

# TBI Television Business International Unscripted

Minding the gap  
Funding splashy formats 4

Crazy cash  
Streaming roundtable 8

## flirty dancing

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# Charting a path to the Maze

US kids network Nickelodeon turned to a decades-old UK format originally aimed at adults to bolster its unscripted offering and attract a co-viewing audience. Richard Middleton finds out why



**D**emand for family shows that drive co-viewing has been surging over the past year, prompting both new format ideas coming to market but also a flicking through of the back catalogue for unexploited gems.

And few shows were as unexploited as *The Crystal Maze*. The format has been around in the UK for more than three decades since making its debut on Channel 4 in the 1990s, creating a legion of loyal fans. But it had never travelled abroad and was little known beyond UK shores.

That was until a Brit working for US kids channel

*The Crystal Maze* has always skewed towards a younger audience

Nickelodeon, who happened to recall watching the show in his younger years, was faced with the task of finding an unscripted show that could offer something different to both his younger viewers and their parents.

“Nick has a history of unscripted but over the past few years there hadn’t been a lot of such shows on the network,” explains Rob Bagshaw, who was named head of unscripted at Nickelodeon in January.

“Our president Brian Robbins picked up on this and realised that our young audience was watching a lot of unscripted hits on other networks, as well as on the streamers and other platforms – YouTube and the

like. He said we should be giving them those sorts of shows on Nick.”

Bagshaw, a veteran of reality TV, started exploring his options, looking at both fresh IP and older formats. “A lot of new ideas are adult versus child, or family versus family, but the great thing about *The Crystal Maze* is that it is family versus the house,” he explains from the show’s set at the Bottle Yard Studios in Bristol, UK.

“The family plays together and so they succeed or fail against the house. And it is not a show that puts contestants in conflict with other human beings – that is a good message.”

With *The Crystal Maze* in mind, Bagshaw turned to the UK to explore the viability of taking this veteran format – originally aimed at adults – and remaking it for kids in the US.

In the classic format, teams of five or six contestants – adults, in the original UK series – attempt to win crystals by completing physical and mental games within themed zones that include Aztec, Future, Industrial and a fourth area that has previously reflected a Medieval and Eastern look. Each crystal allows the team to spend five seconds inside a huge dome, within which they must catch gold tokens that are being blown around by fans. These can then be exchanged for prizes.

“When you present this format, and with the zones you go through, the conversation we had was more about the escape room phenomenon and how that is something that kids and families in the US love to do,” he says. “There hadn’t been a version of that on TV – we could’ve created an original idea about escape rooms but there was already this existing idea in the UK.”

In fact, there had been an existing set – of sorts – in the UK, too, for a few years, and without the rat-infested river that snaked through the original location. It had been created by a group of superfans, who funded a project to recreate the show in all its glory and then allowed others to experience the series for themselves, paying for the privilege.

It was aimed at long-term fans of the show, such as Neale Simpson, creative director at Fizz, the entertainment label for Banijay Group-backed RDF Television. As a long-term devotee of the series, Simpson had not just watched the programme in its Channel 4 days but he had brought it back to life.

He had initially been trying to come up with a “big gameshow idea” and thought he’d landed on a winner when, mid-pitch, he “realised it was just a crap knock-off of *The Crystal Maze*”.

So he delved into the records to find just who owned the format and realised that through some “legal

**“We could have created an original idea about escape rooms but there was already this existing show in the UK.”**

Rob Bagshaw  
Nickelodeon



technicality” related to fellow adventure format *Fort Boyard* it was Adventure Line Productions, a sister company of Banijay. That was in 2011.

“I spent the next six years trying to bring it back, but the big thing was that I’d have to say to broadcasters that if you want to try this show and see if it works again, you’ve got to build a 32,000-square foot set. That is expensive and a big risk.”

With the superfan-created *Crystal Maze Live Experience* set already in place in London, however, Simpson saw an opportunity. As part of a Channel 4 fundraising night of programming, the broadcaster was rebooting a series of classic series and *The Crystal Maze*, set within the experience centre, got the greenlight.

Not that it was straightforward. Simpson says it was “hell” as the crew turned the centre into a functioning TV set in barely 12 hours, but the effort was worth it.

“We delivered the show 12 hours before it went on air. When I woke up to the overnights, 4.5m people had watched it. I sat in a café crying and Tom Beck, Channel 4’s commissioner, phoned up and said, ‘We’re doing more.’”

They did just that and when Bagshaw came calling, an entire set – rather than an experience centre – had been already created. “The set is so immersive, it’s beautiful, and it is up and running and that is an expensive thing to do,” the Nick exec says. “To bring a family to do it here with people who know exactly how these games work in a pre-existing set made much more sense than trying to recreate that in the US and start from scratch.”

Nick named Adam Conover as host, taking a key role as the quirky and eccentric leader who takes the teams through the maze, while RDF, which is producing with Bunim/Murray Productions (BMP), tweaked the games to ensure younger players and their families could play.

Bagshaw, who says he is looking at cookery and pet series to add to Nick’s unscripted slate, has also been keen to ensure a diverse range of families are cast. He adds that while the target demo is kids, the show has also been embraced by older children and adults watching alongside.

“*Crystal Maze* is such a clean and strong format that it was not difficult at all to adapt for the kids and family audience,” adds Gil Goldschein, chairman and CEO at BMP.

“Obviously, we had to ensure that the physical challenges contained within the various zones were age-appropriate, but other than that, the game play is similar to the UK version,” he continues. The hope now, of course, will be that the format delivers a similar legion of fans in the US, too. **TBI**

# Mind the gap

Delivering a splashy format hit is getting more expensive at the same time as demand for unscripted content is rising. Richard Middleton explores the options for producers



*Drive Master* sees Keshet International teaming up with Russian commercial broadcaster NTV



It has been a year since Netflix revealed it had picked up global remake rights to Studio Lambert's hit *The Circle* and was planning to remake the show internationally, prompting a flurry of excitement for third-party format owners around the world.

It underlined the burgeoning interest in unscripted product from streamers but for the format business in particular, it highlighted the fact that streamers – or at least Netflix – were looking at local adaptations in multiple territories.

It also came at an opportune moment for the format business, whose travails in the financing side of things have perhaps been overshadowed over recent years by the explosive surge in the cost of drama. As in scripted, the costs of creating and producing splashy, high-impact shows have been rising and broadcasters rarely have the budgets to keep pace. That has left a gap to fill.

“The point about deficit funding is that it is particularly relevant to public service broadcasters,” says Tim Hincks, a veteran of the format business who was president of Endemol Shine Group before setting up UK-based prodco Expectation with former ITV chief Peter Fincham in 2016.

“It is about how much money they are willing to put aside for unscripted. We all know about the scripted side of things, that it is taken as read, but in non-scripted it has undoubtedly become a challenge.”

“Principally, you don't get enough money from, say, a UK buyer to make your show,” adds Stephen Lambert, CEO at Studio Lambert, which is behind formats such as *Gogglebox*, *Race Across The World* and *Undercover Boss*.

“They expect your distributor to put in increasing amounts of advance but then you have to clear that advance before you see any back end – and it is difficult to resist that pressure.”

This situation is not necessarily new but the extent of deficits in the format business is certainly growing, which is providing opportunities for third parties to get involved. Exactly that happened with Lambert's show *The Circle*: it originally aired on Channel 4 in the UK but was co-produced by his All3Media-owned prodco and Motion Content Group, the IP and rights firm backed by advertising giant GroupM.

“Motion are co-producers for us with *The Circle*,” Lambert explains, “because Channel 4 had a deal with them at that point and that was their only way of being able to pay for the show in the first instance.”

The investment outfit has sunk itself deep into both the scripted and unscripted market over recent years,

funding over 500 series for nearly 200 broadcasters/platforms in partnership with over 100 producers. Aside from *The Circle*, it also counts mega hits such as ITV Studios' *Love Island* on its slate.

The group's involvement inevitably means having another stake holder profiting from projects but they are also a facilitator in a market that now regularly requires third-party investment to get shows up and running.

“Would I have preferred to have been able to do a conventional deal without Motion?” asks Lambert. “Yes, but if they tell me that there is money that wouldn't exist otherwise – and I believe them – then I'd rather take the money than not.”

Several senior execs in the format business have told TBI that some advertising-backed agencies have tended to suck cash out of the business, but Lambert and Hincks agree that that has not been their recent experience.

“Some of those companies used to want to get in at the ground level,” continues the Expectation co-founder. “A few years back they wanted to be involved in the creation of the format but the truth is that it is happening less and less – it is never very helpful for anyone to say that, unless they are the format creator.

“What they have worked out instead is that they don't need to do that. They can come in and make up the deficit – if you don't [do a deal] then you probably won't get the show off the ground,” he says, adding that it isn't so much a fundamental shift as a “nibbling away” of the traditional model.

Over in Israel, a slightly different landscape is emerging. Deficit funding exists and deals are in the works with ad agencies but there are also new models emerging that perhaps represent an alternative way to market. One of these is the “sharing is caring” model employed by Keshet International, says the company's MD of networks Revital Basel.

“Sometimes a broadcaster's need is very specific and finding an international format for a slot is [challenging], so we offer a different solution.” The model, essentially a co-development deal, has been used to create *Drive Master*, which has seen KI working with Russian commercial broadcaster NTV on an idea created specifically for the network.

KI has borne the cost of development while NTV produces the show locally and both companies then partner on rights. “So we keep rights in Israel forever, and we're developing the format now for Keshet in Israel, and they keep Russian rights forever. Then we share rest of world.”

Basel says the model means for the “cost of an option they get a full team with international

experience” while KI gets rights to a format that has been produced and is on air. “We create formats that we think have the potential to sell internationally, so we’re bringing together both local and global.”

Deals involving local and global partners are also emerging as a tonic to deal with static broadcaster budgets. Hincks points out that when a broadcaster’s funding is insufficient to get a show away in their home territory, their suggestion is to explore adding a potential deal with an SVOD to get the deal over the line.

“But then you are selling your global rights to that SVOD,” adds Lambert. “At least if you are relying on a distribution advance, if it is a good format and if the tape is attractive, then there is a realistic chance of clearing that advance out. But if you are selling it to an SVOD, that is it really.”

Yet the PSBs remain a key buyer of content, even if risk-taking is increasingly tough. Last month, ITV’s director of television Kevin Lygo admitted that the industry has become more “brutal than ever” on shows that do not immediately perform, with a resulting impact on commissioning new ideas.

But for producers such as Fincham and Lambert, broadcasters still commission off paper and on some shows they still pay the full cost of production. But the conundrum is that broadcasters tend to need more ambitious format ideas in order to cut through, which are by their nature often more costly to produce.

“That is why it is a nibbling away rather than a fundamental shift,” says Hincks. “It is pragmatic in a way, if you are going for the bigger slots and bigger budgets you will almost without doubt have a conversation about who can come in.”

And that is why Netflix but also Amazon are enticing partners to a degree for producers. “The exciting thing about an SVOD at the scale of Netflix is its decision to make a lot of original content for lots of different parts of the world,” he reflects.

“We tended originally to think of an SVOD as a global player and that the content it was interested in was only going to be the stuff that would play around the world. But they know they have to create a collection of programming that is attractive to different markets.

