanted to make the show for co-viewing and get the parents watching and laughing along with their children. There's nothing more inspiring or empowering than mum and dad laughing, as the children think, 'This show must be ok,'" explains Baynton from his office in Wellington, New Zealand.

For creators looking to develop shows tackling climate change and encouraging sustainable living, successful programmes tend to focus on dealing with



simple practical things that young activists can do in their homes instead of focusing on larger global issues.

Hello Halo's *Junk Rescue* is a prime example of a show that empowers the audience and helps them start their journey as an eco-warrior, rather than an eco-worrier.

"*Junk Rescue* makes sustainability fun. It shows how the things we throw away can be repaired, repurposed or transformed into something useful, and encourages the audience to take the lead on what they can make from what they find," says Langan, who got the idea after seeing what people were throwing away at her local rubbish dump.

"It was heart-breaking. It made me think of all of the things [these objects] could have been used for and what sort of example we were setting for kids. I didn't want the series to feel preachy. I wanted children to have fun and be inspired but also learn to see the beauty and value in objects that, whilst they might be worn or beyond repair, could still have a use for someone."

"The mantra of the series is 'it's not junk if someone has a use for it' and children get to see broken or unwanted items transformed into amazing things," she continues.

Pukeko Pictures is seeing great success with its show *Kiddets*, which is a co-production with China, and introduces five new Wot Wots to the world.

"We've created lots of episodes around recycling water and plastic and looking after animals. More and more shows are embracing episodic lines to tell these key issues about early environmental concerns. One reason for this is that it's harder to make shows utterly about the environment that are really uplifting at the moment as it's such a dark space," explains Baynton.

Meanwhile, over at Hopster, the team are creating playlists from their existing slate of shows that tackle topics like recycling – including favourites such as *Earth To Luna* and *The Science Kids* – to make the

*Kiddets* is a co-production with China

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**"These young women both have tremendous energy that you can't help being inspired by and they aren't afraid of the comments they get from adults trying to trivialise what they're trying to do"**

Terri Langan,  
Hello Halo Kids





content easier to find for busy parents.

Solberg is particularly excited about the original content they are creating and hopes it will motivate pre-school kids into doing something themselves.

"We're delighted to launch *Mr Eco*, who mixes his passion for hip-hop and the environment. His brilliant songs cover littering, recycling and food waste in a fun way. Kids feel really engaged and motivated when watching him. We're also working on a short-form animation series that looks at environmental issues," she reveals.

Denise Deane, owner of UK-based Edutainment Licensing is developing a pre-school series called *Tiny Tusks* about eight little eco-warrior elephants and their adventures as they tell stories of climate change, deforestation, ocean pollution and wildlife trafficking in a light and entertaining way.

Recently, Deane has seen a shift in what broadcasters and platforms are looking for when it comes to content dealing with environmental issues and believes the industry is becoming more open to discussions.

"We've put *Tiny Tusks* in front of a couple of broadcasters and co-producers and we're now starting to get people who are willing to embrace the topics the show covers. Previously, it seemed people thought they didn't really need to be talking to children about these issues but now they're expressing an interest and accepting that it's the children who are making the biggest noise," she says.

Another gentle yet persuasive story that is still in development is *Touch The Earth*, based on *The New York Times*-bestselling children's book series by Julian Lennon. The story follows a group of friends—Jack,

*Touch The Earth* is based on Julian Lennon's book

**"Previously, it seemed people thought they didn't really need to be talking to children about these issues but now they're expressing an interest and accepting that it's the children who are making the biggest noise."**

Denise Deane,  
Edutainment Licensing



Rosa, Kofi and Ally—as they join Ryder, the magical White Feather, on global adventures to help children fix local problems.

Kimberly Dennison, from Gaumont Animation & Family who are developing the series, believes the stories show children how they can be the ones to change the world, one story at a time.

"We're combining realistic language about things like clean water and protecting the earth, while inspiring kids to be curious about the world as they join the Feather Friends on their eco-adventures, helping local kids solve local problems. The series will show kids around the world that our actions and choices can make a big difference for the planet," says Dennison.

## Time to listen to the audience

As the winds of change start to sweep across the industry it seems the voices of teen campaigners are welcomed.

Langan from Hello Halo admits it's people like Levy-Rapoport and Thunberg that give her hope for the future.

"As a child, you're more likely to listen to and respond to your peers than a 'boring adult'. These young women both have tremendous energy that you can't help being inspired by and they aren't afraid of the comments they get from adults trying to trivialise what they're trying to do," she smiles.

The team at Gaumont Animation & Family are delighted to see how Levy-Rapoport and Thunberg are using social media for the greater good and inspiring the next generation to make sure that their voices are heard.

"Young kids see other kids stepping up to a major challenge and can be inspired by them – whether it's making a change in their home or their communities," says Dennison.

The investors and those holding the purse strings to production budgets are also having to make changes, as Baynton from Pukeko Pictures highlights.

"Where it's getting interesting at the moment is that mum and dad investors are now saying, 'Let's invest in something that is helping effect climate change', so you've got big businesses suddenly waking up to the fact that their investment base is going to disappear as they focus on renewable fuels and tidying up the planet."

However, there is also a commercial imperative at hand, explains Baynton. "We've got a moral obligation to do this, but it's also the smart thing to do. The message at MIPCOM needs to be either you're going to get with this or you're dead in the water." **TBI**

# QUPIN's Tales

FIRST EPISODE  
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What if, for once,  
the hero was the wolf?

