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## TEAM

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF  
**GEORGI R. CHAKAROV**  
georgi.chakarov@tvbizz.net

EDITOR  
**Yako Molhov**

DESIGN  
**Anastas Petkov,  
Ivanka Borisova**

MARKETING  
**Stanislav Kimchev**  
sales@tvbizz.net

CONTRIBUTORS  
**Yako Molhov  
Maria Chiara Duranti  
Minko Todorov  
Alexandra Shutova  
Juxhina Malaj  
Evgenia Atanasova**

PUBLISHERS  
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Georgi R. Chakarov  
Editor-in-chief

# We did everything right...



*The Control Room, Chernobyl*

I guess everyone has now seen *Chernobyl* but I'm not going to talk about what makes this series so great and the types of records it has broken so far. I would like to focus on one of the main themes of the show – the reaction right after the explosion and the resounding conviction of the engineers: “We did everything right...” After all, “an RBMK reactor cannot explode”, especially when you have pressed the AZ-5 button.

Of course, none of them knew that this button acts more like a trigger... and of course, prior to pressing it they did indeed push the reactor to its limits, and then the inexplicable happened. Because it was simply impossible. Dyatlov continued to believe there was no explosion until Khomyuk showed him the photos several months later.

The moral lessons coming out of the series are hard-hitting on an individual and group level.

Each and every one of us can relate to the story and “see” the warning signs which the producers have placed in the series. We are all pushing every aspect of our lives, trying to make the best of the 24 hours of the day that we have while ignoring everything else outside “our universe”. On a global level, we all see what is happening to the climate but a decisive effort to reverse the trend is still lacking as we continue to abuse the planet’s resources.

The same process can also be observed in television. The “TV reactor” is overheated already, producing enormous amounts of content which viewers/users find hard to keep track of. A recent study by Radio Times in the UK showed that 18% of respondents called in sick in order to be able to watch their favorite show; and 22% said “they lied about seeing a program to fit in because everyone else was talking about it.” Scientists are only beginning to uncover the hazards of binge-watching like no movement for hours, fast food binging, insomnia, etc. Obviously, people can’t keep up with this tempo and it affects them badly – socially, mentally and physically.

There are three foreseeable worst-case scenarios for the industry if these trends continue in the coming years: oversaturation (people will get sick of so much content and stop watching no matter how cool a show might be), implosion (offering too much content but not getting enough viewers), and collapse (overspending to produce content). TV and entertainment companies will get hit by such disasters in the future, but even then, we might as well hear their top execs saying “We did everything right...” ■

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### ■ Eastern Europe to add 16 million SVOD subscriptions in five years

Eastern Europe will have 26.19 million SVOD subscriptions by 2024; up from 10.02 million recorded by end-2018, Digital TV Research estimates. Russia will supply 8.77 million to the 2024 total, with Poland bringing in another 6.32 million. Together, they will account 58% of the region's total. Netflix will double its subs to 8 million across 22 Eastern European countries by 2024.



### ■ Sres. Papis continues its CEE conquest

*Sres. Papis* (aka *Dear Daddies*) could become the most-adapted scripted format in the CEE region if the current options turn into commissions Viacom International Studios announced recently that following its success in Slovakia pre-production has started for the adaptation in Hungary, and it has been recently optioned for Serbia and Ukraine. Two years ago, the distributor announced a deal with CME for the rights in Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Croatia, Slovenia and Romania.



### ■ Karga Seven preps House remake

Turkish daily Milliyet reports that Karga Seven Pictures has secured the rights to produce a local version of hit US series *House MD*. This is the second drama format sold by NBCUniversal International Formats to the pro-co which is owned by Red Arrow Studios. In October last year, Karga Seven bought the rights to *Suits*. The series will air on TV8.



### ■ World of Dance arrives in Albania

The Albanian version of *World of Dance*, the American reality competition television series executive produced by Jennifer Lopez for NBC, will soon premiere on TV Klan. According to choreographer Andi Murra, who is the executive director of *World of Dance* in Albania, the auditions for the reality show will begin this summer.



### ■ 'Putin' gets own talkshow on BBC Two

BBC Two in the UK has announced the launch of a pilot to a new talkshow, hosted by 'Vladimir Putin'. 'Everybody's favorite bear-wrestling global strongman Vladimir Putin has finally achieved his ultimate goal - a chat-show on the BBC,' the British pubcaster exclaimed. *Tonight With Vladimir Putin* will be a semi-scripted comedy chat-show format in which live VFX enables a 3D digital cartoon of Putin to walk around and sit behind the desk, interviewing real human guests in front of a studio audience, all in real-time.



### ■ Canal+ acquires M7

Canal+ Group acquired M7, one of the largest independent pay-TV companies in Europe. M7 is present in the Netherlands, Belgium, Austria, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary and Romania where it has a total of 3 million subscribers. The purchase price would be slightly over 1 billion euros with a turnover of more than 400 million euros.



### ■ Open fires Kalimeris

The stint of Johnny Kalimeris as CEO of Open TV has come to an end a year after he took the position. Espresso reports that the seasoned exec was fired after a meeting with chairman of the board of directors, Ludmila Borodina, who expressed dissatisfaction with the low results of the channel despite the huge investments in equipment and high-budget productions.



### ■ TVP to partner with Netflix

TVP is conducting talks with Netflix regarding cooperation in the field of series coproduction and sharing its own content with the SVOD giant. To date, only one Polish series has appeared in the Netflix library - *1983*. In addition, Next Film company belonging to the Agora Group has established cooperation with Netflix, based on which Polish films from the distributor's portfolio will be available on Netflix.



### ■ Vida finalizing acquisition of TV2

MTI reports that József Vida, president and chief executive officer of Takarékbank, is finalizing the acquisition of TV2 Group through Abraham Goldman Trusts Management. The company is expecting the consent of the Economic Competition Authority to close the transaction. Vida announced that he is conducting advanced negotiations to acquire TV2 in mid-April.



### ■ Kellner, Discovery and Lauder interested in CME?

Czech website Hlidaci pes reported earlier this month that there are currently three players interested in acquiring CME in which AT&T holds a majority stake. These are PPF which is owned by the richest man in CEE - Petr Kellner; Discovery and CME's minority stake holder and founder Ronald Lauder. CME announced earlier that it has been put for sale. Meanwhile, Czech TV Nova got two joint CEOs - Klára Brachtlová and Jan Vlček.



### ■ MGU names new CEO

Effective June 10, Yevhen Bondarenko has been appointed director of Media Group Ukraine. For the past 7 years, he served as Chief Operating Officer at the StarLightMedia Group. Bondarenko replaced Yevhen Lyashchenko who left the media holding last month. Earlier, ICTV named Anastasia Steingauz as its new acting CEO, replacing Elena Sakhatskaya (Belik).



### ■ RFPI invests in ivi

The Russian Direct Investment Fund will invest in the largest OTT service in Russia. RFPI will receive a minority package after the additional issue of shares, one of the sources of Vedomosti said. Another one noted that the Fund might receive around 10% in the video service.



### ■ Adrian Sarbu returns to TV

The National Audiovisual Council of Romania has approved the granting of a license to Smart TV, a television station which will be run by Adrian Sarbu, the founder of PRO TV and former CME President and CEO, and journalist Marius Tuca. The channel will be launched towards the end of this year.

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# ivi moves into original content production

## Russia's biggest OTT platform to spend 1 billion rubles on new series and films

Russia's leading OTT platform ivi has proven that even in countries where piracy dominates the market, high-quality content and user-centric services will always find their audience and build it over time. Only last year, the company increased its revenues with more than 60% and currently counts more than 50 unique million monthly users. Having achieved a market leadership with 42% share, now the company is entering a new stage in its development with the launch of original content production. Alexandra Shutova met in Moscow with ivi CEO Oleg Tumanov to talk about the new strategy and the preferences of the Russian OTT viewers.

**Y**ou recently announced plans to invest close to a billion rubles in original content. Why did you take this decision?

We started our business in 2010 in the piracy ecosystem. It took us a while to attract the audience and build a business model. Obviously, at that stage of development licensing was the only possible option. In terms of commercial effectiveness, it still remains the most effective one. But as the competition got tougher and our monetization abilities grew, there emerged a possibility and a necessity to create unique offering for our audience.

ivi is growing fast, we generate high income. Last year, the share of our company reached 42%. The competition becomes more noticeable and stronger. We see this step as a timely response to this competition and beneficial in terms of the offering for the audience – something ours, unique and special that will attract and help retain viewers. There are many factors that necessitated and made this move possible.

**The 1-billion-ruble budget is easily comparable to what some big channels are spending on primetime content. Where will this huge sum come from?**

We have enough of our monetization opportunities, but we do not exclude investment rounds that can give a greater impetus to the development of the company.

**How many original shows do you plan to shoot? What genres will you focus on? Can you reveal some of the projects?**

Our audience is very diversified. We have

almost 50 million monthly unique users, dozens of millions watch content, and almost 1.4 million paying users. There are different customer segments. Contrary to TV channels, which have a very strictly-defined content policy, we are more flexible. Of course, we understand what audience any given title will target, but there is no need to fit it into the overall picture. It is more important for us to say something new and not to fill the slots, because we simply don't have them.

We are considering thrillers, comedy stories (even though there is nothing more difficult than to make a good comedy), dramas and mixed genres. We are looking at topics that raise sensitive issues of society development, those that look at the transformation of society under the influence of technology, and transformation of interpersonal relationships. These are ageless themes but in a new presentation, explored in the new stage of the social development. Our audience is hard to please, it demands something extraordinary. It does not watch passively but does so actively. If users do not like, their loyalty is gone, and our project is over.