“That decision is having a big effect on everybody but particularly on unscripted because there is the ability to make different versions of a format in the conventional way. And that is not something we knew was going to happen - and it isn’t really something that anybody aside from Netflix is doing.”

Lambert adds that Amazon is experimenting

“a little bit” but he adds that the next wave of streamers could offer yet more options.

Short-form streamer Quibi, for example, has started to look at formats, with both Lambert and Hincks talking to the Jeffrey Katzenberg-fronted streamer about potential deals. Elsewhere, *Hollywood Game Night* producer Mission Control Media is developing a US adaptation of Israeli format *Come To Bed* for the service, as reported by TBI earlier this year.

The format is largely fixed-rig and follows the bedtime habits and conversations of five couples from different backgrounds and in diverse partnerships. It is distributed by Small World IFT, with Mission Control swooping to option US rights.

Facebook Watch could also be dipping its toe into the format market in a way, with *Red Table Talk* set to be reversioned outside of the US according to creator Jada Pinkett Smith (the social media giant is yet to confirm the roll-out), while in other markets the addition of brands is helping formats travel.

Endemol Shine Group’s *Best.Cover.Ever* received its first international adaptation in Brazil after the company’s local division partnered with music festival VillaMix and global brewer AB for a local, brand-funded version of the show, known as *O Próximo Número 1 VillaMix*. Like the US format, which was from Ryan Seacrest Productions, Endemol Shine North America and Columbia Records, it is available via YouTube.

That might be some way from the traditional broadcaster-led financing model of old but it underlines the ongoing shift of the format market and the myriad ways shows can now be greenlit. SVOD interest in unscripted and formats is increasing, costs for big ideas are rising and broadcasters’ budgets show no sign of surging: the result is that the equation to get format ideas up and running is about to get more complicated. **TBI**

**“Would I have preferred to have been able to do a conventional deal without Motion?”**

**Yes.”**

Stephen Lambert  
Studio Lambert



Channel 4’s *The Circle* is heavily backed by Group M’s Motion Content Group





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# Crazy cash and snackable shorts: The future of entertainment on SVODs

As the likes of Netflix, Amazon and Quibi begin to get their unscripted affairs in order with heavy-hitting greenlights for global-facing shows such as *The Circle*, *Back Of The Net* and *Elba vs Block*, their strategy remains frustratingly opaque. TBI gathered some of the best creative minds in entertainment and formats to shed light on their experiences with the SVODs. Are the days of “crazy cash” over for Netflix? What is Jeffrey Katzenberg looking for in an entertainment offering on Quibi? Does Amazon stand a chance of catching up in the unscripted arena? By Manori Ravindran



Michelle Chappell  
Creative director, Workerbee



Tim Crescenti  
President, Small World IFT



David Flynn  
Co-founder, Youngest Media



Lisa Perrin  
CEO, Creative Networks,  
Endemol Shine Group



Sohail Shah  
Non-executive director,  
Elstree Studios

## What does the future of unscripted on streamers look like?

**LP (ESG):** What Netflix is doing with *The Circle* is interesting. They are doing a hub in Manchester and flying in the Brazilians, French and Americans – and doing it in real time, with one episode a day, rather like *Big Brother*. But 18 months ago, I wouldn't have thought that's something they would have gone for. It's going to be interesting to see how that works. They've yet to crack their big shiny floor show, but they will. People will binge-watch a quiz show now – they will binge-watch something they like no matter what the genre is

**DF (Youngest):** The interesting thing we're finding is that, as well as those binge-watch shows, now streamers also need shows for people who have 30 minutes and don't want to get into something they can't stop watching, but rather something that will really entertain them for that 13 minutes they have spare. The tradition of snackable shows is coming through. But the competition in OTT is only heating up, and they all need their tentpole pieces to sell in a competitive market. And some of those pieces are drama, but entertainment can be that tentpole as well

**LP (ESG):** When we've spoken to Netflix commissioners, [they have said] *Nailed It!* is their biggest

show. And that's why the budgets are coming down on Netflix, because that was done for an awful lot less than *The Crown*. It will be interesting to see how it works when they roll it out in local language, but as a format for them, it's done incredibly well. It's not really cooking – it's a comedy entertainment show, and it's a hit with their young audience

**SS (Elstree):** I also love *Sugar Rush*, and what's clever is that at the end of each episode, they say, 'If you enjoyed that, there's another one coming up', and it just starts. So you watch another one

**LP (ESG):** I love that niche thing they've done. The glassblowers show on Netflix, *Blown Away*, is fantastic. You just think, 'Why am I watching this thing about bloody glass-blowing? But I am'. It's so clever

**MC (Workerbee):** It's great because no terrestrial would have put that on

## How is Netflix beginning to localise in regards to entertainment?

**DF (Youngest):** When you start looking at how Netflix is thinking of local content, for a company like ours that is expanding into the international marketplace, that sort of injection of energy, cash and enthusiasm in those local markets has a brilliant effect in that everyone feels like

they want to up their game. Everyone starts to look at original content as a way to differentiate themselves

**LP (ESG):** But they realise it needs to be tonally different in different markets. You can't just lift an American format and make it in German and assume it will work, because it won't cut it. You do have to localise it. They're one of the first streamers to recognise that. Amazon will also do so as well – they have a strong local team starting

**Endemol Shine recently sold Family Food Fight into Brazil, for broadcaster SBT and Amazon Prime Video. What else are you working on with them?**

**LP (ESG):** We also did a deal with Amazon for comedy-variety series *Last One Laughing*. We are doing that in Mexico, Australia and a couple of other markets

We are totally work for hire. They own the format. But we've taken a view that we want to be their work for hire in those markets and that's something we've decided to go for. We also have some other original development in both through the US and through Georgia Brown in London. That seems to work OK

**SS (Elstree):** I was asked by a company to help them with a children's idea they wanted to flesh out for Amazon, and they have gone for it. It goes into

**"I was short-form commissioner at the BBC in entertainment, and Quibi have got right straight away what we wanted to do at the BBC but were restricted by the cash."**

Sohail Shah



production in November. I found it very easy to flesh out their idea but in terms of what Amazon required to do so, I didn't think it was anything I wouldn't have expected them to ask for. But I got the impression that they were learning what they should be asking for based on what we were pitching. Because it's so new to all of us. Now that their team is in place, they will be more forthcoming and clearer in what they are looking for

**Workerbee had the first UK commission from Quibi and was the first company to start delivering cuts to them. Tell us about that experience**

**LP (ESG):** We were there at the pitch with Jeffrey Katzenberg in February in London. They all waltzed in and it was quite a big deal. Everyone traipsed in and did pitches with them.

**MC (Workerbee):** It's quite amusing. [Workerbee MD Rick Murray] was away and I was on jury service and we sent our poor head of development up to pitch to Katzenberg, but he had a great idea so we thought, 'Well this is going to be fine'. And it was, because when you have a great idea, it sells. He pitched *Elba vs Block* and he had a great bit of tape and [the Quibi team] just thought 'Idris Elba, brilliant' and they backed it. It was very quick.

Within six weeks, it got over the line, and then we





were in production six weeks later. Because we were the first to start delivering cuts, that was interesting because we were figuring it out – should there be closed episodes, cliff-hangers, series arcs? All those bits you’re trying to wrestle with. Initially we started to deliver 10 minutes, and in the end the cuts were five minutes long. We were told that the average 16 to 24-year-old watches content for six minutes and 50 seconds. Katzenberg then watched some cuts and, to summarise it crudely, he just said, ‘I want it louder and I want it quicker’

#### At what point did he get involved?

**MC (Workerbee):** At the fine-cut stage, he just watched over them, which is great. They give quite light-touch notes but they’re really constructive. They’re just fun to work with

**DF (Youngest):** The interesting thing with Quibi is that it’s the most amazing creative challenge and liberation to say, ‘We need to think differently about duration’. But it’s not just US streamers; we’ve just delivered *HouseShare* for BBC Three and that is 23-27 minutes, depending on what the episode needs. And across the board, the OTT delivery allows us to be free in terms of how we create

**MC (Workerbee):** Suddenly making it vertical as well is quite interesting, because it’s both vertical and horizontal. You find that enhances the storytelling because you’re looking for other ways to show [the action], so you might have lots of split-screens and lots of different angles on one vertical page. It actually makes

you think more creatively about a product, which is quite good

#### How did you manage technically? Was that all in the edit stage?

**MC (Workerbee):** Yes, in the edit. We delivered two versions. But we’ve had to play along as we go. It’s the vertical challenge

**DF (Youngest):** We’ve been talking with Quibi and we found that they’re quick and up for good ideas. We came idea-first to them and they will engage at that kind of level because much like all SVODs, no one knows yet what will work in the entertainment space for streamers, and the only way we can work it out is by trying things out

#### The rights situation is interesting, because the rights are returned to you after a period of time. What will you do then with that content?

**MC (Workerbee):** You can repackage them. It’s perfect. For something like *Elba vs Block*, obviously we have shot a lot more than what’s going to go out, so when we do repackage, it’s almost like a whole different programme with much more narrative. They’ve really thought about what makes them different

**TC (Small World):** So, when you’re producing the show, you’re thinking, ‘Okay, these are 10-minute segments,’ but you’re also thinking how will it work when you repackage this

**MC (Workerbee):** On the next one, we’ll be more forward-thinking on that, but for this one, things happened on set that we captured but which were too nuanced to put in the 10 minutes, but brilliant in the long form. Next time, we might plan slightly differently to account for the long form as well.

They said to us, too, to view cuts on our phones. Though we did look in the edit as well (laughs)

**DF (Youngest):** Good point. You can think something is incredibly clear, sitting in an edit with a big screen...

**MC (Workerbee):** ...But then the kids are watching it on their phones

**DF (Youngest):** You’ve got to have that viewing stage and look at whether things like subtitles are coming across properly

**MC (Workerbee):** Colours are also very important

**“Netflix knows they have to pay a premium because they’re paying for producers for hire and taking rights off the table, so they’re prepared to pay a bit more, but those days of crazy cash are definitely gone”**

Lisa Perrin



and can really punch through on the phone. And Quibi involved us in all the marketing as well. It was brilliant to be involved in that, when you wouldn't so much in the terrestrial digital space

**SS (Elstree):** I was short-form commissioner at the BBC in entertainment, and Quibi have got right straight away what we wanted to do at the BBC but were restricted by the cash. Now there has been a cash injection so things have changed, but I had people pitching nice ideas to me, but short-form had a challenging budget. However, the idea and lengths would have been the same, in theory – between 5 and 10 minutes. The difference is Quibi is giving you the cash to be able to realise what you want us to see in a really, really good way. They're brilliant, and I look forward to seeing what we can do with it; it just guts me that we couldn't do it on BBC Three, because it's what we wanted to do

**DF (Youngest):** I think, though, as producers we now need to be flexible to be able to work with, in a perfect world, both Quibi and US networks, but also BBC Three and the online distribution platforms whose budgets are even smaller than those short-form ones. You have to think about how to ready your team for that, and whether the tech is there in terms of the way you can turn things around, how you can shoot things, and have edits in the office. You have to be careful you're not putting everything towards these new providers

### How do you go about pitching to these platforms when they're commissioning extremely niche programmes but also more wide-appeal offerings?