78x7'



# The Big Deals

The top sales of children's programming grabbing headlines

## ANIMATION



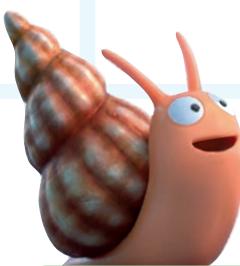
### **Harry**

Amazon Prime Video has acquired animation studio Cosmos-Maya's comedy adventure series *Harry* (26 x 22 minutes)



### **Gremlins**

WarnerMedia has ordered an animated prequel to the 1984 comedy horror film *Gremlins*



### **The Snail And The Whale**

BBC One has scheduled Magic Light Pictures' *The Snail And The Whale* as part of its Christmas line-up



### **Dino Ranch**

Disney Junior has picked up Industrial Brothers and Boat Rocker Studios' animated pre-school series *Dino Ranch* (52 x 11 minutes)

## ONLINE



### **YouTube**

YouTube has pledged to pour \$100m into original children's content over the next three years

### **The A List**

Netflix has swooped for global rights to Kindle Entertainment's teen thriller *The A List* (13 x 30 minutes) following its premiere on BBC iPlayer



## LIVE-ACTION



### **Marvel Studios**

Disney+ has greenlit three live-action originals from Marvel Studios: *Ms Marvel*, *Moon Knight* and *She-Hulk*



### **Find Me In Paris**

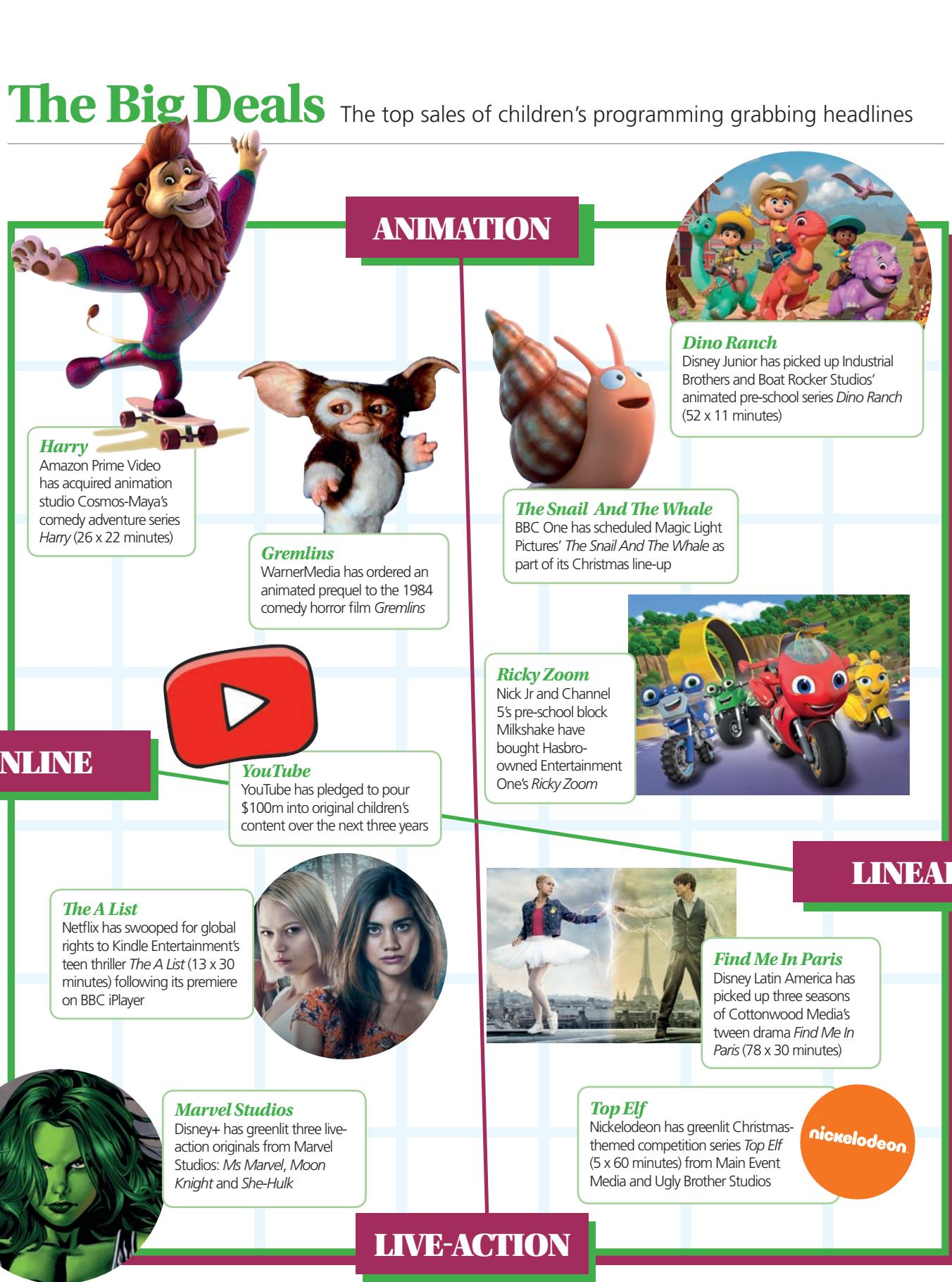
Disney Latin America has picked up three seasons of Cottonwood Media's tween drama *Find Me In Paris* (78 x 30 minutes)

### **Top Elf**

Nickelodeon has greenlit Christmas-themed competition series *Top Elf* (5 x 60 minutes) from Main Event Media and Ugly Brother Studios



## LINEAR



# MOKA'S FABULOUS ADVENTURES!

78x7'



TO HIM, THE WORLD IS A PLAYGROUND.  
TO HER, IT'S A MINEFIELD.