In terms of the number of original shows, there will be dozens of titles of various formats – both, short and full features. We have already participated in 14 movies: 11 of them have released, and three will premiere in the near future. Needless to say, we are interested in serial production.

**Will you rely more on the paid model in the future?**

ivi has a combined model – freemium, and

**We have almost 50 million monthly unique users, dozens of millions watch content, and almost 1.4 million paying users.**

it will remain fundamental for the foreseeable future. The share of pirated viewership is still extremely high in Russia, and it is very difficult to teach the audience to pay. Therefore, the advertising model works well for us in terms of monetization – we have attracted a large audience and a great team that can work with online video advertising and reach results that are important for advertisers. On top of that, the free model is a source of promotion of our business, therefore, both models will develop in the future.

Clearly, the paid model has huge potential in Russia and the world, but given the particular nature of our country, we do not plan on giving up the free model.

**How much do you expect to grow in the next two-three years?**

Let's not guess at the future but look at the results of the previous years instead. In 2018, ivi grew by 62%, which is more than a year before that, when we showed a 50-55% increase. Up until 2014, the company doubled annually, but then the base was much smaller.

The market is still at the very early stage of development. OTT is the driver of structural changes in the media in the world. The cinema market in Russia covers 1.9% of the global one, and the market of online video – only 0.4%. We are very far behind, there is a number of reasons for that and we need to close that gap. The OTT market is taking over a major media segment because it can give users personalization of media experience, which traditional media cannot.

**Who would you say are your main competitors and which companies do you expect to see pushing the competition?**

In regard to customer attention, piracy has been and remains our main competitor. But from the standpoint of competition for resources related to the formation of the segment, there is a tough competition with legal players, each of whom has own ambitions and opportunities, for everything – content, talent, marketing, distribution, – all the resources instrumental to our business development. There is a large number of online video services in Russia compared to the size of the market we present – same if not more than in the huge American market, and they all want to grab a piece of that pie.

**Do you look at traditional TV broadcasters more as rivals or as partners?**

I have always seen them as friends, but they, for some reason, call us enemies (laughs). We work together and partner with some. Others decide to build their own distribution. Time will show, but I think that it is very difficult for a TV broadcaster to make a heavy-weight business only on own content, especially in such a competitive environment. It is very expensive, requires large investments, spider work, extensive efforts and know-how. We have been building our business for nine years now, and you will not believe how much more work we have to do. Our teams of product development, analytics, data processing and marketing work with incredible intensity. There is a giant misunderstanding on the market that launching



ivi CEO Oleg Tumanov

and developing such business is easy, but it is not.

Besides that, regardless of how wonderful movies and series that channels produce are, I think it is not enough to attract and retain a large audience. ivi works with 400 content providers from all over the world – all the six majors, European studios, the majority of Russian companies, as well as studios from Turkey, Israel, India, and other countries. The audience in Russia is

spoiled with pirated websites – users got used to an abundance of content, its variety and freshness, and it is very difficult to meet their demands.

**Why is Netflix not a major factor in Russia?**

Because it never entered the Russian market, it only opened access to local viewers, but hasn't announced its strategy or shown its claws and teeth. Netflix is a very serious



**Our audience is hard to please, it demands something extraordinary. It does not watch passively but does so actively.**

company that still ignores our country. Legislative restrictions are one of the reasons for that. Two years ago, Russia passed a law that requires a special license from foreign services after they reach 100,000 unique users a day. I cannot say whether Netflix has reached this mark, but as we can see now, it does not strive for that. Entering the market means licensing a Russian catalog, adaptation of the service and its pricing

policy, marketing strategy. A market player does these things when there is a specific task, but Netflix has other markets, where the service is more active.

**When do you register the biggest activity of your users? How much time on average do they spend watching shows in your 'primetime'?**

The core of our viewing audience is concentrated in the European part of Russia, and it complies with phases of the day. Naturally, we observe peaks of viewership during the evening and a decline late at night. But given the fact that people from other time zones watch us as well, viewership levels remain high all the time. Viewership time depends on the model and on the platform. People watch us 25-30 hours a month on Smart TV, less on other screens. Mobile web has the lowest viewership time.

**Which are the favorite genres of the ivi users? Do they binge a lot? Are there differences by genres when it comes to the time of watching shows?**

In terms of genres, our users watch thrillers, dramas, comedies and sci-fi content the most. These genres, however, are popular everywhere. On top of that, children's content gets high viewership time.

Of course, our users binge watch. We have recently strengthened our serial offering with Russian and foreign content. Contrary to traditional TV, when people watch what they are shown, we do not observe a difference in genres depending on the time of the day.

**We all know how data collecting is so important for the success of Netflix and Amazon. Do you also operate with similar algorithms in order to offer the best content to your users?**

Absolutely, we work with similar algorithms, because our main goal is to ease the process of picking content for our users – that is what we emphasize in the development. All personalization technology, recommendation mechanisms, understanding what users watch, how often they watch it, how often they come to the service and when they stop – we analyze many factors to make recommendations. In the current stage of improving user recommendations we have shifted to the profile viewership, when each member of the household can create his own profile. When there are several people in the family, but all use one Smart TV, creating a personal profile helps us understand better what each of them needs. This makes

things so much easier, because some might watch *Saw 8* and others *Kikoriki*. Simply an analysis of whether users buy content or not, and what platforms they prefer helps predict user desires as much as possible.

**How are you planning to expand your audience? Will you rely mainly on Smart TV usage which in Russia is among the highest in Europe?**

I think Smart TV is the most significant sphere. *ivi* is about long content – movies and series, and this is the most convenient screen to consume such content. On top of that, Smart TV has absolutely no pirated content – vendors are very meticulous about that, which is great.

The mobile sphere is also significant for us – people always have smartphones on them, they begin and end their days using these devices. Therefore, it is important for us to maintain a relationship with users. PC/web have historically had the highest penetration, which means there is a large audience there. Thus, we support and will further develop all three platforms. But Smart TV is also important for us because its audience is financially better-off, even though this will change in the future.

On another note, there are 55 million households in the country, and 20 million

**It is very difficult for a TV broadcaster to make a heavy-weight business only on own content, especially in such a competitive environment**

dependency on a single provider, who may refuse or be overbought at any moment of time. Third, we have not achieved everything we want in the segment of movies or series yet. That is where we want to succeed. Sports content requires a different attitude, interface, and user experience. We cannot embed sports content around the aura of movies and serial viewership and think that we do not need to.

**Would you say OTT is the future of television in Russia?**

I think that OTT is the future of the media segment. Not because our company is great, but because of the technology of personalization of user experience. Nothing can beat this trend, because users get to decide for themselves. Once they try the possibility to build their media experience around themselves and receive what they want, when they want it, in the quality and on the device they want it – how do you make them return to the format set by the TV – watch what we show, when we show it, on the device we show it. This is the reason for structural changes, traditional media has a hard time countering it.

That being said, it does not mean that TV will disappear in the near future. This segment is being supported by the state in Russia; money flows in and content will be produced to attract people. On top of that, there is a huge inertia of generations, which cannot be overturned in a month, a year or two. These people are used to such viewership. There is background/passive consumption, which has been formed by TV. What is more interesting, many people are having a hard time making a choice. It is easier to click on a remote than to choose to any specific series or movie. The combination of these factors will support television for many years.

There will likely be some symbiotic/hybrid models, where TV will work together with online platforms. They share costs on production and promotion of content, and each attracts its audience. We have touchpoints with both, terrestrial and thematic broadcasters. We are open to such cooperation, and I find it adequate.

In general, content is a very expensive area: licensing of top international content is costly, not even speaking about production. Piracy still covers around 60-70% of video viewership, and companies lose a part of their economy. It is more effective to search for partnership formats of cooperation instead of being ineffective on one's own. ■

Smart TV have been sold. This does not equal to 20 million households, because some have two-three TV sets, and others have none. Only a half of them are connected to the Internet. Statistically, our penetration in households is not that significant. But anyhow, over the course of the next 5-7 years, people will change their TV sets and the majority will have Smart TV. With the current level of penetration of broadband Internet access and the constant reduction of prices for data plans, we anticipate a large part of TV sets to be connected to the Internet. Then, and then you can expect a real revolution and significant shifts in the media.

**Is ivi planning to enter other markets, beyond the Russian-speaking universe?**

Russia and CIS remain our priority, along with the Russian-speaking audience residing abroad. We are not considering entering other markets.

**Are you planning to invest in sports content?**

We thought about that but decided to forego this topic for three reasons. First, sports content is very expensive. Second, and more importantly, it is in fact concentrated in a single pair of hands. This means high

# TV2 continues to build on recent success

Coming off a successful spring season, TV2 Group is set to continue building the momentum in the second half of the year. New CEO Pavel Stanchev who joined the commercial broadcaster in May has the ambition to improve the results and find new revenue streams. Flagship channel TV2 will play a key role in his strategy, as he tells Georgi R. Chakarov in this exclusive interview for TVBIZZ Magazine.



**Pavel Stanchev**  
CEO, TV2 Group

**P**avel, you took the CEO post at TV2 Group in May. What convinced you to change France for Hungary?

My first TV job interview was in Budapest, for HBO, in 1994. Then I was with RTL Klub in 2003-2004. Hungary was always a leading place for the media development of our region in the last 30 years. After a great stint with the leading French TV group, TF1, I decided to go back East. When the TV2 opportunity appeared, I didn't need much time to decide.

**What are the new challenges for you at TV2? What will be some of the key points in your strategy?**

In the last few years TV2 Group has significantly increased its market share. Today, the group's portfolio is the leading in terms of viewership. My goal is to pursue its growth, especially concerning our main station, TV2, but will also

focus on improving the group's financial performance and finding new revenue streams. Digital and international are among them.