**LP (ESG):** We've started doing some multi-territory pitching. We're doing non-English language pitches all together, so it feels very joined up for them right from the very beginning, which seems to have worked for some

**“At MIPCOM, we're going to bring back *I Survived A Japanese Gameshow* and present that to the streaming platforms. But it's the risk of, 'OK are we going to make more money by doing that in 13 territories or 25 territories?' That's the risk”**

Tim Crescenti



streamers, knowing that local language is something that they want

### How does that work?

**LP (ESG):** If we come up with a great format idea, we go in with our German, French, Spanish and Italian partners. So, you go in as a multi-language, non-English language pitch, which for Netflix and Amazon is important because they've hit a limit in the US and UK and the Nordics are completely saturated – all these countries watch the English versions. So, the big subscription uplift is non-English language, that's why there's a massive opportunity. So for us, going in on multi-territory with a format everyone wants to make seems to be working

**MC (Workerbee):** It is different developing for the SVODs, because you only get that one shot. Everything has to be locked down with the talent. The idea of going in with a few top lines – you might as well just get out of the room now. It has to be fully formed. They don't really develop in the room first straight away – they'll develop with you later – but it's really that one shot

**LP (ESG):** The tape has to be excellent. You have to spend a lot of money, and once you've shown it once, it's done. As traditional developers, you make a tape and you think you can show it to BBC One, Channel 4, Channel 5. Now you have to specifically make it for a Disney+ or Netflix, because tonally it's very different. Especially a Disney+ is very different. You're burning through a lot of ideas and a lot of tape time. It costs a lot of money.

But, to be fair we're doing something with Netflix, where they looked at it and they went, 'We love that picture' and it sold

**DF (Youngest):** That's the other part of it. That front image has become more and more important. Popping on a screen amidst major choice is a real challenge. You should be thinking about that visual at the pitch stage, and what the visual can add

**SS (Elstree):** Netflix changes their thumbnail constantly for shows – it's all dependent on the algorithm

### What's new with YouTube?

**LP (ESG):** We are getting some traction. Remarkable Factual has done a big virtual reality history series, which is amazing. They've come up with this innovative way of using VR. YouTube has dropped the paywall and they're leaning into premium education. Locally, there are a



couple of markets they're really looking into as well

**What markets are they targeting?**

**LP (ESG):** YouTube is looking into Germany for German local language, as well as Spanish local language. That's the main push. Germany is getting a lot of interest because it's a wealthy country with a big middle-class and big population. Tonally, it's very different in how people watch TV, so all the streamers feel like Germany is an opportunity. Amazon, Netflix and others all want to commission German local language

**As a distributor, how do you navigate – and negotiate – sales into streamers?**

**TC (Small World):** At MIPCOM, we're going to bring back *I Survived A Japanese Gameshow* with a turnkey production hub and present that to the streaming platforms. But it's the risk of, 'OK are we going to make more money by doing that in 13 territories or 25 territories?' That's the risk. Another thing is, if you get a deal with these streamers, they will give you China which is nice, but we can't sell into China, so thank you for that (laughs)

**LP (ESG):** For us, as a group, we always look at the formats we're pitching and think, are they the right formats for the streamers, or are they formats that could potentially be rolled out in a more traditional way? But ultimately, the creatives just want the ideas made. Netflix, Amazon and Quibi are all very sexy places to play – why wouldn't you want your content up there? So you're hardly going to say to people, 'You can't pitch that'. You have to think 'horses for courses'

**DF (Youngest):** It's a big choice, but for *The Circle*, it feels like Studio Lambert made a very good choice to drive it through Netflix. They have been very supportive

**How have budgets fared in recent years? Amazon reportedly paid up to \$250m for *The Grand Tour*. Are we still looking at these types of deals in unscripted?**

**MC (Workerbee):** They've got a pyramid of different tariffs, and the top is really expensive. The budgets are very good

**TC (Small World):** Whatever Amazon paid for *The Grand Tour*, you're never going to get that deal anywhere

**“Katzenberg then watched some cuts and, to summarise it crudely, he just said, ‘I want it louder and I want it quicker’ ”**  
Michelle Chappell



**LP (ESG):** I think the days of crazy cash are gone. Netflix understood that there was a *Crown* Effect, where they overpaid for that massive bankable thing that I'm sure they'll make their money back on, but it slightly skewed the drama market and they're very aware – particularly as they go into other markets – that they have to keep the market rate, and to benchmark what the French market rate is, and what the German rate is

They know they have to pay a premium because they're paying for producers for hire and taking rights off the table, so they're prepared to pay a bit more, but those days of crazy cash are definitely gone. But it makes sense: they only have a finite amount of money which has to go to more countries with more content. People burn through because audiences binge-watch. So, they're constantly running, which is great because they want content, but they're going to spread that a little bit thinner. What's interesting is that this is happening right when we begin to see a drop-off in US subs for Netflix, as per the most recent results

**LP (ESG):** Yeah, and unless you've got a Disney+ deep-pocketed budget, it's going to be quite interesting. It's inevitable the budgets will be slightly more sensible and the margins will be smaller and they'll have to look at perhaps doing Quibi-style deals. Certainly, budgets are lower than what they were two years ago

**TC (Small World):** Streamers initially want to make a splash so they do A-list celeb deals, but where's all your money going if you've got someone like Justin Bieber? And also, when you attach someone like that, is there really a role for this person? Are we going to get Bieber's 34m followers?

**DF (Youngest):** He's very good in the edit, to be fair. **TBI**



# LODGERS

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5 x 60' + FORMAT



MIPCOM Stand C20.A

# The new money

Breaking down the next wave of streamers on the block



**Release date:** 12 November, 2019

**Launch markets:** US, Canada, Netherlands (12 November); Australia, New Zealand (19 November)

**Pricing:** \$6.99/month

**Originals content spend:** \$1bn

**Third-party content:** Selectively licensed

**Originals greenlit to date:** 48

**Key execs:** Ricky Strauss (president, content and marketing); Agnes Chu (SVP content); Jan Koeppen (president, EMEA); Luke Bradley-Jones (SVP direct-to-consumer and GM, Europe and Africa)



**Unscripted highlights:** *The World According to Jeff Goldblum*; Kirsten Bell's *Encore!*; Nat Geo's *Magic Of The Animal Kingdom*; *Earthkeepers*

**Scripted highlights:** *The Mandalorian*; *She-Hulk*; *Monsters At Work*; *Short Circuit*; *Lady & The Tramp*; *Love, Simon*; *Togo*; *Lizzie McGuire*



**Release date:** 1 November, 2019

**Launch markets:** 100 countries, including UK, Australia, Canada, France, Germany

**Pricing:** \$4.99/month

**Originals content spend:** \$6bn

**Third-party content:** None (only available via third-party apps)

**Originals greenlit to date:** ~40

**Key execs:** Jamie Erlicht and Zack Van Amburg (co-heads of worldwide video programming); Morgan Wandell (head of international content development); Jay Hunt (creative director, Europe); Molly Thompson (head of documentaries)

**Unscripted highlights:** *Oprah's Book Club*; Oprah Winfrey's *Toxic Labour*; *Home*; *Dads*

**Scripted highlights:** Steven Spielberg's *Amazing Stories*; Reese Witherspoon's *The Morning Show*; Steven Knight's *See*; *Ghostwriter*; *Truth Be Told*; *Dickinson*



**Release date:** 2020

**Launch markets:** US-only to date

**Pricing:** Estimated \$17-20/month (confirmed to be more than \$14.99 HBO Go offering)

**Originals content spend:** ~\$2bn (AT&T's HBO Originals spend only)

**Third-party content:** Yes (ie. BBC Studios' *Doctor Who* and *Top Gear*)

**Total shows greenlit to date:** 16 (+9 new HBO shows)

**Key execs:** Kevin Reilly (chief content officer); Sarah Aubrey (head of original content); Joey Chavez (EVP original drama); Jennifer O'Connell (EVP original non-fiction, kids) Jeniffer Kim (SVP international originals); Suzanna Makkos (EVP original comedy, animation)

**Unscripted highlights:** *Extreme Camp*; *Ellen's Home Design Challenge*; *Legendary*; *The Greatest Space*; *First Dates Hotel*

**Scripted highlights:** Lupita Nyong'o-starrer *Americanah*; *Gossip Girl* reboot; *Dune: The Sisterhood*; Anna Kendrick's *Love Life*; Ansel Elgort-starring *Tokyo Vice*



# peacock

**Release date:** April 2020

**Launch markets:** US-only

**Pricing:** Unknown (Two tiers: paid tier estimated \$5, plus free ad-supported tier)

**Originals content spend:** Unknown

**Third-party content:** Selectively licensed

**Total shows greenlit to date:** 15

**Key execs:** Bonnie Hammer (chairman of direct-to-consumer, digital enterprises); Bill McGoldrick (president, original content); Betsy Slenzak (VP unscripted development)



**Unscripted highlights:** *Saturday Night Live* docuseries *Who Wrote That*; Jimmy Fallon talk show series; Seth Meyers exec-produced weekly late-night show with Amber Ruffin; *The Real Housewives* spin-off

**Scripted highlights:** True crime podcast-based *Dr. Death*; *Brave New World* adaptation; Emmy Rossum's *Angelyne*; *One Of Us Is Lying*; Rashida Jones's *Straight Talk*; reboots of *Mr. Robot*; *Saved By The Bell*; *Punky Brewster*

# Quibi



**Release date:** 6 April, 2020

**Launch markets:** North America

**Pricing:** \$4.99/month with ads; \$7.99/month ad-free

**Originals content spend:** \$1bn

**Third-party content:** No

**Total shows greenlit to date:** 38

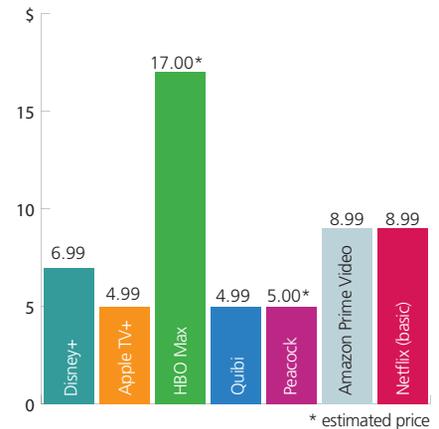
**Key execs:** Jeffrey Katzenberg (co-founder); Meg Whitman (co-founder); Jim Toth (head of content acquisition and talent); Doug Herzog (content exec); Kate Presutti (content exec)

**Unscripted highlights:** *Elba vs. Block*; *Punk'd*; *Singled Out*; Jennifer Lopez's *Thanks A Million*; *Daily Essentials*; *Fight Like A Girl*; Lena Waithe's *You Ain't Got These*