# Cartoon Forum: The Highlights Reel



Super Snail



This year's edition of Cartoon Forum, which ran from 16-19 September, saw 85 projects from 24 countries presented to participants from 39 countries. The Toulouse, France-set event hosted more than 1,000 delegates, including buyers and commissioners from Netflix, WarnerMedia, DreamWorks Animation, Sky, Globosat and HopsterTV.

French projects garnered their share of attention, with highlights including *Mousse And Bichon* (Vivement Lundi!), *Lucy Lost* (Xilam Animation), *Ewilan's Quest* (Andarta Pictures), *Digital Girl* (Cyber Group Studios), *Calamity* (Maybe Movies), *We Are Family* (TeamTO) and *Belfort & Lupin* (Ellipsanime Productions).

Ireland also brought stand-out projects, including the likes of *Critters TV* (Turnip & Duck) and *Pins And Nettles* (Daily Madness Productions), while Belgium's highlights included *Juliette & Jules* (Altitude 100 Production) and *The Marsupilamis* (Belvision), and the Luxembourgish *Quirkistador: Book Of Tales* (ZEILT Productions).

Other top projects at Cartoon Forum included Denmark's *Hugo & Holger* (Wil Film); Finland's *MiniMecs* (Ferly) and *Worst Best Friends* (Haruworks); the UK's *Super Snail* (Sixteen South); and Germany's *Spookies* (Wolkenlenker) and *Boots And Paws* (Studio Soi).



## Adult appeal



Programming with cross-generational appeal that allow adults to watch along with young viewers was once again in the spotlight in Toulouse. Projects receiving considerable buzz included *We Are Family* (TeamTO), *Le Collège Noir* (Milan Presse) and *Some Of Us* (Bachibouzouk), as well as Spanish project *Sex Symbols* (TV ON Producciones).

## Cartoon Tribute winners

### Broadcaster of the Year: RTBF's OUFtivi (Belgium)

RTBF's youth channel OUFtivi has become the market leader for French-speaking Belgians, catering especially to 3-12 year-olds.

### Investor/Distributor of the Year: Telegael (Ireland)

Telegael is a top investor in premium animated and live-action film and television content. The business runs one of Ireland's largest animation studios. Telegael productions have been licensed to more than 150 territories and translated into more than 40 languages.

### Producer of the Year: Panique! (Belgium)

Panique!'s recent credits in animation include *Panique au Village*, *Ernest & Celestine*, *Big Bad Fox And Other Tales* and the formidable *Stinky Dog*. The prodco's latest film *Back To School* won the Jury Award for TV Special at Annecy in 2016.

52x13'

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## Viewpoint Halle Stanford

# How ‘hopepunk’ content can profit from family viewing

**“The Dark Crystal is hopepunk because of its loving messaging about coming together to speak out against the baddies and using violence as a last resort. Hopepunk is the trend I hope will emerge as we all start producing family programming.”**

**F**amily viewing shaped my career. On Friday nights, we'd snuggle up with my mom and watch *The Muppet Show*. We'd laugh together (sometimes at different jokes), have our favourite Muppets, and bond over this fun, shared experience – an experience that would inspire me, like Kermit the Frog, to go to Hollywood to make people happy.

A year ago, I was in a meeting with Apple television executives and I confessed I was weary of surviving the zombies in *The Walking Dead* and watching women get raped in Westeros. I knew audiences, especially families, were looking for hopeful, meaningful and fun experiences like the ones I had when I was a kid. They absolutely agreed. A lot of broadcasters do, too, because one of the biggest trends we're seeing in the television industry is the development of family programming.

Network unscripted shows like *The Masked Singer* and *The Voice* have brought in the ratings and attracted family audiences. Services like Apple, Netflix, Disney+, Amazon and HBO Max have made a commitment to family programming. We're also hearing that pre-school broadcasters are looking for programming that can be ‘co-viewed’. At The Jim Henson Company, we've always produced shows that create shared experiences. We celebrate families. I'm proud we created the first blended family in a pre-school series in *Sid The Science Kid* and the first Pteranodon family to proudly adopt a T-Rex in *Dinosaur Train*.

Premium content aimed at families that is story-driven with strong messaging is now in demand. We may be looking at a flood of family programming in the future and the question is, which shows will stand out? The competition is strong and the winners will be those who invest in this genre.

Producers who understand the modern family will be the ones who create the most impactful series.

Halle Stanford is president of TV at The Jim Henson Company

The television community has a responsibility to get to know the family audience. According to Maria Bailey at family marketing firm BSMMedia, Gen Z is the most racially diverse group in history and has a desire to make a difference in the world. Parents of Gen Z kids are raising their children in an era of school shootings, the Me Too movement and #KeepFamiliesTogether. They're looking for stories to help them and their family enjoy their time together and also to inspire them to create a safer, healthier and kinder world. Today's modern family is unique.