**TV2 has successfully built a strong portfolio of channels but is the ad market big enough to provide for a healthy business?**

Like in the rest of the world, the Hungarian broadcasters rely today not solely on the ad market. The distribution revenue is a key driver for the multichannel strategy. That will be complemented by other sources of income. But I am optimistic about the years ahead for TV advertising. The Hungarian economy is doing quite well. At the same time, worldwide we observe a return of the investments in TV and other traditional media after the internet „folyó”: the reliability and transparency make the TV GRPs the unbeatable tool to reach the targeted audiences.

**One of the main revenue streams for the two big commercial broadcasters in Hungary comes from pay TV fees. Are you planning to increase your rates? Do you expect tough negotiations with the providers?**

TV2 Group's channels represent today the highest value for every operator. In that respect we are aiming at a win-win and fair relationship. This is what I have been doing in the last decades, from my time at HBO through the TF1 Distribution carriage negotiations.

**Where do you see potential for further growth of the group and what would you say are your advantages compared to RTL?**

The first potential is with the further growth of our flagship channel, TV2, building on the success of our Spring season in which primetime shows



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like *Exathlon Hungary* and *Raid the Cage* outperformed our competitors. In that respect, we are fully focused on our Autumn grid. The Hungarian viewers know that TV2 is close to their hearts and will offer the best news and entertainment they love.

**Is TV2 planning any acquisitions and in which segments?**

Currently we are focused on growing our existing business and on increasing our profitability and cash flow generation. That will put TV2 Group in the good starting block when the right investment opportunities appear.

**What will be the highlights in TV2's schedule for the second half of the season?**

Our biggest highlights will be *Asia Express* which will be on-air daily during one part of the Fall, it is returning with its second season. This time the contestants have to do their mission in Sri Lanka, India and Thailand. After the success of the sport reality *Exathlon Hungary*, we really believe in *Fittest Family*, while *Game of Chefs* is also coming back with its second season.

**The departure of former CEO Dirk Gerkens has resulted in a change of the policy to work with one producer. Could you mention some of the com-**

**panies you are partnering with and what will be their projects?**

My ambition is to transform TV2 into the home for every talented Hungarian TV professional. So now that we opened the gate we will work with different production companies during the Fall season. That being said, IKO will remain our privileged house. Going forward, we won't mind if IKO works also for other TV groups.

**Last fall, TV2 tested a vertical model of scheduling which delivered mixed results. RTL also had a similar model in spring. Will you return to that model?**

What I can see is that our Spring season worked quite well, which was not the case for the competition. As I said, we are currently fine-tuning our Autumn grid, but it would be stupid to radically change working scheduling models. We listen to our audiences.

**It seems you are lagging behind RTL when it comes to the digital side of the business. Do you agree and what are your plans in this direction?**

I am still a fresh comer and currently analyze the situation together with the TV2's team. My recent experience in France where MYTF1 offers the most watched AVOD platform will certainly help.

**You also operate a sports streaming service. Are Hungarians ready to pay for exclusive sports content?**

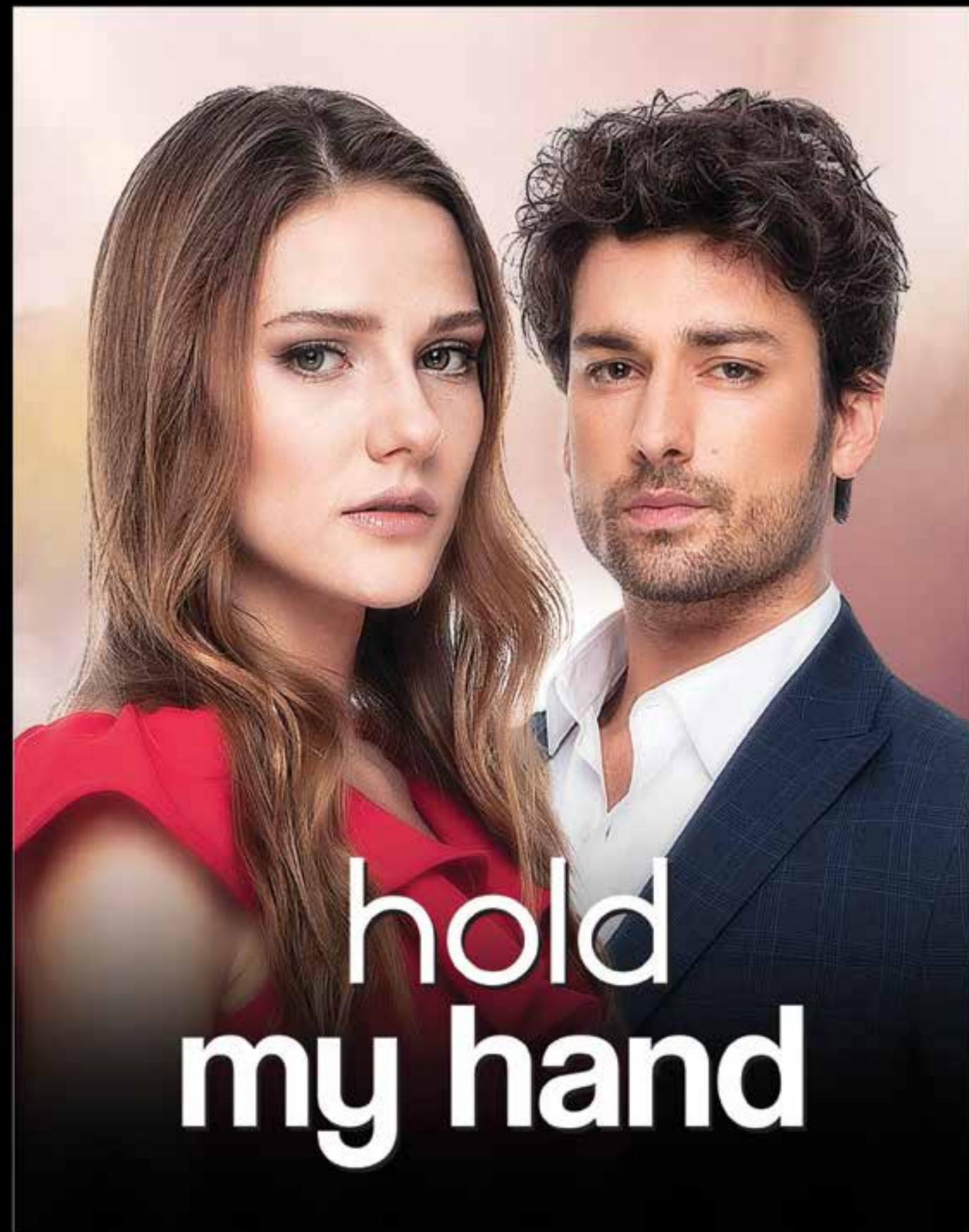
As I said we are currently reviewing our online positioning and strategy, so I won't exclude the SVOD model for the moment.

**You follow closely the developments of the CEE markets. Which are some of the traits Hungary has in common with the other markets and what are the differences?**

In commercial TV every market is different and specific. For several years on the Hungarian broadcasters were imposed German models of programming. But the market progressively evolved towards content that works in the rest of the region or even, in some South-European markets. Finally, the Hungarian audiences are shaping their own TV model.

**Will you continue to rely on Turkish dramas and Latin telenovelas in your daytime schedule?**

TV2 is traditionally the home of the Latin and Turkish series. We achieved great success in this genre. This was the reason why a dedicated telenovela channel called Izaura was launched so our audience will see good series on our channels in the future too. ■



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# Kanal 2 is 25 and changing with success

The 2018/2019 season was quite eventful for Estonian commercial net Kanal 2. The channel used its 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary to fully revamp its strategy with a focus on content produced in-house with more talk and social interest programs, while canceling several popular shows. Even though the transition has been hard, Kanal 2 managed to keep its leading position on the commercial market during the spring season and continues to build on that success, as Postimees Group CEO Andres Kull tells Georgi R. Chakarov.

**M**r. Kull, this season Kanal 2 celebrated 25 years on air as Estonia's first commercial channel. What were some of the highlights and accomplishments for your company during the past year? As I started as CEO from January 1, maybe I'm not the best person to ask. During the last year there have been lot of changes in our staff, new people were coming in and I think at the moment we are more pragmatic in our approach, carefully assessing any changes we plan, acknowledging that it's not a growing market and act correspondingly...

**The flagship channel saw a major revamp during the spring season. What were the key changes that you**

**introduced in the schedule and are you satisfied with the results?**

Actually, those changes were already started before I took the position as CEO. So suddenly I happened to be in the middle of that process and everything was quite new to me. We dramatically cut the part of third-party production and replaced it with our own. We heard a lot of screams from the market: "It's cheap!" as if the price tag would always grant the quality. Nobody had trust in us, a lot of people expected us to die. It didn't happen and during the first 4 months we've been the market leader among the commercial channels. So, rating-wise we are quite satisfied, but sales could be always better.



**Andres Kull**  
Postimees Group CEO

**Other market players have qualified your move as a risky one. Do you agree? Are you planning to continue implementing this strategy for the next season and what is included in your plans?**

Every change you make can be risky. Then again, doing nothing isn't necessarily the safest way either. People in this business know very well that there are no guarantees for success when you make changes in your program. It's more or less a question of stomach feeling and testing. Trusting your own taste is normally the last thing to do. The only thing that is certain is that in a small country like Estonia local content rules and you must build your primetime mainly on that. It's more expensive but unavoidable.