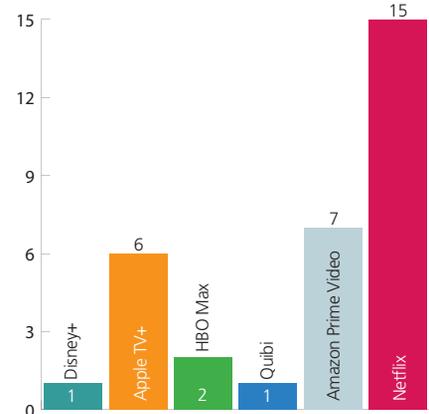
**Scripted highlights:** Steven Spielberg's *After Dark*; sci-fi *Don't Look Deeper*; Anna Kendrick's *Dummy*; *How To Lose A Guy In 10 Days* reboot; Darren Criss co-created *Royalties*

## By the numbers

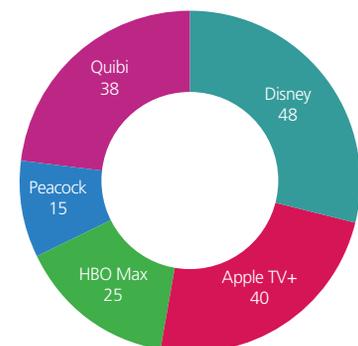
### Price point per month (\$):



### Content spend 2019/2020 (\$bn)



### Total originals greenlit

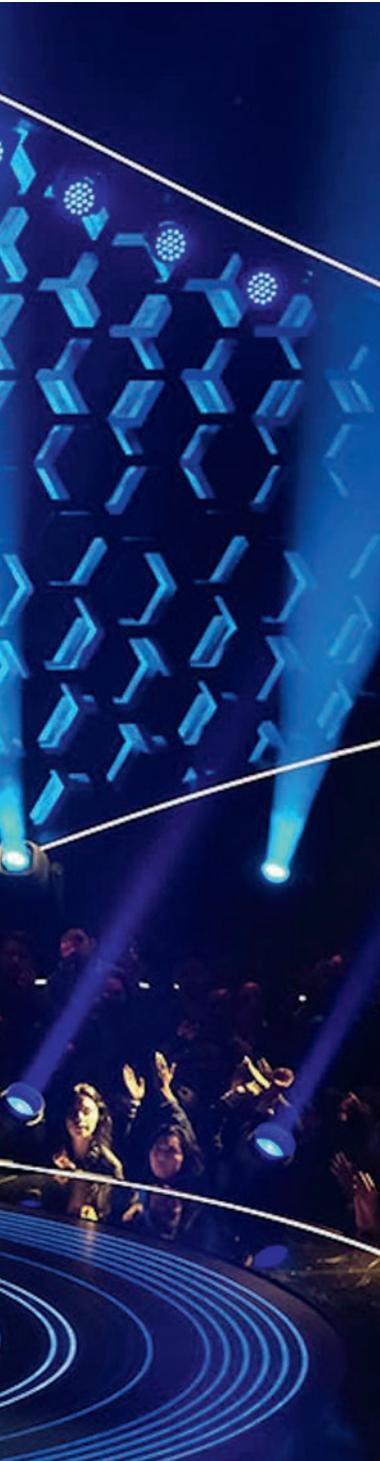


# Forward thinking

ITV Studios' deal for Israel's Armoza Formats over the summer marked a watershed moment for the unscripted business. Richard Middleton talks to founder Avi Armoza



*The Four* was renewed for a second season by Fox in 2018



**I**TV Studios has been involved in its fair share of M&A activity over the past five years, but few deals have underlined the changing nature of the unscripted business as its acquisition of Armoza Formats earlier this summer.

The Israeli format creator and distributor has been a constant at TV markets around the world over the past decade, with its stock soaring following Fox's acquisition of *The Four*, the entertainment show created by Armoza's in-house team.

But while such deals flung founder Avi Armoza and his company to new heights on the global stage, it became clear that in the TV world where scale matters, no matter how good the underlying IP might be, selling format rights would only take his firm so far.

"We realised that we needed to get into production, we knew that that would be the next level of income for us," Armoza tells TBI. And as the veteran format exec explains, his growth philosophy – that "to stand still is to go backwards" – meant shifting away from a pure IP creation and sales operation.

For companies such as ITVS and Endemol Shine Group, the strategy of selling a broadcaster format rights, then charging a production fee on top to create a local version – using their own, local production firm – has become a key revenue generator.

But for smaller companies such as Armoza, despite being heavily laden with IP, taking that next step into production can fast become a leap.

The company, which is behind a raft of formats including social experiment *Sex Tape* and entertainment series *I Can Do That!*, had made some production moves prior to the ITVS acquisition, most notably striking a deal with ex-Shine France founder and CEO Thierry Lachkar that would see his firm, Deeply Superficial, producing the Israeli outfit's formats in the country.

But Armoza admits that by going down the M&A route, scale can now be achieved far more quickly – and that has become increasingly important as streamers become more active across the unscripted landscape. "And they are not buying formats," he says, "they are buying productions and finished tape."

"Through M&A, we can very quickly go to the top floor of production and all of a sudden team up with ITVS, which has so many production companies. At the push of a button, we are really advancing."

The deal highlights not only the increasing

importance of being able to produce for new unscripted players, but also the allure of IP-holding firms such as Armoza to muscular, global players such as ITVS.

"Our company was growing and developing, and we became increasingly attractive, with approaches from different directions," he explains. UK-based investment bank Stella Capital Partners oversaw the process for Armoza, with multiple outfits looking to take a stake in the Israeli company.

"If you have one, two or three companies looking at you, it's better to go through a structured process, in which you explore all markets and find the right partners," he says of appointing Stella.

While Armoza won't divulge the firm's other suitors, he does shed light on why ITVS fit the bill. Financials were, of course, important, but the culture of the acquiring company was vital. "If you look at M&A, there are often more failures than successes. We were looking for a company that had a shared vision, and we found that in terms of culture and values at ITVS," he says.

"It was about understanding the role of creativity within the organisation, too, and understanding that there is not only one way to achieve that creativity. Armoza was operating in a very unique way: we were not a production company in our country but we were able to develop and create IP on global scale."

Armoza will continue to operate largely independently, he says, despite ITVS' 100% acquisition of the company.

It will also, however, become part of ITVS' Global Creative Network, headed up by Mike Beale, extending its reach around the world. But Armoza adds that retaining the company's DNA and spirit will be key to delivering future format hits. Its slate of new formats heading to MIPCOM also shows little sign of waning ideas, with the likes of *Queens of Love* becoming available to buyers for the first time.

The show has been created in-house and features three drag queens who use their outspoken personalities to audition potential suitors, analysing the date and the potential partner. It is joined by third party shows such as fellow dating-reality show *Single Parents Cruising*, from Zone 3, and studio entertainment format *Song Of My Life*, from Yellow Film & TV, on the first ITVS-backed Armoza slate.

"The aim is to create more, but another aim is to understand the platforms that we have and the reach we have now, in terms of where ITVS operates," Armoza says. "We're better placed to get

**“Our company was growing and developing, and we became increasingly attractive, with approaches from different directions.”**

Avi Armoza  
Armoza Formats



*Queens Of Love and Sex Tape* are among Armoza's formats heading to MIPCOM

the knowledge and needs of each market, and we can tailor and focus our development operation, that will be our main challenge.”

The deal has injected “new spirit and energy” into the company, Armoza continues, but he admits the unscripted market is becoming increasingly tough for mid-range players. Either you are small and nimble enough to survive, or you become part of a global player that enjoys scales of efficiency and clout.

“The toughest place to be is in between. If you want to expand, then you need a wider footprint on the international market.”

With the ITVS deal now in the bag, Armoza is focused on expanding the operations of the

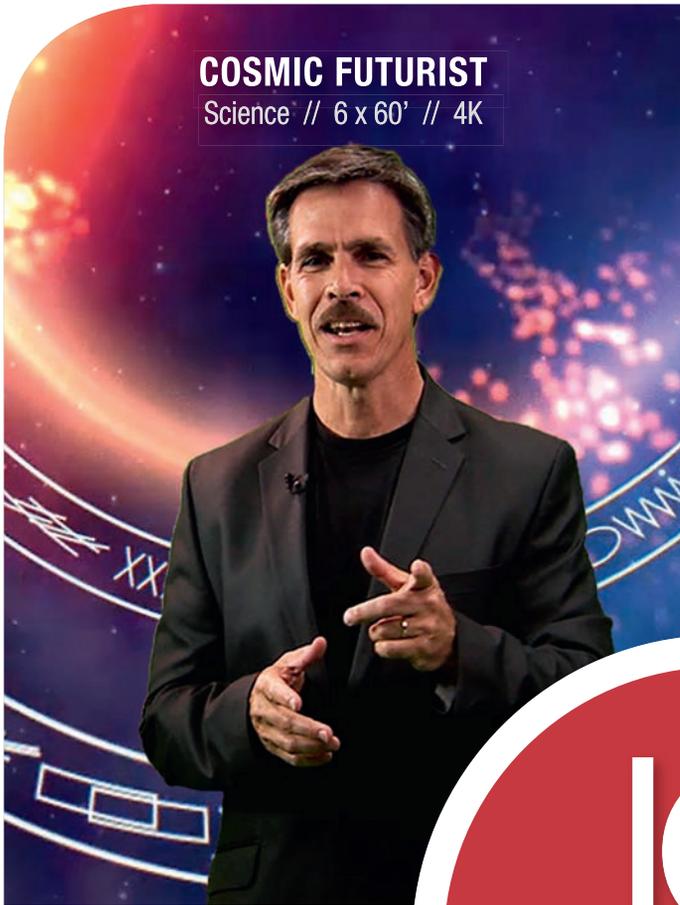
company that bears his name but now belongs to someone else.

“It’s a stage of experimentation for the streamers: they are changing models and trying different things,” he says. “In terms of regulation and commercial necessity, they will need to do local productions in certain territories and also in local languages. And this is one of the benefits of being part of a group with a large production capability – you have more efficiencies and models that you can utilise.”