After I watched the pilot for Netflix's *The Dark Crystal: Age Of Resistance* with one of the writers, Simon Racioppa, he congratulated me on the series being ‘hopepunk’. I fell in love with the word instantly. The word was created by writer Alexandra Rowland in a 2017 Tumblr post. She preached hopepunk “says that genuinely and sincerely caring about something, anything, requires bravery and strength”. The punk in hopepunk is making corny cool again. It's about showing up exactly how you are and encouraging one another to make a change. *The Dark Crystal* is hopepunk because of its loving messaging about coming together to speak out against the baddies and using violence as a last resort. The trend I hope will emerge as we all start producing family programming is hopepunk.

For gatekeepers who also have ratings and subscribers at top of mind, let me give them hope: hopepunk can be profitable. *Star Wars*, *Harry Potter*, *This Is Us*, *Stranger Things* and *Into the Spiderverse* are all hopepunk. Kermit the Frog and The Muppets are the original hopepunkers. These are the types of series we are developing right now at The Jim Henson Company – positive, innovative and with spirit. We're storytellers and I see it as our job to inspire our audiences. We all have a gift to make a difference. And, as Kermit reminds us: “That's the kind of dream that gets better the more people you share it with.” **TBI**

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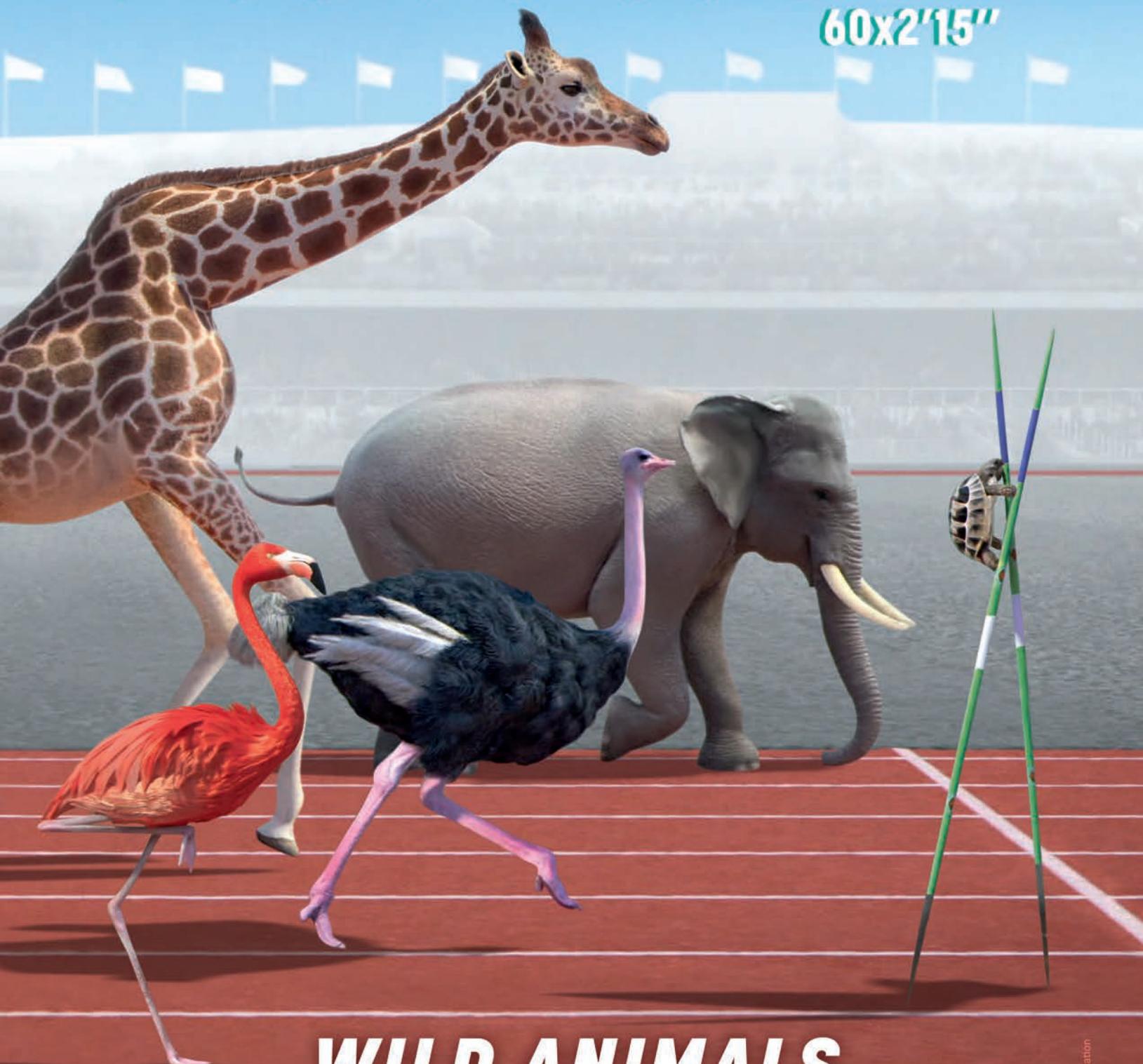
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WITH WIDE TALENTS**

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# Choosing their own adventures

As interactive and voice-activated programming grows in popularity among kids, Helen Dugdale examines how new tech is affecting the consumption patterns of young audiences

**M**edia headlines are awash with how children and teens are choosing to consume their favourite shows. Young people, with strong ideas of their own, are embracing the speedy developments in tech and increasing number of platforms for viewing, gaming and engaging with content.