**What would you say are the main trends in Estonia in terms of viewing preferences?**

It's harder and harder to attract younger viewers because their watching habits are very fragmented and inconsistent. They don't have Estonian language preference probably due to their English language skills, so Netflix and similar VOD platforms are very popular. Older people, on other hand, are very loyal to linear TV, but even their habits are changing. More and more of them are using catch-up services. It has its positive and negative side. Actually, it leads to an even more extended TV consumption but takes away some ad revenues as you can easily skip the commercials. Generally, I don't think that we have any specific trends in Estonia which don't apply to the other markets.

**Estonia is quite small but quite competitive market. With a total ad spend of about 26 million euros, how hard is it to run a sustainable business?**

If somebody claims it to be easy, just don't believe them. Even if the main competition for ad money takes place between the two major commercial channels, we shouldn't forget about the national broadcaster and its two channels. Their content spending is far bigger than ours which makes it hard for us to compete for the viewers. In this situation it is quite logical that CPM goes up, but CPS goes down. In other words, we give away more media for less money. Spending on TV ads is quite constant and rather declining than going up. We can't say that Facebook and Google's increasing share only impacts the local web revenues - all media are under that fire.

**Eesti Meedia is the biggest media company in the Baltics. What are the synergies that you have running between the various operations? Are you planning to expand your TV presence beyond Estonia?**

Our business name has changed from Eesti Meedia to AS Postimees Grupp now. All the classified business was separated in Q1 and sold in Q2. The Postimees brand became dominant in our group and as it is much better known on the market, we decided to go back to using that brand. We have some synergies by producing news and investiga-

tive journalism in almost all our media operations. Nowadays, there is a strong convergence between different media, so we don't invent the bicycle here. As regards expanding the TV business, we are careful because we don't see it sustainable in the long run in the current form. Some kind of transformation or convergence will happen in the already near future.

**How important was it for you to drop the free broadcasters and start charging pay TV operators for your channels?**

I think it was the same process which all the news media in web are currently in the middle of. Losing ad revenues leads one to selling the content instead of giving it for free. In TV business it was even worse – you just didn't give it for free, but even paid substantial money for being on the air. Concurrently, the share of cable operators on the market was rapidly increasing. Of course, that move still forced lot of people to join a cable operator and in the new situation they discovered lot of additional available localized channels to watch, which resulted in even more fragmented viewership. But in the end, we got paid for our content which took away some pressure from the diminishing ad revenues.

**You recently acquired two smaller cable channels. Are you planning to continue to expand your channel portfolio?**

First of all, we need to see how it will go with these two. Then we can make further plans.

**You are very active in making (integrating) shows with YouTube/Instagram stars into your program. Does this strategy help you attract the younger viewers?**

Yes, it does, but everything connected to what is viral for the young is like mayflies, they come in numbers but die very soon.

**You also operate the VOD platform VEEBITV which offers original and acquired content as well as sports events, movies and news. Can you reveal some figures on the usage of the service? Which are the most popular sections and titles?**



We have two main content sources – one comes from the TV channels and the other from our postimees.ee news media site. The most popular sections are TV series (local and foreign) and news media clips about what happens right now. The usage isn't very massive yet but increases slowly and constantly. Considering the amount of Estonian content we offer, it's actually Estonia's Number 2 VOD platform after YouTube.

**Are you planning to produce digital-only content?**

We already do produce digital-only content. There are numerous news clips

as well as live broadcasts have produced only for digital platforms and they've never seen on linear TV.

**How big is the influence of the major international VOD platforms in Estonia? Is a small market like Estonia of interest to them?**

As I mentioned earlier, young people are quite heavy users of Netflix and similar platforms. The major interest is in TV series, which they watch many episodes of in one go. Netflix is very visibly present on our market and has a remarkable amount of user accounts in Estonia. ■



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# Ukraine closes another winning season and preps for the next one

Channel Ukraine once again finished the TV season as the most-watched network in Ukraine in the key demos. The successful mix of high-quality drama productions in primetime and popular reality projects in daytime has been a guarantee for success during the past few years. Yako Molhov talked to Channel Director Viktoriya Korogod and the production and distribution heads about the preparations for the new season, ongoing productions as well as plans for international partnerships.

**V**iktoriya, what is Ukraine channel's program strategy for the upcoming season? You are known for your series, but will you also focus more on non-scripted content?

First of all, TV series work well not only on our channel, this is a global trend. For instance, today's trendsetter Netflix has gained its popularity owing particularly to series. That is why Ukraine is planning to further ground on TV series in shaping its agenda.

At the same time, we have been also creating non-scripted content for some time now. We started with daytime reality shows for weekdays like *Mission: Beauty*, based on our own format, and Global Agency's *Rivals-in-Law*. Then we tried this category in primetime. This spring we

premiered the grand show *Amazing People* based on the Endemol Shine format *The Brain*. We are going to develop similar projects in the future, but only together with TV series instead of replacing them.

**What are the new projects for this fall?**

It is quite hard to say definitely since not all of them have been approved yet. But speaking of TV series, I can tell you of one format-based primetime project. Usually, to create new series we actively search for new formats which, on one hand, are cheaper than our primetime projects and, on the other hand, will meet the expectations of both young and adult audiences. This year we bought a Turkish format which we first planned for the 18.00 slot, but then we decided to shorten it to 24 episodes to make it more



**Viktoriya Korogod**  
Director of TV Channel Ukraine

dynamic and add drama and run it in the primetime slot. The premiere of the series is scheduled for this fall.

**You have been actively developing original series productions since 2014.**

**What is the number of fiction projects currently in the pipeline and are increasing your investments each year?**

The channel needs 480 hours of premiere fiction content in the primetime slot. This is about 50 primetime weekend and 40 weekday projects a year. That is, we are currently working on around 90 primetime projects, all of which are on different stages of completion. As a rule, we try to form the agenda for the next year by April-May, which is why some projects may be on the stage of approval, while others are being shot. Anyway, 90 projects mean two seasons, for instance, spring-fall or fall-spring. They are all being developed now.

At the same time, we are working on our daytime projects. Some of them have turned into franchises, like *Agents of Justice*, *True Mystery*, *Story of a Crime*, or *Doctor on Duty*. For these projects we simply shoot new seasons. However, we also have some new stories which are only being developed and thus not fixed in the upcoming program plans yet. We believe they will enjoy success, which is why we do not give up on them. As for now, there are about 10-15 such off prime projects, both regular and new ones.

**What are the latest trends on the Ukrainian TV market? What are viewers mostly interested in watching in terms of genres?**

You know, it's melodramas. Though apart from them there is a demand for detective

stories, which we have many of, both in the primetime and off prime slots. People want to see stories that unveil the truth. For instance, even though *True Mystery* is not a regular detective story, it has been highly popular for five consecutive years. It is a reality show. By the way, the other realities *Mission: Beauty* and *Rivals-in-Law* are also extremely popular. Considering that our country is actively developing, I cannot but mention informational broadcasting, entertaining projects – concerts and weekend shows – as well as comedy projects since they have always been popular and will remain so.

**Are you actively following the format trends? What formats have attracted your attention recently?**

Since we are actively looking for an entertaining show which will help the channel prove its leading position, our primary focus is on primetime entertainment projects. However, we have not decided yet what format we will develop during the next season. This spring we tried *The Brain*. I am not sure whether we will have the second season of the show. Generally speaking, we are now working on developing entertaining primetime formats.

**How have the language quotas affected the channel and the market in general?**

Any changes to the broadcasting laws influence both the channel and the

market. We are carefully following the trends, legal trends in particular. That is why even before the law entered into force, in late 2016-early 2017 we began altering our production process by adapting it and shifting to the Ukrainian language. We formed lists of Ukrainian actors, directors and other creative crew members who would ensure constant production of projects in Ukrainian.

**What is your digital strategy? Do you plan content specifically targeting online audiences?**

You know, we have been thinking of it quite a lot because digital platforms are actively developing both in Ukraine and worldwide. Therefore, we, as a national television leader, must look for new ways of working in the digital sphere. But before speaking of creating content specifically for the online audience, we first must study its needs as this kind of audience differs in many ways from traditional TV viewers. That is why we have a task to produce content for digital platforms, but this is only a second step, while the first one is to understand what kind of content the online audience expects from us.

**Does the fact that the new Ukrainian president comes from a TV background spell better future for this business?**

I do not know the plans of the new president and cannot comment on it, but in

general, I believe in Ukrainian television, and I am sure it has good perspectives regardless of any external influences.

**What is your strategy for international co-productions? Any key partnerships you can mention?**

I have heard this question many times before and my answer has been the same: we are highly interested in co-production and we are open for new offers. Besides, we are actively looking for partners for co-production ourselves, and we already have good results – we are now working on one of our primetime series in cooperation with our Latvian

colleagues. In our system of values, co-production is when the creation of a product involves actors from both countries, investments of both partners and, in our particular case, it should use both Ukrainian and Latvian locations. We are very happy with this partnership. The series I'm talking about will be presented at the 10th Odesa International Film Festival in July. On channel Ukraine it will be aired this fall in primetime. Therefore, we are happy we can both go on developing partnership with our Latvian colleagues to make other series of the same quality and accept offers from other countries.



**Olena Kanishevskya**  
Creative Producer of TV channel Ukraine, Director of prodco Tele Pro

**O**lena, Ukrainian series are getting increasingly popular abroad. To what do you attribute their success?

Thanks for mentioning of our locally made series. It was right to the point. They are actually gaining in popularity. I don't think there are a lot of countries which might boast the rapid development of series production the way we can. There is a great deal of shooting now in Ukraine, so the competition is tough leaving no room for mistakes. Producers strain every effort to draw up any idea and to implement it while engaging the best expertise possible. The productions have learned to meet the target audience needs and tastes, analyze their response to content and to promptly take it into account. Prospective sales are also kept in mind. A good series is deemed a good asset and a steady source of revenue worldwide. Ukraine is no exception in this case.