And those opportunities look likely to spark further M&A, as the creative companies behind formats and rights holders look to gain from the lucrative world of production on a global scale. **TBI**

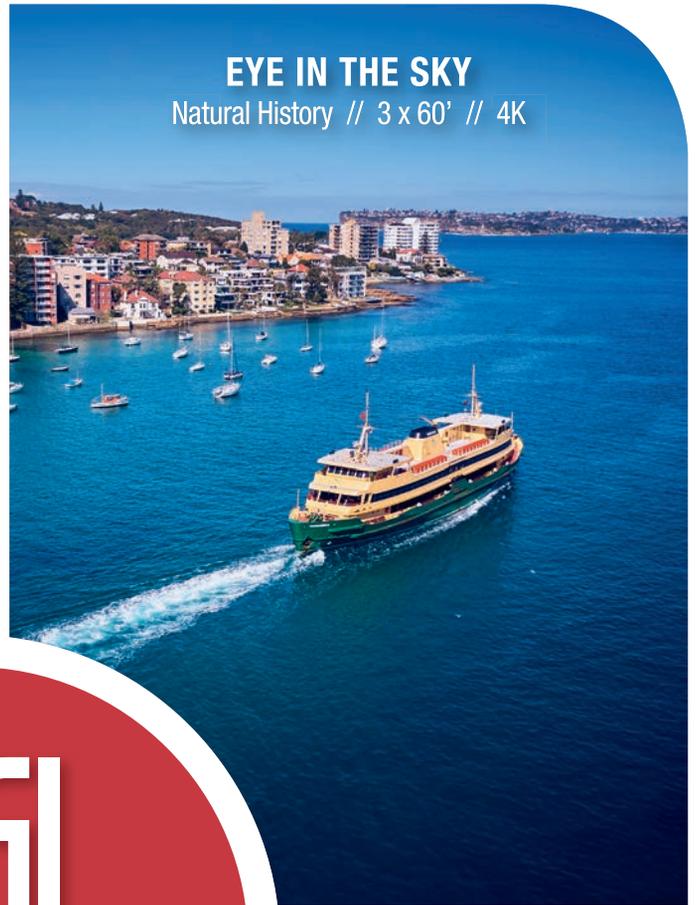
## COSMIC FUTURIST

Science // 6 x 60' // 4K



## EYE IN THE SKY

Natural History // 3 x 60' // 4K



**LG**  
MEDIA

VISIT US AT  
P-1.C86

## INSIDE SAUDI ARABIA RACE TO CHANGE

People & Places // 1 x 60' // 4K



## SPIKY GOLD HUNTERS

Travel & Adventure // 6 x 60' // 4K





## Viewpoint Lisa Perrin

### Brotherly love

**“Big Brother is one of the very few shows that can claim it created a brand new genre that remains popular to this day.”**

**B**ig Brother, the big daddy of reality formats, the one that genuinely changed television forever, is celebrating a landmark birthday. Twenty years ago, nine pioneering housemates entered a house in the outskirts of Amsterdam with no contact with the outside world, to be filmed around the clock by 24 cameras. *Big Brother* is one of the very few television shows that can claim it created a brand new genre that remains popular to this day.

Fast forward two decades on and reality television continues to leave audiences gripped. These formats are still amongst the most travelled internationally. Just what is it about reality series that makes viewers obsess over them? Is it because it's like looking in a mirror, imagining how you would react in the situations we see on our screens?

Reality forms an important part of any broadcaster's schedule. It's tried and tested to deliver audiences, especially in the all-important 16-34 demo. *Big Brother* fills a large part of a schedule, bringing with it a lot of noise. Whether celebrity or civilian, there are always great characters in *Big Brother* and in the territories that have rested the show, viewers have definitely missed it. The format is relishing a renaissance, with the latest comebacks in Poland and Finland this year – and Germany and Sweden confirmed for 2020.

We are now busy planning the next 20 years and have come up with innovative new ways to produce the show with new tech. Two years ago, we drastically changed the workflow, gallery and approach to filming. This has opened up lots more creative opportunities – new cameras and AI have enabled us to take the show out of the traditional set and into new locations, like a beautiful house in Warsaw or a shopping mall in the heart of Helsinki. These versions feel modern and contemporary and

move the format on with an authentic environment for the housemates to interact.

*Big Brother* has always been brave with its casting. It reflects society, giving a voice to people from different backgrounds – be it BAME, LGBTQ or the older generation. This diversity is unique and appeals to viewers and broadcasters, giving people license to talk about important topics. I'm proud to say there have been three transgender women appearing in our many Indian versions, the most recent of which is currently on air, and Canada welcomed the first non-binary housemate in 2019.

The flexibility of the format means we can also put other issues front and centre, with sustainability and environmental issues being highlighted in *Big Brother* around the world. We're looking at all our productions and what we can do to improve practices, especially considering *Big Brother's* huge global audience. It's forming a big part of the show with an eco-house in Finland, and in India real water restrictions have been implemented for housemates to mirror what is happening in drought struck parts of the country. Behind the scenes in Germany, they saved an estimated 12,000 coffee cups by using reusable bamboo mugs. Younger viewers have a lot at stake when it comes to the environment and if we want *Big Brother* to last another 20 years we need to engage with their passion.

As we celebrate *Big Brother's* epic success, we are putting building blocks in place to keep people engaging and interacting with the format, adding twists and turns, keeping it entertaining and immersive. With 18 markets on board this year, we have ambitions for even more comebacks and successes. Who knows what's in store for any of us in the next 20 years, but one thing is for sure: the world will be watching. **TBI**

Lisa Perrin is CEO of Endemol Shine Group's Creative Networks

# NEW CONTENT FOR MIPCOM



**BRADLEY WALSH & SON:  
BREAKING DAD**

10 x 30  
Hungry Bear Media  
for ITV 1



**TOM KERRIDGE'S  
AMERICAN FEAST**

10 x 30  
Blink Films  
for Food Network



**CRISTIANO RONALDO  
MEETS PIERS MORGAN**

1 x 60  
Plum Pictures  
for ITV 1



**EASY WAYS  
TO LIVE WELL**

3 x 60  
Keo Films  
for BBC One



**TALKING ANIMALS  
TALES FROM THE ZOO**

6 x 60  
Emporium Productions  
for Channel 5



**WAR ON PLASTIC  
WITH HUGH & ANITA**

4 x 60  
Keo Films  
for BBC One

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# Formats Hot Picks

The formats we're betting on at MIPCOM



Top  
Pick

## Five Guys A Week

**Distributor:** Fremantle

**Producer:** Label1

**Broadcaster:** Channel 4 (UK)

**Logline:** A single woman invites five suitors to live with her for a week, eliminating them one by one in an attempt to find her perfect match

With its arresting title, dating show *Five Guys A Week* sets out to transform the first-date experience by providing one single woman with the chance to compare and contrast five suitors in real time.

Fast-tracking the “getting to know you period”, the woman must live with five boyfriends for a week – all at the same time, eliminating one each day, until the last man standing.

The ‘locally sourced’ men go everywhere with their host en-masse: to work, on a night out with mates, or for dinner with the parents, with a combination of fixed-rig and roaming

cameras following the action. As such, it’s billed as a test of romance, compatibility and stamina – a dating show that explores what people actually want from their partners as well as offering a sometimes surprising insight into the male psyche.

*Five Guys A Week* is produced by Label1, best known for factual hit *The Hospital* and format *The Job Interview*. Channel 4 ordered a pilot of the show in 2018, and earlier this year announced it was taking it to series with another 9 x 60-minute episodes to accompany the pilot, creating

a 10-part commission.

It is being executive produced by Label1’s new head of factual entertainment Barnaby Coughlin, who has form in the dating genre, having previously executive produced C4 shows *First Dates* and *First Dates Hotel* at Twenty Twenty.

“We wanted to create a show that compared and contrasted men’s very different wooing techniques, all the while putting the woman at the centre of the experience and leaving the decisions to her,” explains Simon Dickson, co-founder and creative director of Label1.

He says the first scene that Label1 dreamed up was five guys ringing a woman’s doorbell, one after another in quick succession. Next, they thought it would be revealing and funny to see what happens when the girl takes her five

“boyfriends” to meet her parents. “Pretty soon, we realised we had the beginnings of a powerful format,” says Dickson.

Throughout, the woman is in total control and watching the competition between the men drives the format. Dickson says the show also delivers regular “hits” of excitement and intrigue throughout – taking dating shows to the next level by upping the formatting while keeping the “rules” simple.

“Take, for example, the way in which the format allows for the eliminations, when the woman kicks out each unsuccessful guy, to happen in the real world. This hasn’t been seen before outside of big entertainment shows or competitive set-ups such as *Bake Off*. We wanted to bring this excitement into the unscripted space.”

**Don't**

**Distributor:** Banijay Rights  
**Producer:** Banijay Studios North America  
**Broadcaster:** ABC (US)  
**Logline:** A gameshow where a family can win money by following one simple rule – Don't

Picked up by ABC in the US, new game show *Don't* is currently in the edit. Billed as a comedic physical format, it follows a family of four who must work together throughout five mental and physical challenges with just one rule: Don't. For example, "Don't Slip," "Don't Forget," "Don't Laugh," "Don't Say It," "Don't Scream".

"Accomplish this simple rule and chances are you will win money," explains executive producer David Goldberg. "What makes it tricky is that your brain is telling you to do."

If the family fails a challenge,

they don't earn money and one of them is eliminated from the game, until only one remains. The last remaining relative must then complete the rest of the challenges on their own for a prize of up to \$100,000 for the family.

*Don't* was developed by Banijay North America and has Ryan Reynolds as an executive producer. *Big Little Lies* actor Adam Scott is to set to host.

Goldberg says *Don't* focuses primarily on physical competitions, often with a question and answer component.

"We have created a unique environment and visual vernacular for the show. You could almost call it 'The Don't World,'" he says.

Creating this world has been the biggest challenge about bringing *Don't* to screen. The Banijay team have shot 8 x



60-minute episodes for this launch season, which required 25 or more unique challenges.

"Any time you create a show from scratch, there are challenges. But in those that involve physical games, some of which are large scale, the challenge is amplified," points out Goldberg.

The format, yet to be formally pitched, is being

introduced to buyers at MIPCOM. "It's been pretty much under wraps," says Goldberg.

He says that while the US show is ambitious, the format can be scaled down to work for smaller markets. It is also suitable for a production hub model, allowing a number of territories to use the same set to offset costs.

**Parents' Evening**

**Distributor:** Lineup Industries  
**Producer:** Stellify Media  
**Broadcaster:** BBC Northern Ireland (UK)  
**Logline:** Taking viewers inside the most important night of the high school calendar – the parent-teacher meeting

A parents' evening is often one of the most stressful events of an academic year – for the kids, parents and school. Now it's been made into a doc format by Stellify Media, the Belfast-based indie run as a joint venture with Sony Pictures Television. Filmed with a fixed rig across an academic year, it features a different high school in each episode. Audiences learn what the child thinks of their school, what their parents think of the academics, and get a hint about what the teacher thinks, too.

Stellify co-founder Kieran

Doherty bills *Parents' Evening* as a family sitcom, citing the warmth and humour of *Modern Family* as an inspiration. "It's not just about kids in school – their home life is as important to us as their actual consultations."

Viewers also get to see how parents interact with their kids, while the teachers are also filmed in their staffroom 'precinct', away from the kids.

Casting engaging children, parents and teachers was a key production challenge, adds Stellify co-founder Matthew Worthy. So, too, was the need

to let the parents' evening run naturally. "We couldn't ask for any re-takes if we missed anything. It really focuses the mind," says Worthy.

Perhaps unusually, the format is being represented by Lineup Industries rather than Sony. Lineup co-founder Ed Louwse explains: "As ex-Sony execs we knew the guys at Stellify and

Sony International very well and came across this title. Without any disrespect, this was one of the smaller commissions in the Sony catalogue and not likely to be a focus. Yet it suits our catalogue which includes titles like *Radio Gaga*, *Taboo* and of course *Long Lost Family*, and we felt we could add some value to the process."





### Comedians Giving Lectures

**Distributor:** ITV Studios Global Entertainment

**Producer:** 12 Yard Productions, part of ITV Studios

**Broadcaster:** UKTV's Dave (UK)

**Logline:** Top comedians give their own unique take on an academic lecture

It's like a TED Talk – but with jokes. *Comedians Giving Lectures* launched on UKTV channel Dave in September, and the new format sees top comedians deliver their own take on an academic lecture.

Each talk has the title of a genuine lecture – from “10 Ways the World Could End” to “How to Spot a Liar” – but none of the content. The comedians are then marked on their comedy skills by the audience, as well as an expert in the field of their lecture topic.