Citing a recent Kids Insights report on kids' behaviours, Nick Richardson, CEO and founder of the market intelligence outfit, has some ideas on what they're really up to when staring at their devices.

"Technology is playing a far greater role in taking up children's time. They are now doing a lot more with tech friendlier games, using it to unlock more content."

"Most parents these days essentially grew up in a world that was more linear with regards to content and tech. While we had to wait until the next day or next week to watch the next episode, we're seeing

that lack of linearity is changing habits, with the use of technology, but also in that the content they're watching doesn't need to be new."

Morgann Favennec, EVP of global sales development at Xilam Animation, agrees with the research, as evidenced by the trajectory of one of their bestselling programmes.

"Our hit series *Oggy And The Cockroaches* first aired 20 years ago and has never been as popular as it is today, proving that comedy travels well internationally and remains timeless as we see different generations now watching and enjoying the show together. Across all genres, high-quality production will always make a difference in the longevity of your content and help it cut through the market," says Favennec.

With so many different options around what to watch and how to consume it, for parents it can seem that young viewers are managing to sidestep the eyes

*Puss In Boots: Trapped In An Epic Tale* was one of Netflix's first interactive offerings



and voice of authority and do exactly what they please.

However, Kids Insights research offers some peace of mind as it shows that parents now have more control, as the number of kids binge-watching TV is decreasing, as Richardson explains:

"On average a UK child would watch three shows back to back, but this has reduced significantly year on year, from only 2% of kids in 2016 watching one episode at a time to 18% in 2017," he says.

Kids now watch on average one to two episodes, rather than three to four a year ago, says Richardson.

"That's because the awareness of binge-watching and the concerns of effects on health have been covered widely in mainstream media. Parents' attitudes have changed, and many manufacturers have now put safeguards in place, which means that a parent can control how much content a child can consume through automation, instead of manually having to be there. That's not to say that it's not still an issue, but in our data, we're seeing a big reduction in binging due to an increase in knowledge from parents and changes in technology making parents' lives easier."

## The future is gamification

From the tween viewer to the more mature young adult, most members of these demographics will have sampled the delights of what interactive content can offer after watching the likes of Netflix's Bear Grylls-fronted live-action series *You vs. Wild*, *Puss In Boots: Trapped In An Epic Tale* and *Black Mirror: Bandersnatch*. The buzz word on the street is gamification.

"We're now seeing the gamification of content has increased significantly," says Richardson. "Augmented reality is also going to be a growth opportunity and the kids are calling for it. They have this expectation that they will control what they're watching, and they want to be able to have an impact. The story doesn't have to be the way the story is. Being able to twist it to suit themselves is all part of the bigger trend of personalisation that we'll see more of in 2020."

As with any personalised content, there is a greater chance the young audience will interact with it for longer, talk about it more and explore all the different variants that it offers. However, the repeated use of the same content poses a risk to independent production companies or creators who are trying to get their stories through.

Anish Mehta, CEO at animation company Cosmos-Maya, believes that creators must embrace

**"Kids have this expectation that they will control what they're watching, and they want to be able to have an impact. The story doesn't have to be the way the story is. Being able to twist it to suit themselves is all part of the bigger trend of personalisation."**

Nick Richardson,  
Kids Insights



the swiftly changing landscape.

"There is no denying the KGOY (Kids Getting Older Younger) phenomenon. Children nowadays have access to umpteen number of platforms to entertain themselves. Hence, the onus lies on the content creator to produce quality, conscientious content. It is an opportunity as well as a responsibility."

Bruno Felix, co-founder and MD of Amsterdam transmedia production house Submarine, suggests that content creators should learn to adapt quickly to the new offerings and understand their specific needs.

"It's challenging for sure, but at the same time it is great, because as a content creator you also see the kids changing their relationship to the different services and therefore playing, viewing and interacting in different ways. These new viewing options obviously give opportunities to tell stories in different ways and keep the mind of a creator young and active."

## Using their voice

No one can deny the world of kids' content and the platforms that exist inside the industry are changing at lightning speed. James Poulter, CEO of London-based Vixen Labs, a leading voice consultancy, has seen first-hand the way that Generation Z has taken to voice-activated gadgets.

"Voice applications and audio content more generally are gaining real traction as parents seek alternatives to screen time, particularly in the morning routines and bedtime hours. Smart speaker adoption is giving kids themselves access to far greater choice in what to listen to and play with, as well as access to knowledge and facts, as these devices are far cheaper and present less stress for parents."

Poulter believes this is one of the biggest potential growth markets for kids IP owners in the next 24 months "as kids and parents are in exploration mode, looking for new content and brands to engage with via voice".

Anyone writing a marketing plan at the beginning of 2019 probably wouldn't have listed TikTok as a serious contender for grabbing attention, but as Richardson concludes, it's hard to plan for who or what will be the next big thing.