**What are some of the major projects you are currently working on?**

TelePro as production company proceeds with new seasons of its successful projects, such as *True Mystery*, *Agents of Justice*, *Mission: Beauty* and *Star Path*. A new police procedural series with a strong character arc is in the preproduction period. We are right in the middle of prepping a pilot episode on rescuers, and we always have a few ideas in scripting.

**What kind of scripted formats are you looking for?**

We are always in pursuit of ideas that might give rise to unique format features which thus would enable us to transform a relevant project into a new brand. We are hunting for new territories. I don't mean geography, not in the least. I mean the areas to develop long vertical multi seasonal series.



*Rivals in Law*



**Iryna Chernyak**  
Director of TV Content Sales Department, Media Group Ukraine

**Y**ou have been shooting more and more series in Ukrainian due to the language quotas. Is it now harder for you to sell the content?

No doubt, it affects the sales of our content to the countries of CIS and the Baltic region. Broadcasters in these territories when it comes to quality content always choose the one which is in Russian. Not to mention, that when it comes to the content produced in Ukrainian it is more expensive (dubbing or subtitling) for the buyer and not every client is willing to spend extra money and time in order to adapt such content to the viewer when there are plenty of other finished series and programs already produced in Russian. However, the good news is that over the past couple of years we've had quite a lot of cases

when Ukrainian language was not an issue and clients gladly bought our high-quality TV series, reality shows and programs, so I guess the quality is still more the priority than the matter of language.

**Who buys your original content?**

Even though our primary clients are CIS countries, we have many deals with Western Europe and Asia. Together with selling content, we are also working on developing our international platforms – *Ukraina 1*, *Ukraina 2*, *NLO 1* and *NLO 2* – and actively promoting them around the world, particularly in Western Europe. For instance, we have contracts with Germany and Poland. I would also like to note all of the aforementioned channels base on the content of *Ukraina* and *NLO TV*. ■



*Mission Beauty*

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# CEE Breakout Hits

TVBIZZ Magazine presents some of the biggest new success stories in the CEE region this TV season

## Hercai

*Hercai* was the most-watched premiering series during the spring season in Turkey. The ATV drama dominated the Friday night charts reaching more than 30% share in the key demos. The series has also been breaking records on YouTube. *Hercai* is a hard-hitting family drama filled with vengeance, love and tears.

## Sanatorium of Love

TVP1's original docu reality format was the breakout hit of the spring season in Poland. The first season of the show was watched by an average of 3.5 million viewers and got 22.54% share on Sunday nights. In the show, six elderly ladies and six senior gentlemen set off to a picturesque health resort in the mountains, where for three weeks they get to experience new adventures, including love.

## The Devil's Throat

The crime drama was the most-watched series in Bulgaria during the spring season, reaching 30.5% share in Nova's demo. *The Devil's Throat* is named after one of Bulgaria's most-famous caves which plays a major role in the series. Mia Yazova is a criminal profiler from the State Agency for National Security who investigates a smuggling ring in Smolyan. When a series of gruesome murders are committed in the region, she comes to help police investigator Filip Chanov.



## Vlad

The Romanian adaptation of Turkish drama format *Ezel* delivered excellent ratings on PRO TV this spring. The season finale had over 1.9 million viewers and up to 30.5% share in the commercial demo. The series, inspired by the story of Monte Cristo, tells the story of Adrian Anuței, a man who was sentenced to jail after being blamed for a robbery he did not commit. After four years, Adrian returns under the name of Vlad Pop with a revenge plan.



## Black Widows

The debut of the Czech adaptation of Finnish drama format *Black Widows* delivered one of the highest results of Prima in recent years – over 35% share in the commercial demo. *Black Widows* tells the story of three women who are good friends but have problems with their husbands. They start a new life when the three husbands die in tragic circumstances, but a detective quickly discovers that the events were not accidental...

## At the Border

*At the Border* dominated the daily rankings in Croatia during the whole 2018/2019 season, reaching up to 47% share. This is the story of Petra who returns from Zagreb to her native village in order to inherit the illegal business of smuggling goods from Bosnia and Herzegovina to Croatia from her grandmother. But there she meets the border police officer Marko and things get very complicated for both of them.



## Survivor

Returning to Russian air after nearly 10 years, *Survivor* delivered the highest ratings in TV3's 25-year history, scoring up to 13% share in the demo, which is four times higher than the channel's average.



## Dear Heirs

*Dear Heirs* aired over four months on RTL Klub securing the channel with the leadership in its daily primetime slot. In 81 episodes it averaged 20.1% share in the demo and generated over 8.1 million online views. The series is based on Croatia format *No Matter What* and focuses on the inheritance of a huge fortune which will be given only to the ones who move back to their small village and stay there for at least a year.

## Roots

*Roots* was the most-watched original drama in Serbia for the 2018/2019 season. RTS1 drew over 2 million viewers for the finale of the TV adaptation of the eponymous novel by Dobrica Cosic. The main theme about the everlasting conflict between fathers and sons, family background and identity issues and political conflicts that have led to national and family break-ups at the end of the 19th century.

## Joker

Global Agency's quiz show was the surprising super hit of the spring season in Slovenia. The premiere of the show scored the whopping 44% share in its Saturday night slot on TVS1.

## Love in Chains

Period drama *Love in Chains* became the most-watched March series in Ukraine in the past six years. The season one finale scored over 20% share on STB. This is the story of Kateryna who was raised as a lady of noble blood but for people she is only just a bondmaid. She is determined to gain her freedom.



# Meeting LA's Finest

Top Hollywood stars Jessica Alba and Gabrielle Union held an exclusive international presentation and screening of their new action series at NEM 2019 in Dubrovnik. A spinoff from the famous *Bad Boys* franchise, *LA's Finest* comes to change the way people look at women – as characters, as members of society and the changing Hollywood industry.

**J**essica, Gabrielle, tell us a bit more about the show. Do you enjoy working on that project?

**Jessica:** Yeah. The show is really fun. The show is for everyone. I think it's great to watch with friends and watch with a partner. You can binge watch. I just think that it's one of those shows that the more you watch the more you get attached to it and you have to see what's next. I think that our characters are very relatable as well. It's a show about two LAPD Detectives and it's in that *Bad Boys* universe so you get the action, you get the fun, you get the

comedy and it is still very grounded in our friendship.

**Which one is the good and the bad character?**

**Jessica:** We're trying to rewrite Hollywood and create a different sort of future so it's we're both a little good and we're both a little bad.

**Gabrielle:** I did a little research and just asked a bunch of cops and detectives what is it like - how knowing that so much of the law and the understanding of the law and the enforcement of the law is really in the eye of the beholder.

So, I love that we get to explore this cool untapped gray area where we don't always do the right thing. Our hearts are in the right place. Sometimes we made mistakes, but we keep them moving and we try to improve. And I think it's very relatable to most people's journeys.

**Jessica:** More like a good driver - bad driver.

**Do you think there should be more shows like this with badass and strong women?**

**Gabrielle:** Hell yes. I think you said it best. I mean there was this idea that

against the world and this government that was oppressing her and had made her. So, I came into my own as an adult collaborating with a visionary like James Cameron that believed that women should be depicted this way. So, I've only ever thought that we should have the seat at the table, that we deserve as much screen time as men and that we're really good at it. And it took Gab a very successful career as an actress for her to get to this point. This is the third time she's executive producer and this is a show that she wanted to create so I was happy to be part of that.

**What were the main challenges for both of you in this spinoff of a franchise known for its dude humor?**

**Gabrielle:** The things that we loved about the Jerry Bruckheimer style and the *Bad Boys* universe is the action sequences. We liked that you can break up an action sequence with humor, so it didn't take itself so seriously. But the quality of the jokes is a little bit different because I think boys can get away with different types of humor. And I think women can have a little bit more a layer. It can be a little more dry, you can get it two or three seconds later. There will be the quick joke that you get right away but we can also add a little bit of like our own little fun stuff.

**Jessica, if I am not mistaken this is your first role in a TV series. What is the difference and how did you manage with the transition from film to TV?**

Well I started my career here and then went away from it for 20 years. Gosh. At the time I would say the time commitment is the biggest difference. And I think when you have a finite amount of time to tell a story and you have to sort of spoon feed the audience and do a lot of plot exposition and keep it moving whereas in a TV show you have more time to tell the story and you don't always have to give the audience all the nuggets. As you go you can let them figure things out and then they can rewind and say - "Oh you're right, they mentioned that thing in that one episode and then they put the things together." So that's more fun because sometimes as an actor you're like OK now I had to do three paragraphs trying to explain the same thing over and over. But the time commitment is different. I can be in and out of a movie where this is a much longer time commitment.

## LA's Finest

The drama follows Sydney "Syd" Burnett (Union), who was last seen in *Bad Boys II* taking down a drug cartel in Miami. Having left her complicated past behind her, she is now an LAPD detective with a new partner, Nancy McKenna (Alba), a working mom with an equally complex history. Burnett is forced to examine whether her unapologetic lifestyle might be masking a greater personal secret. Taking on the most dangerous criminals in Los Angeles while skirting the rules, Syd and McKenna become a force to be reckoned with, on the streets and in each other's lives.



**LA's Finest is available on Spectrum. How has the TV industry changed with the VOD services becoming content powerhouses?**

**Gabrielle:** That's a great question. What's changed is that there's so much more content, which means there are so much more opportunities for actors. Every project doesn't necessarily need the 20-million dollar actor and it's giving a lot more people an opportunity to shine, a lot more people are global and have been getting the opportunity to have a global audience. So still a long way to go but we're off to a great start.