Mike Beale, MD of global creative network at ITV Studios, positions the show as part of an overall trend recently for “authentic but simple comedy formats that move away from a classic panel show and take funny people a little outside of their comfort zone”.

Beale says that in a world where politicians and experts are arguing over life-changing issues, *Comedians Giving Lectures* provides a perfect antidote by “taking the big issues and allowing the country's best comedy brains to find the funny

in them”.

Produced by ITV Studios-owned 12 Yard Productions (*Eggheads*, *Who Dares Wins*), the eight-part series was filmed in a real lecture hall to make it feel like an authentic lecture was taking place.

Beale notes that the format gives broadcasters the opportunity to showcase a broader variety of comedy talent and is thus open to not only stand-up comedians but comedy actors and other celebrities as well.

It also means that stand-up comedians can't rehash old material, guaranteeing new content every episode on a wide range of topics – most of which are rarely used as the basis for a comedy routine.

ITV Studios is looking to sell the format into territories with a good precedent of non-scripted comedy, such as the US, Australia, Canada, Benelux and Scandinavia – where Dave hit *Taskmaster* has been picked up.

Beale adds that the format can work across the board globally.

### Meat The Family

**Distributor:** Red Arrow Studios International

**Producers:** Spun Gold, Rise Films

**Broadcaster:** Channel 4 (UK)

**Logline:** Topical social experiment that explores what happens when a family's dinner comes to stay

Tapping into concerns about the natural world, food production, animal welfare and what we eat, this social experiment sees four meat-eating families welcome the animal they most frequently serve for dinner into their home.

Whether a chicken, sheep, pig or even a cow, they treat the new arrival like a pet – taking it for walks and playing with it in a bid to understand its intellectual and emotional capacity. At the end of three weeks, they are forced to make a choice: go vegetarian and send the animal to a sanctuary, or remain meat eaters and kill their friend.

Juliet Rice, head of prodco Spun Gold (*Garden Rescue*, *Secrets Of The National Trust*), says they wanted to make a series about what we eat that didn't feel dry, worthy and preachy but fun and entertaining.

“The minute we asked ourselves why is it that we would eat a little lamb or pig but not our pet dog, it begged a lot of questions. Do we love our dogs more because we think they are smarter than farm animals? Have personalities? [Because they're] cuter?”

It was a short step from there to finding out by getting farm animals to move in with families, Rice explains.

The format, she adds, allows the families to investigate a big issue while on an intensely personal journey of their own. “We decided to shoot the series with observational filmmaking at the heart of it ensuring that it never felt like a features show or indeed a journalist-led specialist factual programme.”

The show also allows broadcasters to tackle a topic that usually sits within factual.



### In A Man's World

**Distributor:** NBCUniversal International Formats

**Producers:** Lucky 8, JuVee Productions

**Broadcaster:** Bravo (US)

**Logline:** Four women undergo astounding transformations to discover what life is truly like in a man's world

In this #MeToo era, new format *In A Man's World* feels timely and likely to stir debate. Billed as a social experiment, it follows four women as they are temporarily transformed into men with help of an Oscar-winning makeup team, plus a voice coach and movement experts.

The idea is that they can then discover how the other gender lives, exploring the differences for men and women in society, their careers and their cultures.

Each of the 4 x 60-minute episodes follows one woman, from pro-pool player to a pastor,



going about their daily lives at work and at home, even fooling their loved ones with their new male alter egos. The series, which launched on Bravo on 1 October, comes from executive producer and Oscar-winning actress Viola Davis' JuVee Productions and Lucky 8.

NBCUniversal International Formats is handling sales. Its SVP of format sales and production Ana Langenberg

argues that the format taps into the cultural zeitgeist, shining a light on the social and gender issues of the modern world.

The women taking part, she adds, discover a lot about themselves and the gender bias that exists today. "The fascinating experiences the women endure will resonate with people all over the world and each episode offers a very different perspective,

highlighting a broad range of issues across the series."

MIPCOM will be the first time that NBCUniversal, which encompasses Bravo, has introduced the series to international buyers. "We will be offering it to all clients in our key markets, particularly the ones where factual entertainment is strong," says Langenberg, who says the format could be a good offering for digital platforms.

### Marrying Millions

**Distributor:** A+E Networks International

**Producer:** Sharp Entertainment

**Broadcaster:** Lifetime (US)

**Logline:** A focus on new couples, where one half of each couple is wealthy and the other is not

Launched in July, Lifetime's new reality show *Marrying Millions* is either about true love or the love of money.

A relationship format, it focuses on newly in love couples that come from completely different worlds, where one half of each couple is extremely wealthy and the other definitively is not.

Take, as an example, one of the couples in the Lifetime series: Bill, 60, is the founder of a commercial real estate company with investments worth billions.

He met Brianna, 21, at a Dallas restaurant where she worked.

Or Gentile, a real estate investor in Las Vegas, who met Brian when he went to work on one of her construction projects. He lives paycheck-to-paycheck, while Gentile has a net worth of around \$15m.

The format follows the couples as they immerse themselves in each other's opposite worlds, meeting the parents, siblings and friends who are suspicious of the relationship and convinced it's just about money.



Gena McCarthy, EVP and head of unscripted at Lifetime and FYI, recalls being pitched a sizzle for the format by Sharp Entertainment.

"It was very much an unscripted iteration of *Pretty Woman*, where the woman with the heart of gold despite a lower economic situation overcomes the odds to achieve romantic

success."

She says it took a lot of patience from the producers to be able to cast six real couples who were prepared to take part.

However, the result, according to McCarthy, is a franchise that "satisfies a vicarious itch to peer into how 'the other half lives' that will please audiences everywhere.

### Queens Of Love

**Distributor:** Armoza Formats

**Producer:** Armoza Formats

**Broadcaster:** n/a

**Logline:** Three drag queens help a singleton audition four potential suitors

There's plenty of twists on the relationship show at this year's MIPCOM (see TBI's Hot Picks for *Five Guys A Week* and *Marrying Millions* in this issue).

*Queens Of Love* is another, very different spin on dating. Developed in-house by formats specialist Armoza Formats, it's billed as a new take on the genre: three fabulous and outrageous drag queens are charged with rescuing the love life of a singleton every episode by auditioning four potential suitors together.

The drag queens coach the singleton and then sit with them to help cut through the small talk of a first date, using their first-hand experience of both genders to bring out the truth from each suitor and find out the information that really matters.

According to Moshiko Cohen, senior creative director in Armoza's development department, the questions they ask can be extreme and very

funny – how much they earn, whether they have cheated, or to explain their social media activity.

But the idea is to discover “the true essence” of the suitors, and work out if there is “a fit and a chemistry” with their singleton.

Shows such as *RuPaul's Drag Race* have proved that drag queens are a draw on television. “There's something about the fact that they are in costume,” says Cohen. “People open up to them.” He describes the three drag queens in the pilot that Armoza has produced as being like “human lie detectors”.

The result, he says, is a fun watch and relatable hour-long format that should appeal to younger viewers. As is customary for Armoza, the pilot for *Queens Of Love* has been produced without a broadcaster attached. Armoza, now backed by ITV Studios, is launching the format in Cannes, where it will be introduced to buyers for the first time.



### HouseShare

**Distributor:** Youngest Media

**Producer:** Youngest Media

**Broadcaster:** BBC Three (UK)

**Logline:** A group of young people move into the ultimate house share together, sharing a home and all their money



The cost of living in a global city like London makes it an almost impossible dream for many young people to consider moving to.

*HouseShare* acknowledges this reality and spins it into a format that is squarely aimed at a young audience. It takes six people from all over the country, getting them to share a house in London – and all their money as well.

Over the course of the series, the house sharers do what all new arrivals in a big city do: look for work, friends and love. In this case they also pool their earnings into a joint bank account – causing inevitable tensions if some work harder than others, or if one of the participants spends too much.

*HouseShare* is created by Youngest Media (*Small Fortune*, *Game Of Clones*). Most of the Youngest team are from outside London themselves, says executive producer Shaun Parry, and moved to the big city to chase their dreams. They had been

struck by reports that few younger people were able to do this now because of the financial climate.

“We started talking about an idea that might help young people achieve this by coming together, sharing everything and supporting each other.”

Parry says the idea of sharing money felt like a good way to bring out people's different values and drive emotional narratives. Money, he points out, doesn't exist in most reality shows. “In this one, it's front and centre. And there's real jeopardy, because each housemate's future is on the line. They've left home and jobs behind to come here.”

*HouseShare* launches as a 6 x 20-minute series – the equivalent of a commercial half hour – on BBC Three later this year. Parry argues that it has social purpose, but is still funny and entertaining. “It's a reality show that's more real than most, full of relatable contestants and without a bikini in sight.”

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# Factual Hot Picks

The best factual one-offs and series hitting Cannes



Top  
Pick

## War On Plastic

**Distributor:** Hat Trick International

**Producer:** Keo Films

**Broadcaster:** BBC One (UK)

**Logline:** A call to arms to fight plastic pollution, investigating what we can all do to reduce our use of plastic

Back in 2017, BBC One's *Blue Planet 2* sparked a public outcry about the impact of plastic on the world's oceans, triggering a global debate and focusing the attention of policy makers on the issue.

Two years on, the calls for something to be done have only become louder as concern about plastic use become intertwined with growing fears about climate change.

Instead of revealing the harmful effects of plastics on our seas and marine animals, this campaigning BBC One

series focuses on where the problem is coming from and what can be done about it. Along the way, it accuses big businesses, corrupt systems and poor governance for the plastics crisis, and reveals some appalling stats – such as the fact that the equivalent of a garbage truck full of plastic is emptied into the oceans every minute of every day.

The four-parter is fronted by chef and campaigner Hugh Fearnley-Whittingstall and former *Watchdog* presenter Anita Rani.

The producer, Keo Films, has a long track record of creating campaigning films, like *Hugh's Fat Fight* and *Hugh's War On Waste* – and the result can be seen in this series.

On one level, this is a journalistic series that seeks to get to the heart of the plastic crisis. For example, Fearnley-Whittingstall travels to Malaysia to find mountainous piles of supposedly recyclable British plastics rotting on illegal dumpsites, and local families suffering from its toxic effects.

Rani, meanwhile, confronts organisations contributing to the crisis and visits wet wipe companies to ask why they aren't telling consumers about the plastic they contain. She also joins young activists who are campaigning for

McDonalds to stop giving away plastic children's toys.

But *War On Plastic* is more than a series of investigative reports. "The challenge with any environmental film is to find ways to make it accessible to a broad BBC One audience as well as revelatory and hard-hitting, which is why so much time and effort is spent dreaming up big, eye-catching stunts like the opening of episode one, when a garbage truck load of plastics is apparently tipped into the sea," says Sarah Tong, director of sales at Hat Trick International, which has a long-running output deal with Keo and is handling distribution for this series.

To reach a wide audience, environmental films also need to be entertaining and funny too, which is why Fearnley-Whittingstall in one episode puts on a dodgy moustache and markets tap water to plastic bottle-drinking tourists in Covent Garden. Tong says the series also "has an emotional heart" provided by the documentary elements on a plastic-free street in Bristol.