"At the beginning of the year, TikTok was nowhere in our data. Then in our research, from January to August 2019, it has gone on to be the second favourite app with girls aged 10-12 years, just behind YouTube. Netflix, WhatsApp and Roblox are also among the top five apps for 10-12s, which shows why data is so vital. You can react to it." **TBI**

18%

of kids watched one episode at a time in 2017, over 2% in 2016

# Zodiak Kids

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**2<sup>nd</sup> Best Live Action TV**

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Multiple award-winner across 3 series

**Children's Interactive BAFTA**

**Two Broadcast Digital Awards**

**RTS Northern Ireland**

**Kidscreen Award**

# Kids Hot Picks

The very best children's content hitting the Croisette



# Top Pick



## Superhero Kindergarten

**Distributor:** Genius Brands International

**Producers:** Genius Brands, POW! Entertainment, Oak Productions

**Broadcaster:** n/a

**Logline:** A former superhero-turned-kindergarten teacher oversees a class of secret superheroes

Arnold Schwarzenegger and Stan Lee often talked about potential collaborations over the years, according to the actor and former governor.

During one conversation, *The Terminator* and *Twins* star mentioned he'd love to do a sequel to his 1990 movie *Kindergarten Cop*, which features a tough cop who goes undercover in a nursery to locate a ruthless drug lord's ex-wife.

Shortly afterwards, Lee called up the action hero and asked what he thought about doing an animated series that shared some similarities to his cop movie, but with a twist: the teacher would be a former superhero, and his students would be five-year-olds with superpowers.

Lee passed away last November before he could see one of his final ideas come into fruition, but Genius Brands, Stan Lee's POW! Entertainment and Schwarzenegger's Oak Productions have now picked up the mantel.

The 52 x 11-minute *Superhero Kindergarten* – which does not yet have a release date – is making its debut in the international market at MIPCOM this month and is being penned by *Deadpool* co-creator Fabian Nicieza.

The 2D animated series aimed at four to seven-year-olds focuses on Arnold Armstrong, a former gym teacher who turned superhero after inhaling some ionic dust left in the wake of a mysterious comet.

After decades of saving the planet Arnold is forced to expend his power in a final battle against his arch nemesis. He then falls back on teaching, albeit as a kindergarten teacher to a group of five-year-olds with rumoured superpowers.

Schwarzenegger, who lends his voice to the series' protagonist, serves as executive producer along with Genius Brands' chairman and chief exec Andy Heyward and POW! Entertainment president Gill Champion.

While the property's entertainment value is clear, Schwarzenegger appears equally as enthusiastic about its health and well-being messages.

"Of particular pride to me is the fact that I am not only teaching kids to use their superpowers, but I am also imparting valuable lessons about the importance of health, exercise and nutrition," he says.

Genius Brands International will be distributing the series and the property also fits into its "content with a purpose" brand portfolio, which includes

toddler brand Baby Genius, adventure comedy STEM series, Thomas Edison's *Secret Lab* and financial literacy and entrepreneurship series *Warren Buffett's Secret Millionaires Club*.

The firm's content catalogue also includes another animated Stan Lee/POW! Entertainment series, *Cosmic Crusaders*. States POW!'s Champion: "Stan Lee's *Superhero Kindergarten* was near and dear to his heart, working with one of his longtime collaborators Andy Heyward, as well as Arnold, and we look forward to continuing the partnership with Genius Brands to bring Stan's vision for this new adventure series to life."

POW! Entertainment is now owned by Chinese branding and licensing giant Camsing International Holding Limited.

While Lee might not be around to appreciate the end results of this creation, as homage to the comic book legend, he will appear as a cameo in every episode. Heyward says: "Just as his millions of fans look forward to seeing him appear in each Marvel film, they will look forward to his presence in each episode of this cartoon. It will make it a series that parents will enjoy alongside their children."

Schwarzenegger is also gearing up for this autumn's US release of *Terminator Dark Fate*, which the animation could also benefit from as parents start to reacquaint themselves with the franchise.

**Seal Force 5**

**Distributor:** Hoho Rights  
**Producer:** Hoho Entertainment  
**Broadcaster:** n/a

**Logline:** Five arctic seals, mutated into humanoid form, assemble as an elite special forces fighting ecological villainy

Speaking of his search to find the right animal for Caldera Creations' first vehicle, aimed at 6 to 10-year-olds, creator Paul Caldera reveals why seals were the answer.

He says: "We were looking for an animal that is both adorable and funny yet also fit for action, but isn't already a pop culture icon – and seals were the perfect choice."

"From there, the idea of using seals as Navy SEALs seemed like a ready-made match for the action/comedy animation genre."

The resulting show, *Seal Force 5* (26 x 22 minutes), features five arctic seals, mysteriously mutated into humanoid form, who assemble as an elite special forces team to prevent a shadowy cabal from pushing the world to the edge of ecological collapse.

Each episode is self-contained but with a longer series narrative arc featuring the bad guys, which slowly gets revealed as the show progresses.

While a broadcaster is not yet

attached, Hoho Entertainment helped the fledgling company bring its idea to fruition and has come on board as the series' producer.

The firm's distribution arm Hoho Rights is now on the lookout for broadcast and co-production partners at MIP Junior and MIPCOM.

Oliver Ellis, Hoho's joint MD, claims that the series has all the ingredients for a fun, action-packed show for older kids.

"The international market has been saying they are looking for older children's fare for some time. This is now the time for broadcasters to get on board early with a comedy adventure series with global appeal."

Ellis describes the seals' nemesis, The Evil Order of Eden, as "a bit like James Bond's Spectre but with a malicious environmental intent".

Ellis believes that with environmental issues topping the list of kids' concerns, this series will also strike a chord with its audience with a real call to action.

