



Australian Government



MIPCOM

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Report by Deanne Weir (Acting Chair), Tim Phillips (Investment Manager) and Maha Ismail (TV and Online Executive, Business and Audience)

Demonstrating an almost insatiable global hunger for more and more content, MIPCOM organiser Reed MIDEM happily announced that the 30th anniversary of MIPCOM was its biggest ever. It attracted a record number of 13,700 delegates from 112 countries.

DEAL FRENZY!

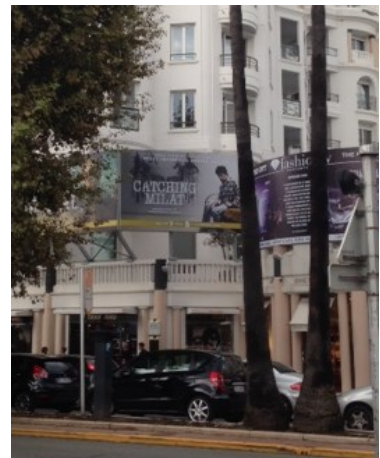
The Palais was its usual whirlwind of optimistic pitches, opportunistic sales, disappointing coffee and celebrities walking through the corridors.

On show was a real hunger for Australian content. Distributors, broadcasters and online platforms continued to express their strong interest in being involved in new programs, and there is demonstrable competition to get involved in our shows. Distributors would often acknowledge that they had 'missed out' or been 'out-bid' by a rival on a particular series.

There was consensus that the quality of local output just kept improving, and that most of our stories had international appeal. Certainly the issue of 'accent' now seems to be less of a problem, the result of the strong programs arriving on mainstream channels from more diverse places (the 'Nordic effect', perhaps).

Australian product was well represented in the frantic deal making, with many new shows being launched at the market.

NBC Universal launched **Deadline Gallipoli** to buyers, while Shine International gave great exposure to thriller **Catching Milat** with a billboard on the Boulevard de la Croisette. DCD Rights was pushing indigenous drama **The Gods of Wheat Street**. Distribution start-up Escapade Media launched the documentary **The Lost Aviator**. Beyond Distribution released a suite of new local programs to market including **Bogan Hunters** and **Kinne**.



Catching Milat on the Croisette



Deadline Gallipoli on the front cover of mipcom News

As always, Australian children's content was very strongly represented. ABC Commercial launched the new Wiggles series **Ready, Steady, Wiggle** and animated sci-fi space epic **Prisoner Zero**. The Australian Children's Television Foundation was promoting the second series of adventure show **Bushwacked** and the preschool program **Hoopla Doopla**. Flame Distribution was generating strong interest in the adventure documentary **Blue Zoo**, while 9 Story Entertainment was pushing the animated comedy series **Get Ace**.

TRENDS

TV continued its ascent

The migration from film to television continued at MIPCOM 2014. As one commentator noted, "cinema is alive and well – just not in the theatre". As feature films continue to polarise towards either small independent films or huge tentpole action movies, the mid-range movie market is largely disappearing. The space is continuing to be replaced by high-end television drama series.

"Movies and TV are slightly swapping their aesthetics. Film in general used to be about the texture and the resonance of a tone of storytelling, and I think TV now has moved strongly towards that." – M Night Shyamalan

Film companies are continuing to open up TV divisions. Movies stars are continuing to lead drama series. Hollywood directors are re-emerging as TV showrunners and stories that started life in other forms are finding a new lease of life as returnable TV series.

Examples are now so commonplace that it is proving more difficult for series to make a

real splash at the market. While previous years have been dominated by one or two key 'must-see' programs, this year had a much more even playing field. **Wayward Pine**, a *Twin Peaks* style series directed by M Night Shyamalan and starring Matt Dillon, was one that generated some real attention. Shyamalan was a guest at the conference. He said that the days of television being the commercial, ugly sibling to feature films were over. He sees TV as the place to make content that resonated, whereas cinema is becoming more focused on money.

Other shows to generate buzz included the aristocratic soap opera **The Royals** featuring model and actress Elizabeth Hurley; **Taboo** from Scott Free Productions starring Tom Hardy; and **The Missing** starring Australia's Frances O'Connor and James Nesbitt, a story about a British couple who lose their child in France. Canada's **Schitt's Creek**, starring Eugene Levy and Catherine O'Hara, seemed to be the most buzz-worthy comedy.

How to stand out from the crowd

One drama that managed to generate a little more interest than most was **Kingdom** starring Nick Jonas (of the Jonas Brothers fame). The show focuses on a family involved in the tough world of Mixed Martial Arts (MMA). Jonas, who was at MIPCOM marketing the show, is a highly effective marketing tool for the series courtesy of his 9 million Twitter fans.