**Where do you see your future - in producing or acting?**

**Gabrielle:** All of it. I mean this is like once I realized I could be an executive producer and starring on it in front of the camera. Luckily, I partnered up with one of the most intelligent people on the planet. She managed by creating a billion-dollar company. So, she's done it for herself. In between movies. But I wanted to partner up with somebody who equally has a big life and who has very ambitious dreams and who wants to figure out how you can kick ass in a different more unexpected way than what they assume for women in Hollywood with children.

How we, sort of, want to just kick up our heels and then rest on our laurels and live in the past. But the reality is different. We just get better and give us more titles, give us more things to do, it's a different day. We can multitask. That's a beautiful thing about it. So that's the best way to manage it, by getting more jobs.

**Is it easier now for women to get jobs in Hollywood?**

**Jessica:** I think the only way that the industry, any industry can see that you can do it differently is by being successful. I created a business in big bad corporate America and 60 percent of my leadership are women. I give a four-month maternity leave to my employees who are women. Men get paternity leave of two months and they can get up to four months if they want to. You can still nurse your baby and work and there's a way to do that and you can also be paid equally. Being successful in corporate America, gave me the confidence that when I came to the table as an executive producer for the first time on this show that we could create with Gabby the type of Hollywood environment that we always wanted. So, in our writers room 90 percent of the people that we hired were women. We literally were blind

testing who were the best writers. They just happen to be women. You see native people honors, the indigenous Americans on our set. You see Latinos on our set. You see Asians represented on our set. You see Europeans represented on our set, you see African-Americans represented on our set. That is not normal for Hollywood. And it's so cool that we can bring that type of diversity and community to a Hollywood set. And then I was nursing my son when we did the pilot and he was two and a half months old. So, I had to take breaks sometimes.

A lot of actors have to hide their pregnancies. Frankly, when I had my first kid I experienced a lot of that prejudice and I was like - I don't need it. I'm good. And then I went and created my company and I didn't want to deal with it until the business was ready to give me a shot to be the full person that I am and I feel like after the Time's Up and the #MeToo movement there is an awareness that we deserve to have equality. Feminism is equality. And my husband believes he is a feminist. He believes his daughters get to have equality, that his wife can have equality. And it's not a dirty bad word that women get to an equal part in society. I'm happy that we're at this place now. ■

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# HIDE AND SEEK

## True Ukrainian Noir

ZDF Enterprises is bringing the first true Ukrainian Noir production to the international market. After *Hide and Seek* was presented with short clips at MIPDrama Buyers Summit 2019, now the German distributor is giving NATPE Budapest attendees a chance to screen the first two episodes of the crime drama produced by Film.UA in an exclusive World Premiere. We spoke with the creators about this great new show.



**Kateryna Vyshnevskaya**

Head of Development and  
Co-Productions at FILM.UA Group

**K**ateryna, *Hide and Seek* is one of the latest additions to ZDF Enterprises' vast catalog of drama series. What makes this series stand out from other Ukrainian crime dramas?

Crime drama in general and noir in particular is a rarity in the Ukrainian television landscape. Ukrainian viewers have not yet had a chance to be exposed to local stories of such complexity. In many regards, *Hide and Seek* is a bold project for Ukraine. It is also an atmospheric project. Compelling story lines and engaging visuals both work to build up tension. Unprecedented attention was paid to the visual language, music and sound design. We approached the series the same way one would a theatrical feature. The series starts as a detective story, when a 7-year-old girl disappears from a locked apartment, and gradually develops into

a drama that touches upon social and psychological issues.

**Tell us a little bit more about the series' plot; is it based on real events?**

The first episode opens with a father and daughter playing hide and seek. The father closes his eyes, counts to five, opens his eyes... and fails to find his girl. The child disappeared from inside a locked apartment! More kids go missing in the same town. Later, a video surfaces on the internet portraying the missing children, each holding a sign with a mysterious combination of numbers.

This is fiction. However, when researching for the series we were shocked to learn the stats. It turns out around 5,000 children go missing in Ukraine every year. Surprisingly, these stats are not much lower in EU countries. We tried to discuss the issue of missing children and figure out why this is happening. One of the plot lines, for instance, deals with the issue of illegal adoption.

**Who are the main characters in the series?**

Our main characters are Varta Naumova and Maxim Shumov. These are police investigators in charge of the missing children case. Varta is new to the police department, we see her arrive at the town in the beginning of the first episode. Maxim is an experienced investigator, whose partner was relieved of duty and Maxim, himself, has been demoted to operative. Each of the characters bears the cross of past trauma. The deeper we delve into the investigation, the more we learn

about their gushing wounds.

**How many episodes are there in season 1 and have you planned an open ending for further seasons?**

It's an 8-episode drama. Even though the crime investigation storyline is resolved, our characters' personal dramas are not. We deliberately planned it this way to be able to return to our characters again in season 2.



**Olesya Lukyanenko**

Creative Producer

**O**lesya, the series integrates elements of the noir and thriller genres, intertwined with intimate personal stories. What was the most-difficult part when writing and shooting the series?

The structure of the series is complex and multi-layered. We have a lot of supporting characters, and their storylines are essential to the general plot. We pay a lot of attention to our main characters' personal dramas and the viewer relives their memories and flashbacks along with them. This was the most challenging part - integrating all these plot lines without sacrificing the integrity of the main mystery.

**How long did it take you to make this production?**

We started filming late September last year. It took up 62 shooting days to wrap up. However, due to difficult weather conditions, these 62 days were spread out across 5 months. We are now in post-production. The series will be ready for delivery by the end of summer.

**Can we call *Hide and Seek* a "Ukrainian Noir" and to what extent does it depict the reality of living in rural Ukraine?**

It would be an honor for us if *Hide and Seek* succeeds in establishing Ukrainian Noir as a genre. We put particular effort into making sure we are true to the realities of living in small town Ukraine. But the issues our characters face are reflective of the flaws in our institutions at large and not just in Ukraine. Just watch the news anywhere! The collapse of the existing systems in general and police force in particular enable the dark side of human nature to flourish leading to the phenomenon known as misplaced retribution. When people don't know who to turn for help to and where to direct their rage, they direct it at society at large. We see this happening all over the world these days.



*Hide and Seek*

**Mirela Nastase**

ZDFE.Drama French-speaking  
and Eastern Europe Director

**M**irela, what has been the feedback following the series' presentation at MIPTV?

The feedback has been phenomenal! Being selected among the 10 most anticipated series by the Buyers Summit in Cannes was a celebration in itself. After showing the 15-minute teaser that was edited especially for MipDrama, the reactions have been strong and very much in awe of the production quality, casting and cinematography of the series. Major broadcasters in UK, Italy, Germany, France, Australia and Japan have been asking to screen more on the day of the event. We have already received multiple requests to screen the first available episodes (the series is in postproduction now) and to present the series at multiple festivals and trade events. We are told how surprised everyone is by the level of craftsmanship that went into creating the series. And it's true - there was no detail too small. Both we and the buyers feel that *Hide and Seek*, thanks to its unique visual identity, authenticity and clarity of vision signals a new breed of drama not only from Ukraine, but Eastern Europe in general.

**You are also holding a screening during NATPE Budapest International. Is this a show that could appeal to audiences in CEE?**

The screening is actually an exclusive B2B world premiere of the first two episodes of the series. We have chosen this market in particular because of its focus on CEE. We would like to emphasize the fact that premium drama can originate anywhere, including Eastern Europe and pride ourselves with a series 100% shot and financed in Ukraine. While all broadcasters in CEE produce their own local shows, only rarely they acquire dramas from the neighboring countries. But beyond cultural and historical bonds all these countries share, we hope that the series will touch upon human universal themes and a genuine curiosity for excellent drama. We are confident that the show will appeal to audiences in CEE as its setting will look uniquely familiar to audiences in all the countries of the former Eastern Bloc. On top of that familiarity, however, the series tackles themes that apply to a wide range of societies and circumstances. It stays with you and causes reflection. ■



Meet us at NATPE Budapest

14-17 October 2019  
Cannes, France



# The World's Entertainment Content Market

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**mipjunior.**

12-13 October 2019

# ATV brings big hits to NATPE Budapest

ATV Distribution is attending NATPE Budapest with a number of hits this year. Müge Akar, Sales Director for CEE, CIS and Asia, tells us more about the highlights in the catalog of the Turkish distributor.

## Müge, what are ATV's latest hit titles that you are selling this year at NATPE Budapest?

ATV's new big hit *Hercail* is our main focus this year. It has been the Number 1 show in Friday prime-time and has carried this flag for the whole first season. While *Hercail* succeeded to reach 30% share on the local market, *Lifeline* also maintains its success. Also, ATV's first daily drama *Don't Leave Me* will be promoted at NATPE Budapest.

## *Hercail* was the biggest launch of the spring season in Turkey. To what do you attribute its great ratings success? Have you already closed distribution deals for *Hercail*?

*Hercail* has a great story that tells an epic love that tries to stand up against the revenge and the dynamics of a traditional Turkish family. Sub-stories are as powerful as

the main storyline and this increases the variety of the represented themes. Also, the story takes place in the southern part of Turkey and the atmosphere is very unique. Romania and Uzbekistan have already acquired *Hercail* as a proof of its massive success. ATV is negotiating more deals which will be announced soon.

## What other titles have made the headlines this season?

ATV's rating record holder drama *Lifeline* is going very well with its second season and it will continue for a third season. In addition, *Grand Family* which is a long-running powerful Turkish drama is back in ATV's catalog. It focuses on a family that is on the top of a mafia clique. *Hercail* will also continue with season 2 in the fall. We will launch new drama series during the summer period and if they prove to be a success, it would be possible to move them to the main season.