**#DeliciousMax**

**Distributor:** MK Media Group  
**Producer:** Svoya Production  
**Broadcaster:** n/a

**Logline:** Crafted like a vlog, food enthusiast Max delves into famous foods that cater to an 8 to 14-year-old demo



*#DeliciousMax* is an animated edutainment series from Ukrainian producer Svoya Production that showcases the history of some of the world's most loved foods – as seen through the lens of younger teens.

The main character is 15-year-old Portuguese vlogger Max who has his own culinary channel. Each 10-minute episode sees Max talk about famous foods that are bound to go down well with the series' target audience of 8 to 14-year-olds: spaghetti, hamburgers, sushi, ice cream, pizza, French fries, pancakes, popcorn and even chewing gum.

Crafted like an online vlog, each show covers general information about the food followed by its history, while the remaining segment is a chatroom dedicated to Max answering viewers' questions about cooking specifics and eating.

The series is related to another internationally focused Svoya production, *Who's There?*, which takes a

humorous look at different countries around the world.

Now in its second season, 12 local video vloggers, each with their own specialty, have been introduced in the *Who's There?* format. Max pops up in that, too, and while his area is food, other vloggers include an Australian into astrology and a Singaporean boy interested in high tech. Svoya's plan is to make a season per blogger.

The first episode of *#DeliciousMax* (12 x 10 minutes), which explores spaghetti, has already been delivered, and while a broadcaster is not yet attached, Canadian distributor MK Media is the international distributor. It has been focusing increasingly on edutainment titles, according to the firm's head of sales Anna Verbovska, and the distributor loves the modern approach taken by this series.

"It's a mix of blogging and TV. A broadcaster can share *#DeliciousMax* for TV viewers and offer the same content for its online channels," she says.

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**Odo**

**Distributor:** Sixteen South Rights

**Producer:** Sixteen South, Letko  
**Broadcaster:** n/a

**Logline:** A gender-neutral little owl is prone to getting in trouble joins other small birds in daily

Based on the book by Oliver Austria, *Odo* is a gender-neutral owl who joins other little birds for the day's tasks at forest camp. When things go wrong, Odo always wants to put them right, which often causes things to snowball out of control.

Belfast animation outfit Sixteen South – which is producing as well as distributing the property via its new sister company – is encouraging international broadcasters to choose for themselves whether Odo should be male or female. Or neither.

"To us, Odo's just Odo," says Sixteen South's creative director Colin Williams, who created the series with Emmy-nominated



kids TV writer and script editor Sam Barlow, with artwork supplied by 2D artist Alena Tkach.

Williams adds that the series also promotes self-belief in pre-schoolers as well as dealing with important themes such as immigration and respect for others.

Animated at Sixteen South and Polish 2D animation studio

Letko, Williams describes the look as 2D with 3D lighting and camera effects.

"We're calling it 2.5D," he explains. "We didn't want to create a 3D CGI show but wanted the theatre of 2D and added some new techniques involving depth of field and 3D lighting into the 2D world to really make everything pop."

While there are no

broadcasters attached, Williams says Sixteen South Rights has already completed "a significant amount of deals on the show" that it plans to announce shortly.

Summing up, Williams says: "Odo has had a brilliant reaction from the market. It's a truly beautiful-looking show with a cute lead gender-neutral character who believes they can do anything."

**Kids Safari**

**Distributor:** West One International

**Producer:** Lion Mountain Media

**Broadcaster:** n/a

**Logline:** A mix of live-action and 2D animation sees kids exploring the most amazing places on Earth

Created by Peter Lamberti, founder and chief executive of Lion Mountain Media, this series was inspired by his young children Luca and Melua, who travel with their parents making wildlife films.

Viewers are invited to join the 8 and 10-year-olds on a wild journey of discovery as they explore some of the most spectacular places on earth.

Shot in 4K across the US and Africa, this family series, aimed at eight-year-olds and upwards,

is a mix of live-action and 2D animation.

Locations range from the rolling savannahs of the African bush, to the Pacific Ocean, the Rocky Mountains in the US, the jungles of Madagascar and the towering sand dunes of the world's oldest desert.

Carl Hall, MD of West One International, which is distributing the 36 x 12-minute series, believes that the series is "one of a kind".

He adds: "There's loads of

interesting and daring content including the two main children entering a shark cage with great whites circling – a first for a kids' TV series.

"The series really gets up close

and personal with nature and we feel strongly that there hasn't been a kids show like this on offer before," he adds.

The series is seeking broadcast partners in Cannes.



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**Lupin's Tales****Distributor:** Xilam Animation**Producer:** Xilam Animation**Broadcaster:** France Télévisions**Logline:** A little wolf dreams of becoming a fairytale hero, but makes a terrible mess

Inverting the classic ‘big bad wolf’ trope, this animated series from Xilam follows the adventures of Lupin, a tiny wolf who dreams of becoming a fairytale hero.

Lupin sneaks into classic stories, taking on the heroes’ identities, convinced that he can do things just as well. The problem is that he’s still an impulsive little wolf who insists on doing things his own way, and creates a terrible mess.

With guidance from the show’s narrator, Lupin is willing to fix his mistakes and seal a happy ending as he journeys through medieval Europe, Greek and Nordic myths and Asian tales.