At the MIPCOM Trending Topics panel, experts were impressed by Jonas' commitment to the fans and the show through his online presence especially live tweeting. They noted the value of having a star with a social media presence actively engaged in a conversation around the series.

Disruptive Netflix's next target

The number and range of streaming and VOD providers just seems to be growing. Reed MIDEM advised that around a third of the all-important content buyers at MIPCOM were focused on digital and VOD rights.

It was no surprise that the keynote presentation from Netflix Chief Content Officer Ted Sarandos was probably the most attended Grand Auditorium session of the market. Sarandos acknowledged that Netflix's "channel where viewers set their own timetable and always find something they love" had disrupted broadcast TV's traditional business model. Broadcasters around the world (including quite visibly right now in Australia) were adapting their businesses to compete. Sarandos predicted that TV networks would find themselves soon being forced to release full seasons of shows: "Releasing one episode at a time will increasingly become a thing of the past... releasing a full season will soon become a common thing. Even as early as next year."

"The current model we have has been the same almost since the beginning of movies on television in the early 70s... The world has moved on from then." – Ted

Not content with disrupting broadcast TV's business model, Sarandos gave industry executives at the conference a peek into the company's plans to shake up the movie business.

Netflix's current feature film projects include a sequel to **Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon** and an exclusive four picture deal with Adam Sandler. Sarandos said that using "day and date" releases could modernise a theatrical distribution model that he feels is antiquated for the on-demand audience.

Emphasis on global thinking

Television producers have always been adept at working with international partners, but with the challenge of delivering more intricate and distinctive stories with higher production values, working with global partners is being regarded as more important than ever. The focus is now also much broader than traditional partners the UK and the US.

"I'm trying to lay it all out and see who catches on and who goes on the journey. I'm totally fine that not everyone will." – Nick Jonas on tweeting for Kingdom.



Flame Distribution at the matchmaking event

In this context, Screen Australia partnered with the Brazilian TV Producers export program (BTVP) and the Brazilian Association of Independent Television Producers (ABPITV) to host a targeted Australia/Brazil breakfast matchmaking event for documentary/factual and children's TV producers at MIPCOM. Thirty-nine companies participated, and feedback was positive, with news of two test animations in the works between Australian producers and highly regarded

animation studios. It is expected that recent changes to telecommunications legislation in Brazil will generate significant funds per year for additional production and create a greater demand for content and opportunities for international co-production partners.

In further recognition of the need to make international partnerships easier, following MIPCOM Screen Australia launched a simplified and streamlined version of its International Co-production Program. The revised program is designed to make the guidelines clearer and more useful, and to cut the red tape involved in setting up an official co-production:

http://www.screenaustralia.gov.au/news_and_events/2014/mr_141021_copro.aspx

YOUR AUSTRALIAN BASECAMP

The Screen Australia stand is home to the business operations of over 65 Australian companies at MIPCOM and MIPTV. The MIPCOM 2014 stand provided free meeting tables, waiting area, wifi and messaging service. Over 400 meetings took place at the stand over the week, booked through the online booking system on the Screen Australia website.

A number of Australian participants provided us with post-market feedback and, as a result, we will be looking to update the stand in 2015 and continue to provide a flexible, modular set up that can accommodate slight variations between MIPTV and MIPCOM. The new stand will open up for targeted networking events, provide as many meeting table spaces as possible and include easily accessible power points for recharging your portable devices.



Industry networking drinks at the Screen Australia stand

These changes will help ensure that the Screen Australia stand continues to be the hub of Australian activity at MIPCOM and MIPTV.

MEETINGS WITH DISTRIBUTORS, PLATFORMS AND FINANCIERS

Screen Australia representatives met with a variety of international television distributors, broadcasters, online platforms and financiers to discuss projects in which the agency has an interest, and also to gauge interest in potential new projects.

Meetings included:

- All3Media
- ITV Studios
- DCD Rights
- eOne
- NBC Universal
- Beyond Distribution
- Endemol
- BBC Worldwide
- Annapurna International
- Fox International Channels
- Cake
- Distribution 360
- YouTube Asia Pacific
- Turner Asia Pacific
- Mondo Media
- Aver Media
- Ingenious.

If you have a project which you would like to pitch to one of these potential partners, feel free to contact Screen Australia in advance using the Contact Us details below.

CONTACT US

Deanne Weir (Acting Chair), **Tim Phillips** (Investment Manager) and **Maha Ismail** (TV and Online Executive, Business and Audience) attended the market on behalf of Screen Australia.

For feedback on meetings with distributors, potential international co-producers, broadcasters, online platforms and financials – please contact Tim Phillips on +61 3 8682 1900.

For feedback on the Screen Australia stand and arrangements for MIPTV 2015 – please contact Maha Ismail on +61 2 8113 5800.