**Müge Akar**

Sales Director for CEE, CIS and Asia

**Your catalog consists of over 40,000 hours of TV content. What are your clients looking for in terms of genres, what are the latest trends?** Our clients would like to have premium dramas and our goal is to bring high quality productions to our clients. Recently, love stories are pretty popular because of their intimate storytelling. Further, the dramas that help to increase social awareness on public make the audience question the right and wrong. Also, the daily series running from Monday to Friday are in demand, since they are shorter in terms of episode duration and the big number of episodes is also an advantage. *Don't Leave Me* fills this gap in our catalog.

## What is your distribution strategy for 2019? Will you be expanding to new markets this year?

ATV is always working to widen its horizon and seeking new markets all the time. We attended World Content Market at Moscow this year and this was our first time at this event. Africa, Asia and Russia receive our attention this year and we would work more on these new territories.

## ATV is selling content to over 60 territories. What are your key markets?

MIPCOM is still the most important market for us since we can meet with almost every country which we deal with. Regional markets such as NATPE Miami/Budapest and MipCancun are also very effective. ■





# HERCAI

VENGEANCE, LOVE AND TEARS...

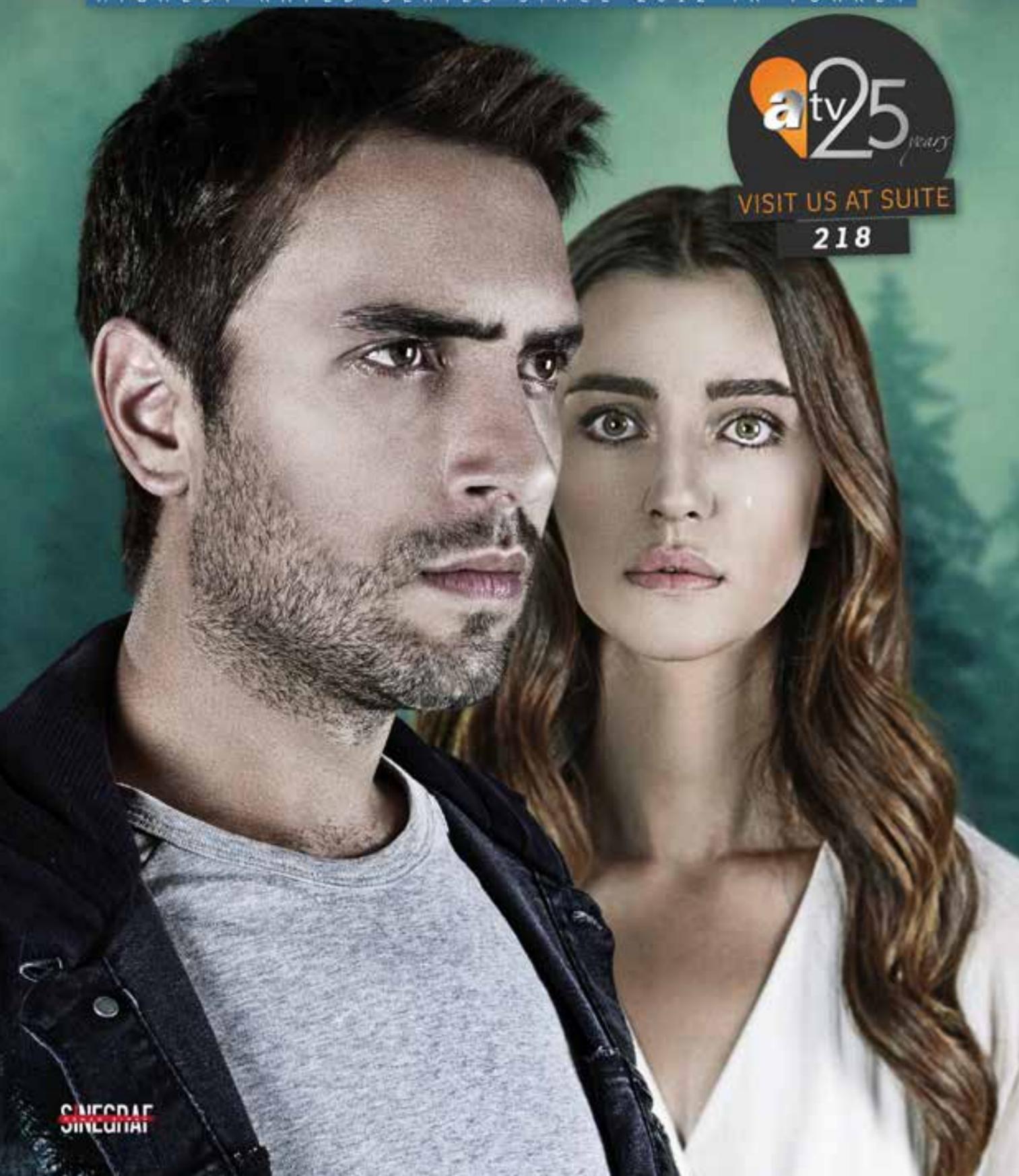


# LIFELINE

HIGHEST RATED SERIES SINCE 2012 IN TURKEY



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JULY 30, 2019

**CONTENT  
CO-CREATION  
EXCHANGE**

## KEYNOTES



**JULIE MCNAMARA**  
EVP, Original Content



**HEATHER MOOSNICK**  
SVP, Content Partnerships



**AMY REINHARD**  
VP, Content Acquisition



**BEN RELLES**  
Head of Innovation

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# Calinos

## big hits and a Romanian premiere at NATPE

Calinos is coming to NATPE Budapest with a large catalog of Turkish hits and its first Romanian drama. International Sales Director Asli Serim tells us more about the highlights which the Turkish distributor has prepared for buyers from CEE.

**C**alinos is one of the first companies to started to distribute Turkish content internationally. How has the market evolved and what are the latest trends in terms of fiction?

This journey started in 2001 when we sold the first Turkish series *Wild Heart* to Kazakhstan. Since then, Turkish dramas have been sold to more than 150 countries around the world and have become a worldwide known brand and social phenomenon. Turkey is the second highest exporter of TV content after the United States. Dramas and romance are still the most sought-after genres because when it comes to real life stories, love and intrigue, there are no boundaries.

**What are Calinos' highlights for this year's NATPE Budapest International?**

Our most popular series *Our Story* and *Woman*, that we have been distributing since last year, have been sold to many countries in Europe and the Balkans and have been generating high ratings everywhere they have been broadcast. *Forbidden Fruit* is another title that we have signed many deals for and we'll be seeing in quite a few countries next season. We also have a new title in our catalog - *Original Sin* - a Romanian drama based on a Turkish novel which has been a great success and leader

in the ratings locally and we believe this title will generate good interest by buyers from around the world.

**What are your latest deals in CEE?**

We have sold *Woman* and *Our Story* in Bosnia and Herzegovina. *Woman* will also air in Hungary. *Forbidden Fruit* will be seen in Romania and Poland. We also recently closed a deal for *Relationship Status: It's Complicated* in Slovenia.

**What are the most successful series in terms of audience results in Turkey that you offer to your international clients?**

*Falling Leaves* was one of our most successful series ever, especially in the CEE region. In North Macedonia, the final episode had a share of 80% and in Bulgaria - 60%. Stories about family values and the struggle of a father to keep his family together struck a chord in many people's hearts. Another series that has generated profound success is *The Girl Named Feriha*; it became a phenomenon in all countries that we sold it to. Our latest series, *Woman* and *Our Story*, have been very popular and successful too, which has made us and the broadcasters very happy.

**What is your sales strategy for 2019? Will you be looking into new territories this year? Is Latin America still the most-important market for you?**

Western Europe and the Far East are currently a priority for us. Africa is another interesting market for us; the prices are still quite low there, but we believe the demand will grow in the near future. Latin America is still one of the most important markets for us. We currently have our series broadcast in most countries in Latin America.