Aimed at upper pre-schoolers, the show was jointly created by Laura Muller – whose credits include Xilam’s *Mr Magoo* and *Zig & Sharko* – and Nicolas Le Nevé, the director of another Xilam property, *Oggy And The Cockroaches*.

Muller also shares directorial reins with Antoine Colomb, whose previous credits include Xilam’s *Moka*.

France Télévisions commissioned the show, which is set to air next autumn, with Xilam already securing pre-sales with Rai in Italy and VRT in Belgium. The first episode will be presented at MIP Junior this year.

The series uses a mix of 2D and 3D to create a unique pop-up book-like aesthetic – a technique adopted, according to Xilam Animation head Marc du Pontavice, to enable kids to feel as though “they can imagine and create a whole world from a simple piece of paper”.

Xilam expects the 78 x 7-minute series to do well globally as episodes cover tales from regions such as Asia, Northern Europe, Latin America and Africa. The animation producer-distributor will target broadcasters and platforms.

**Blue's Clues & You!****Distributor:** Viacom International Studios**Producer:** Nickelodeon Animated Studios, Brown Bag Films, Out of the Blue Enterprises**Broadcaster:** Nick Jr. (US)**Logline:** A reimagining of the beloved 1990s blue-spotted dog Blue

Nickelodeon’s 1996 curriculum-driven interactive series *Blue’s Clues* followed an animated blue-spotted dog called Blue as she left a trail of clues/paw prints for the host and the viewers, to figure out her plans for the day.

Combining concepts from child development and early-childhood education with innovative animation and production techniques that helped viewers learn, the original incarnation became the highest-rated show for pre-schoolers on US commercial television.

The part live-action part animated series was syndicated in 120 countries and translated into 15 languages, becoming the longest-running Nick Jr. series until it was surpassed by *Dora The Explorer* in 2011.

The new series is a ‘reimagining’ for a new generation of pre-schoolers by its original creators, Traci Paige

Johnson, Todd Kessler and Angela C. Santomero

Now called *Blue’s Clues & You!* (20 x 30 minutes), it will feature new elements alongside refreshed iconic items from the original series – including new CG-animation for Blue and Magenta, provided by Dublin-based Brown Bag Film’s Toronto studios, as well as several new characters.

The show’s new Filipino host Joshua Dela Cruz has already been declared “a grade-A hottie” by fans on Twitter, according to Huff Post, and distributor Viacom International Studios expects the programme to perform strongly in markets with a local host. “We’re in the initial phases of exploring which territories would be most effective and looking at potential hosts,” says Lauren Marriott, Viacom’s VP of International programme sales.



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**Kingdom Force****Distributor:** Boat Rocker Studios**Producer:** Industrial Brothers,  
Boat Rocker Studios**Broadcaster:** CBC (Canada)**Logline:** Five animal heroes must  
band together to protect the  
citizens of various kingdoms

Described as a 'high-octane animated action show' aimed at older pre-schoolers, *Kingdom Force* follows the exploits of five animal heroes who must serve and protect the citizens of their different kingdoms.

The kings are supported by a fearless wolf leader, Luka, and their rescue vehicles, which can transform into a giant super-robot called Alpha-Mech.

This 52 x 11-minute 3D animated series, set to debut on CBC this autumn, was created by Industrial Brothers co-founder Matt Fernandes, whose credits include The Jim Henson Company's show *Dot* and Industrial Brothers' own



properties *Top Wing*, *Yup Yups* and *Gummandos*.

Animated at Industrial Brothers and Canadian animation and VFX house Jam Filled Entertainment, *Kingdom Force* combines children's love of action heroes, animals and vehicles as well as championing

diversity, according to Boat Rocker Studios.

The distributor's MD Jon Rutherford explains: "Each of our heroes comes from a different Kingdom with their own cultures and traditions but when they combine their individual strengths to help

save 'animal kind' and unite to become Kingdom Force, the team is unbreakable," he says.

Rutherford adds that Boat Rocker has secured "significant" sales with leading international broadcasters across a number of territories and will be holding further discussions.

**Touch The Earth****Distributor:** Gaumont**Producer:** Gaumont**Broadcaster:** n/a**Logline:** Four international friends join forces in ecological adventures

Based on Julian Lennon and his children's book collaborator Bart Davis's trio of *New York Times*-bestselling books, *Touch The Earth* aims to inspire

children around the world to become eco-warriors and promote sustainability.

Lennon and Davis are executive producers on the

series, which is being made through Gaumont Animation in collaboration with its president Nicolas Atlan, and Terry Kalagian, SVP of creative development.

The story follows four friends – UK-born Jack, Venezuelan Rosa, Ghanaian Kofi and American Ally – as they join Ryder, an Earth Spirit in the form of a magical White Feather airplane, on adventures around the globe.

Themes of environmentalism and social issues run through the series, and, on their expeditions, the characters help other kids solve problems local to their region.

These involve lending a hand to a stranded elephant in Africa, diving into a beach clean-up

in India, and planting a fresh vegetable garden at a newly built school in New York.

"*Touch The Earth* will inspire children everywhere to make a difference and show them how they can be the ones to change the world, one story at a time," says Kalagian.

The series is comprised of a CGI-animated story featuring the main characters with a factual, live-action segment at the end of each episode profiling children who have made a difference, including Greta Thunberg, Ryan Hickman, Gitanjali Rao, Leroy Mwasaru and Richard Turere.

Currently in development, there are no broadcasters attached to the global-facing 52 x 11-minute series.

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