Tong says there's also a very clear format for *War On Plastic*, giving it remake potential. However, because Fearnley-Whittingstall is a well-known personality internationally, finished programme sales are Hat Trick International's focus in regions where it's too costly to produce the format. The programme has already been sold into Australia, Spain and Iceland ahead of its launch at MIPCOM.



### The Real Prime Suspect

**Distributor:** Orange Smarty

**Producer:** Monster Films

**Broadcaster:** CBS Reality (UK)

**Logline:** The real-life inspiration behind *Prime Suspect* reveals what it takes to solve a murder

*The Real Prime Suspect* is aptly named. This 10-part true crime series is led by Jackie Malton – the first female detective in the Flying Squad, a branch of the Serious and Organised Crime Command in London’s Metropolitan Police Service.

An openly gay woman detective who rose through the ranks of a very male police service, she was the inspiration behind Helen Mirren’s character in the acclaimed drama *Prime Suspect* by Lynda La Plante.

Malton is at the heart of this series, re-examining British and American murder cases. She uses her list of contacts to get access to case files, and to interview the police and detectives at the heart of each investigation, to reveal what it takes to solve a murder.

Orange Smarty head of acquisitions Stella Brisley says Malton’s grit, determination and enquiring mind are on show in each episode of this

CBS Reality series, produced by Monster Films. Her approach, says Brisley, “gives the viewer a thoroughly authentic perspective on the crimes” and how the perpetrators were caught and brought to justice.

Many of the contributors were initially very wary of taking part, and have refused to be involved in crime shows previously, says Brisley. But once the contributors had spoken to Jackie and realised the programmes were going to be told from her perspective, they agreed.

Orange Smarty, led by Karen Young, is an associate producer on this series, which marks its first significant investment in an original commission – a major trend among distributors.

The sales firm has worldwide rights outside the UK, Republic of Ireland, Africa and Poland, where it is TXing on CBS Reality. Deals have already been made in Australia, New Zealand and Scandinavia.

Brisley says Orange Smarty is looking to close deals with individual channels as well as pan-regional broadcasters across Europe, Asia and North America.

### Unmasking Jihadi John: Anatomy Of A Terrorist

**Distributor:** Entertainment One (eOne)

**Producers:** Nutopia in association with Livedrop Media

**Broadcasters:** HBO (US, Canada), Channel 4 (UK)

**Logline:** The inside story of Mohammed Emwazi’s journey from an ordinary London boy to one of the most notorious terrorists of all time

It’s now five years since an Isis cell carried out a spate of brutal beheadings in Syria, using social media to distribute videos of the hostage killings to an outraged world.

This single film tells the story of the leader of that cell, charting how an ordinary London boy, Mohammed Emwazi, became Jihadi John, one of the most notorious and hunted terrorists in modern times.

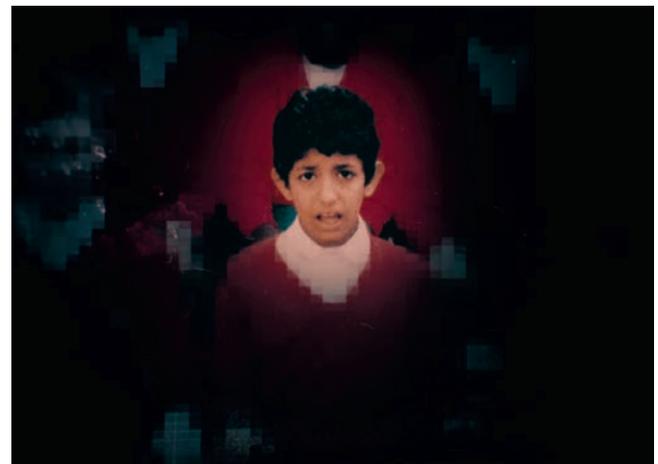
The documentary was made by an accomplished team: *One Strange Rock* producer Nutopia alongside Livedrop Media, run by the security correspondent of *The Sunday Times*, Richard Kerbaj (*My Son The Jihadi*), and triple BAFTA-winning director Anthony Wonke (*Syria: Children Of The Frontline*).

Together, they’ve crafted a film that tells the story of the rise and fall of Isis in Syria, and the impact its ideology had in the West – but through a particular character, Emwazi, who became the poster child for Isis’s brutal regime.

The range of interviewees assembled for the documentary is impressive, including many CIA, Pentagon and British intelligence operatives who were involved in the hunt for Emwazi, as well as surviving hostages, and those who knew him before he became notorious.

What the film does particularly well is reveal the process by which Emwazi, a shy, nervous and rather unpopular school boy in London, was radicalised. “It’s a powerful reminder of the human cost of fanaticism and the systems that are built to combat it,” says Noel Hedges, EVP of acquisitions at eOne, which is handling international sales.

Citing the commissioning broadcasters, Channel 4 and HBO, Hedges says it is a film that would appeal to premium pay-TV and public service broadcasters, but would equally work on a digital platform. “It is a very impactful film with an extremely powerful message and cinematic quality.”



### Let's Talk About Sex

**Distributor:** Cineflix Rights

**Producer:** Spelthorne Community Television

**Broadcaster:** Channel 4 (UK)

**Logline:** Unintentionally funny sex education videos are shown to parents and kids to get an uncensored take

As every kid and parent knows, there are few things more uncomfortable and embarrassing than having to talk together about where babies come from.

Comedy archive series *Let's Talk About Sex* taps right into this universal truth. It presents some outrageous and unintentionally hilarious sex education videos of the past to parents and kids – and then asks them for their take on them, opening up conversations about contraception through to what was considered 'normal' versus the realities for kids today.

Produced by Andrew Newman and Sacha Baron



Cohen's production company Spelthorne Community Television, this young-skewing three-parter debuted on Channel 4 in April with over one million viewers.

It's one of Channel 4's top 10pm shows for 16 to 34-year-olds this year, according to Cineflix Rights VP of acquisitions Kate Laffey.

She says getting the right tone to the series was crucial – having teenagers watch sex education

videos with their parents has the potential to be hilarious and memorable but crude if it goes wrong.

"We wanted the format to be as funny as a sitcom yet as informative as a documentary and we had to find the archive and the cast of adults and their teenage children who could deliver that."

She explains that Cineflix is currently exploring remake opportunities in the US and has

already sold it to Australia's SBS ahead of launch at MIPCOM.

"The beauty of this series is that it works as both a finished tape sale and we see strong format potential as sex education is a universal topic," says Laffey.

Laffey is hoping Cineflix can sell *Let's Talk About Sex* as widely as it can, albeit with caveats. "We will have to take into consideration local sensitivities," she says.

### Art Is For Everybody: The Legend Of Keith Haring

**Distributor:** TVF International

**Producer:** BBC Studios

**Broadcasters:** BBC (UK), PBS (US)

**Logline:** A biopic of artist Keith Haring who blazed a trail in 1980s New York before his untimely death from AIDS aged 31

Next year marks the 30th anniversary of the death of US artist Keith Haring, whose pop art and graffiti-like work grew out of New York's street culture of the 1980s.

To mark the anniversary, the BBC and PBS are co-producing a single 53-minute film about this influential and popular artist whose life was cut short by AIDS at just 31, leaving behind an iconic body of work that today is splashed across T-shirts, music albums and all kinds of

homeware items.

*Art Is For Everybody: The Legend Of Keith Haring* is being produced by Janet Lee at BBC Studios with the same team that won the 2018 Specialist Factual BAFTA for *Basquiat: Rage To Riches*. They've had access, via the Keith Haring Foundation, to a candid and moving conversation that Haring had with his biographer over a five-day period – and this provides the narrative drive for the film, which combines

original and new archive with a hip-hop aesthetic to try to mirror the energy of his art and political activism.

TVF, which also represents *Basquiat: Rage To Riches*, helped raise financing for this Haring biopic to plug a shortfall in the production budget and to fund an international version for distribution.

"Both films are set around the same time in New York, and Haring and Basquiat were close friends," says TVF head of acquisitions Will Stapley, who adds that while this is not a sequel to last year's film, they complement each other well.

"The film is still in production so we will be taking this to MIPCOM as a pre-sale."



## How I Created A Cult

**Distributor:** TCB Media Rights

**Producer:** Conscious Life

**Broadcaster:** n/a

**Logline:** An examination of the inner workings of a cult's formation and growth through exclusive access to the founder

*How I Created A Cult* is the latest project to be commissioned directly by distributor TCB Media Rights, without any broadcaster involvement.

Billed as a TCB Original, the 3 x 60-minute documentary charts the rise and fall of cult organisation EnlightenNext, whose leader Andrew Cohen seemed to have immense power over his followers before he was outed by a number of them as emotional and physically abusive.

The series draws from 60 hours of original interviews with students and victims, and more than 200 hours of archival footage, alongside interviews with Cohen himself. Along the way, it examines how a cult is formed and grows, and sheds light on the power structures and control mechanisms used to attract and keep followers.

The show was originally pitched to TCB by Spring Films, who had been developing the project with online platform Conscious Life. With footage largely shot and archive fully sourced by the time it came to

TCB, the distributor invested into the post-production of the series. TCB commissioning editor Hannah Demidowicz then worked closely with director Meagan Gibson and the Conscious Life production team to craft the series editorially.

Explaining why TCB invested in the project, Jimmy Humphrey, head of acquisitions and co-productions, says: "We realised that there's an endless fascination into the inner-machinations of cults, and with so many of his former followers talking to camera, a treasure trove of archive, and uniquely a direct interview with Andrew himself, we felt this stood out from the other cult stories on the market."

Humphrey adds that the series has a "premium feel" that can appeal to linear and non-linear broadcasters internationally.

TCB represents worldwide rights for the series. He says an announcement about the project earlier this summer has sparked interest: "We've deliberately been holding material back to do a proper exclusive launch at MIPCOM."

## #Anne Frank. Parallel Stories

**Distributor:** Nexo Digital

**Producers:** 3D Produzioni and Nexo Digital, in collaboration with Anne Frank Fonds Basel

**Broadcaster:** n/a

**Logline:** Oscar-winning actress Helen Mirren retraces the life of Anne Frank through the pages of her diary, and five other women who survived the Holocaust



It's astonishing to think that Anne Frank might still be alive today, had the horrors of the Holocaust not cruelly cut short her life.

To mark what would have been her 90th year (she was born in 1929), this Italian-made 90-minute documentary tells the story of the Jewish teenager's life through the pages of her diary, a text that has made the tragedy of Nazism known to millions of readers all over the world.

Frank's story is intertwined with that of five Holocaust survivors, who were teenage girls just like her: Arianna Szörenyi, Sarah Montard, Helga Weiss and sisters Andra and Tatiana Bucci.

British actress Helen Mirren retraces Frank's story through the words in her diary. The set is a reconstruction of her hiding room in Amsterdam. Meanwhile, off set, a young actress (Martina Gatti) introduces the places that were part of Frank's short life and her feelings.

The film is produced by 3D Produzioni and Nexo Digital and, crucially, has been made with the co-operation of the Anne Frank Fonds Basel, the rights holder to Frank's diary.

"The most important challenge has been to get the rights from the foundation to use Anne Frank's words," says Nexo Digital's head of sales Veronique Commelin. Citing the participation of Mirren, as well as the five Holocaust survivors, Commelin explains that "few projects about the subject have received such endorsement".

*#Anne Frank. Parallel Stories* will have a limited theatrical release in the US, Canada, the UK and Australia from October 2019. Nexo Digital is looking to sell the documentary worldwide at MIPCOM, except for a handful of territories where it has already sold: the Netherlands, Belgium, Russia, Israel, Italy and Spain. Commelin bills it as a "potential prime-time show" on major TV channels and SVOD platforms.



### The Movies

**Distributor:** Kew Media Distribution

**Producers:** The Playtone Company and Herzog & Company

**Broadcaster:** CNN (US)

**Logline:** A history of American cinemas, as told by some of its biggest on and off-screen stars

There have been many TV series documenting the history of the cinema, but few have come with as many high-profile contributors as this CNN Original series.

Coming from executive producers Tom Hanks, Gary Goetzman and Mark Herzog – the team behind CNN miniseries *The Decades* – it explores American cinema through the decades by combining archive footage and interviews with leading actors, directors, producers, critics and historians.

Among the interview subjects



Photo: Warner Bros./Photofest

in this Hollywood highlights reel are industry luminaries such as Steven Spielberg, Julia Roberts, Tim Burton, Cameron Crowe, Robert de Niro, Morgan Freeman, Ron Howard, Tom Hanks, Angelica Huston, Julianne Moore, Ridley Scott, Sharon Stone – and many more.

“It’s the definitive history of US major theatrical movies,” says Kew Media EVP of sales and distribution Jonathan Ford.

“Through Emmy-winning producers Herzog & Company and the Playtone Company, they have great access to talent.”

Kew Media is handling sales via an ongoing partnership with CNN that sees the London-headquartered distributor selling five series produced with the broadcaster.

The series aired in July and August in the US, running in two-hour weekly instalments

over six episodes in a rather random order of decades.

It started with the Eighties, highlighting films such as *The Empire Strikes Back*, *E.T.*, *Back To The Future*, *When Harry Met Sally* and *Do The Right Thing*, then in subsequent episodes moved on to the Nineties, the Aughties through to the present, then back to the Seventies, Sixties and The Golden Age (1930s to 1950s).

### Love Don’t Judge

**Distributor:** Barcroft Studios

**Producer:** Barcroft Studios

**Broadcaster:** n/a

**Logline:** A TV version of Barcroft’s online series about unconventional relationships

Having been a bite-sized hit on Snapchat, YouTube and Facebook, Barcroft Studios are supersizing *Love Don’t Judge* into a 10 x 60-minute series for television.

*Love Don’t Judge* takes a close look at ‘less traditional’ relationships. The titles of its short-form episodes give a good clue as to the kinds of relationships that are put under the microscope: “I’m 23, He’s 55 – But He’s Not My Sugar Daddy”, “I Can Be Gay And Muslim”, through to “She’s Not

My Mother, She’s My Wife”.

Each episode sees one unconventional couple prepare to declare their love for one another at a public event. But first they must rally their friends and family to try to convince them to accept their relationship.

Barcroft Studios’ chief creative officer Alex Morris says *Love Don’t Judge* was developed as an “inspiring and uplifting show” that features real couples thriving despite the pressures of the outside world. Morris says Barcroft, which runs its



own popular YouTube channel, could tell from its network’s digital insights that there was a strong audience demand for this kind of show. “We produced this series to specifically leverage authentic emotion and inspiration, areas where we see huge audience response online,”

says Morris.

It’s the latest Barcroft series to have been incubated online, following the success it has had with *Extreme Love* for WE tv in the US, which was developed from Barcroft’s short-form series brand. Barcroft is selling the series to a range of broadcasters.

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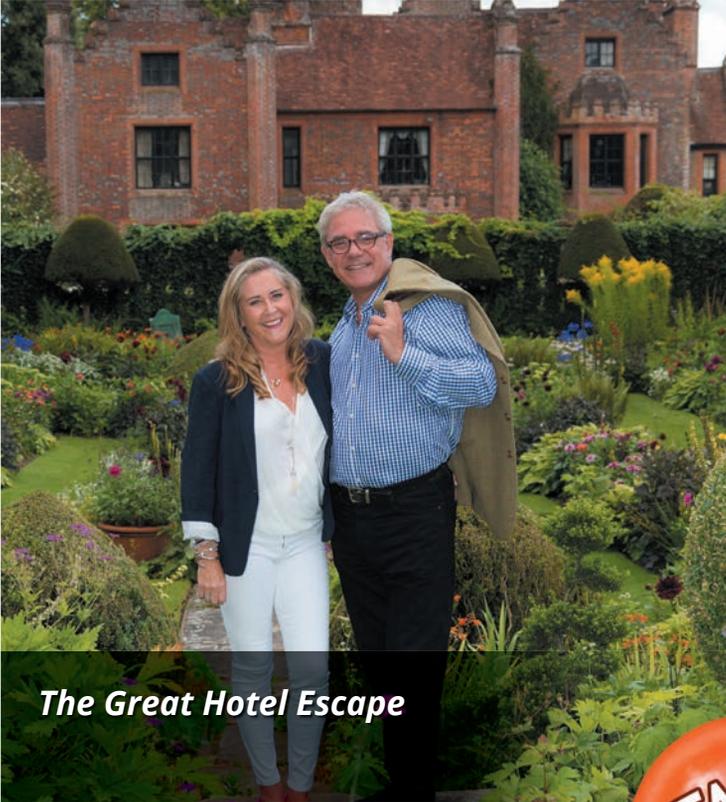
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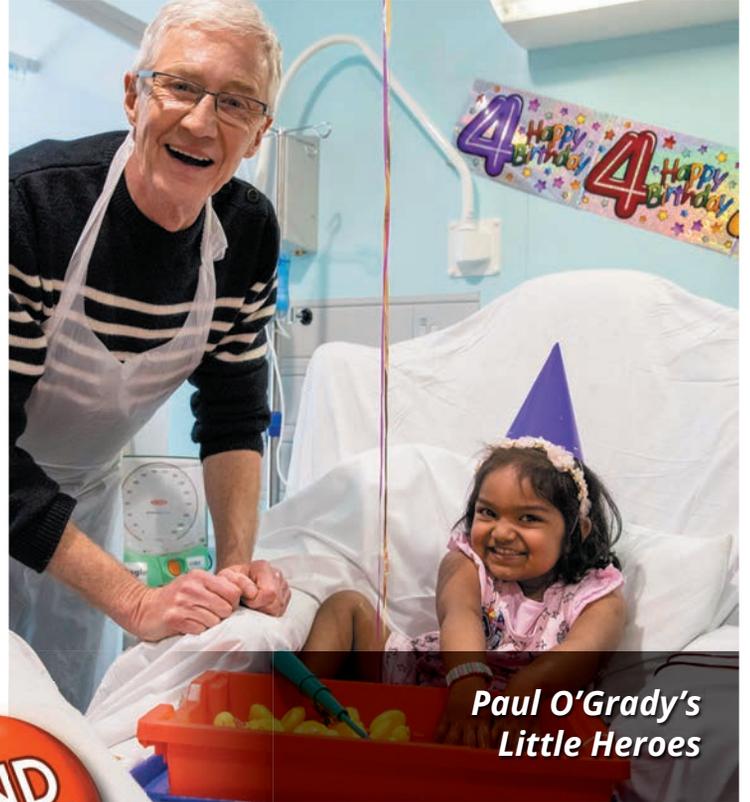


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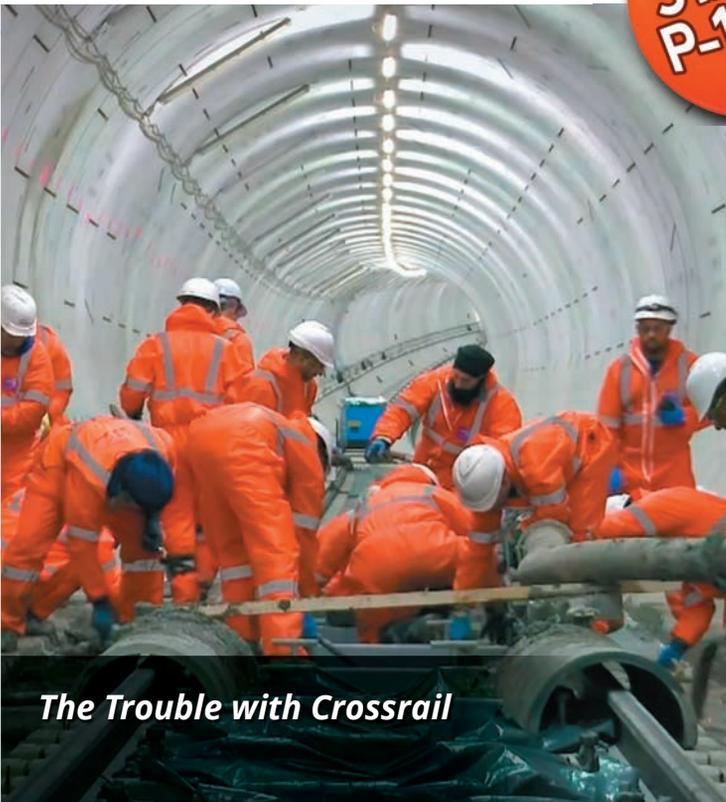


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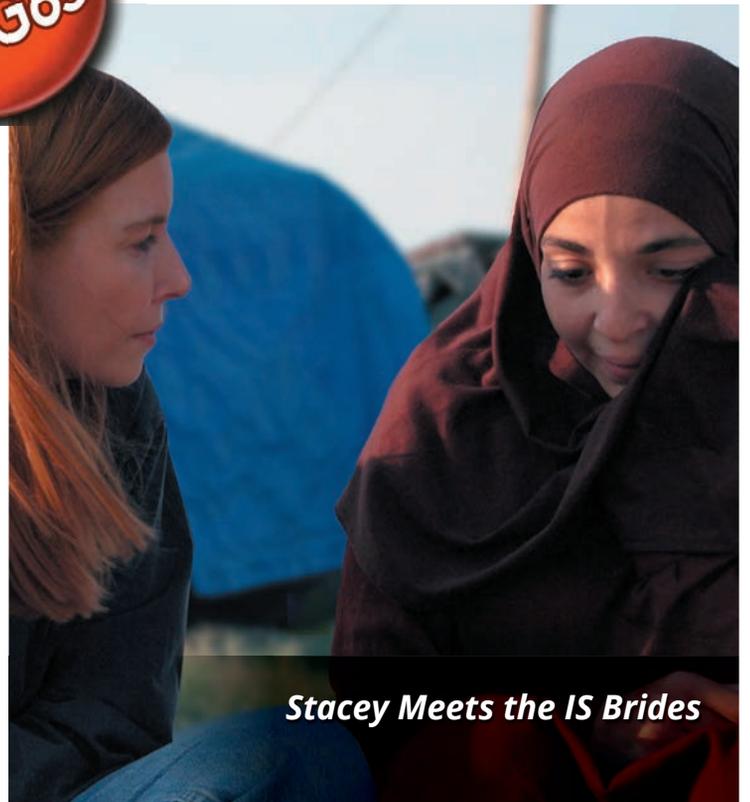


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