Recently there was a competition for Latina Turkish Awards in which more

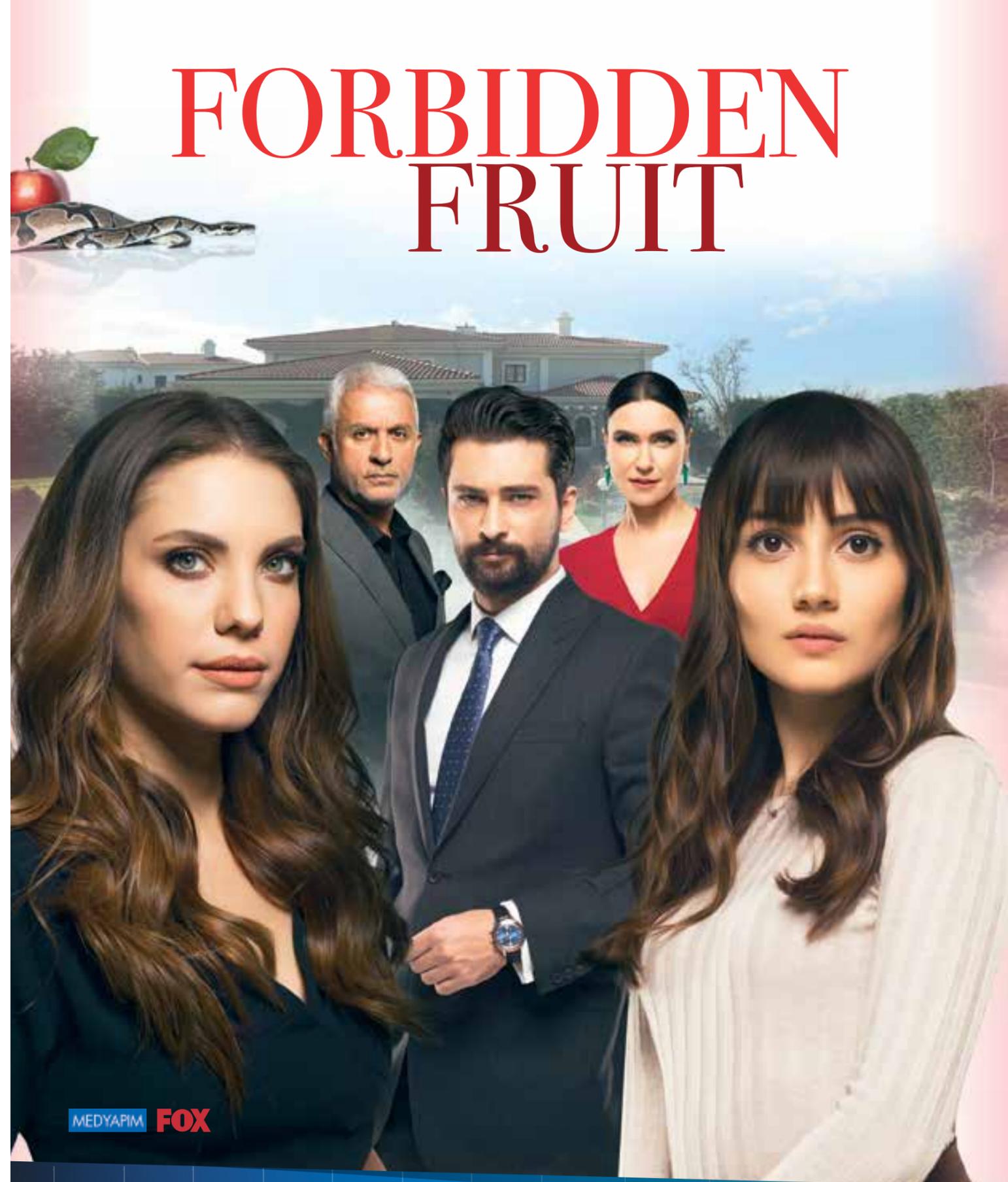


**Asli Serim**  
International Sales Director, Calinos

than 3 million people voted for online. *Our Story* won 11 out of 22 awards.

**You recently picked up Romanian series *Original Sin* for distribution. Is that your first Romanian series and do you have plans to pick up other series from Eastern Europe?**

Yes, this is the first Romanian series in our catalog and the reason why we picked up this title for distribution was because it was a story based on a Turkish novel. It was shot with the same production quality and runtime as a Turkish drama series. High quality, great actors and most importantly a great story is what we look for when deciding what programs to offer our clients. We believe that this title will prove to be a great success as we have seen a good interest from our clients at MIPTV and we will close many deals by the end of this year. ■



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# our story

From the producer of "FERİHA"



MEDYAPIM FOX

Best International Drama at  
TOKYO DRAMA AWARDS 2018

# W O M A N



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# Drama remains at the heart of Inter Medya's business

Interview with CEO Can Okan

**M**r. Okan, Inter Medya was founded back in 1992. How has the company welcomed its 27th year of existence and what are your main priorities?

Many new private broadcasters were launching in the early 1990s. In 1992, when the company was established as a content distribution company, the main activity was to supply content to those channels. We started our business by acquiring feature films, predominantly from the United States, and licensing them to Turkish TV channels. In time, also compelled by the economic conditions within Turkey, we decided to broaden our operational area to CEE and CIS territories, where we became an important content distributor.

Towards the end of 2008, due to the recession and in order to minimize our risk, we decided to pull away from our "buyer/reseller" identity and assume a sales agent role. In a period when Turkish TV series were becoming more and more popular around the world, we started to become the sales representative for some of Turkey's most known producers, whom I also knew personally. At the time, we were undertaking the sales of all of Focus Film's daily daytime series, Avsar Film's weekly primetime series as well as all of TMC's series, which were very successful in Turkey and abroad.

**You have an impressive portfolio of TV series, formats and feature films. What are your main highlights for this year's NATPE Budapest International?**

Turkish dramas are very popular everywhere. Following the success in Latin America we are now conquering Western Europe with our series and films. We have closed a number of deals for *Black Money Love* in various countries. Produced by Ay Yapim and sold in over 140 countries worldwide, we have recently licensed the series to Spain. We are pretty sure that our strong

drama title produced by Koliba Film, *Broken Wings*, will also find its spot in the hearts of European consumers.

**What are your latest deals in in CEE? What are your most-popular titles in the region?**

Turkish dramas have been on air for more than ten years in this region. Buyers have a high level of awareness about the storylines, casts and performance of all Turkish programs. Since the beginning of their popularity in the international market, there has been strong demand for Turkish series in CEE, especially in the Balkans, where many of our series and feature films have been exported. Meanwhile, the Western European market has become more fruitful for us. *Black Money Love* is on air on Nova TV in Spain. We believe this success will positively affect the surrounding countries. Turkish dramas have a great potential and the success of our dramas will soon spread to more countries in Western Europe. Our hit series *Bitter Lands*, produced by TMS & B Productions, was recently licensed to Bosnia Herzegovina, Hungary and Slovenia.

**What are your key territories and where do you see unrealized potential?**

Since the beginning, Turkish series have been successfully sold all over Central and Eastern Europe. The Balkan region has been an especially important market for us. Spain has finally accepted Turkish dramas and we are confident that we will continue to sell Turkish series in this region and in other parts of Europe. One of our most popular series produced by Ay Yapim, *Black Money Love*, was sold to Atresmedia and another hit drama in our catalog, *Endless Love*, to Media Set. These two series attracted millions of viewers per episode across Spain and will open the doors to European Market.



**Can Okan**  
CEO, Inter Medya

**In the past Netflix acquired shows from Inter Medya, including the revived *Behzat Ç* which you are bringing back together with BluTV. What is your strategy in terms of digital sales and partnerships with VOD services?**

Of course, streaming platforms are very interesting to us because they give viewers the opportunity to watch what they want without any time limitations. The future is definitely leaning toward this direction and we see great potential to produce Turkish dramas for VOD platforms around the world we would also like to mention that we cooperate with BluTV, a Turkish streaming platform, announcing our latest production, the long-awaited return of the cult series *Behzat Ç*. The preparations of the shooting have already started, and the series will air on BluTV in 2019. The first three seasons of the show were a great success and it was only a matter of time before the series appeared on our screens again. Inter Medya will produce the series and distribute *Behzat Ç* worldwide. ■





# All good things must come to an end...

By Yako Molhov

2019 is proving quite the bitter-sweet year for TV fans all over the world. While it brought us arguably the best TV series in recent history – HBO's *Chernobyl*, which topped the IMDB chart for highest-rated TV series ever and gained widespread critical acclaim – it also marked the end of two of television's most-popular and most-discussed "guilty pleasures" – HBO's *Game of Thrones* and CBS' *The Big Bang Theory*. Both series enjoyed high ratings not only for their finales but throughout their runs, with the former debuting back in 2011 and the latter launching its first season in 2007. However, both *GoT* and *TBBT* had to travel a long way before turning into TV phenomena.



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**T**he first season of the CBS show about the two socially-awkward geeks-roommates and their friends ran from the fall of 2007 through the spring of 2008 and reviews were decidedly mixed and while the show's viewership was okay, its first season ranked an unimpressive 68th against all the other shows on TV. However, *The Big Bang Theory* became the first show to end its run as TV's top series since the final season of *Seinfeld* aired in 1998. The hourlong airing of back to back episodes garnered a substantial 3.1 rating in the key 18-49 demographic and was watched by just under 18 million total viewers. The finale also topped the other main demographic of 25-54 (4.7 rating).

The show was nominated for the Emmy Award for Outstanding Comedy Series from 2011 to 2014 and won the Emmy Award for Outstanding Lead Actor in a Comedy Series four times for Jim Parsons. It has so far won seven Emmy Awards from 46 nominations. Parsons also won the Golden Globe for Best Actor in a Television Comedy Series in 2011. In total, the series has so far won 56 awards from 216 nominations. It has also spawned a prequel series in 2017 based on Parsons' character, Sheldon Cooper, named *Young Sheldon*, which also airs on CBS.

HBO's *Game of Thrones* also enjoyed strong ratings for its finale, despite its tough launch. The sixth and final episode of the eighth and final season,

titled "The Iron Throne," delivered an audience of 13.6 million viewers in linear viewership alone, topping the previous record (12.5 million) set just the week prior and unseating *The Sopranos'* season 4 opener (13.4 million) as HBO's most-watched single telecast ever. Across all HBO platforms (linear, HBO GO and HBO NOW), the fiery episode amassed a record 19.3 million viewers, exceeding the previous series high of 18.4 million (again, set by Episode 5, "The Bells"). *Game of Thrones'* ratings increased as season 1 progressed – episode 1 had 2.22 million while episode 10 had 3.04 million viewers – nowhere

near the 13.6 million in linear viewership of the finale.

The series based on George R. R. Martin's novels has also spawned several spin-offs, although HBO is yet to announce details about their total number and premises – one thing is certain – they won't be sequels.

Undoubtedly, both shows will go down in TV history books but how have the two finales fared against other TV hits' final episodes throughout the history? Axios provided the answer in the form of a chart and neither *TBBT* was in fact a bang, nor *GoT* took the ratings throne compared to the good

## Popular TV show finales, by rating

SHOW	YEAR	NETWORK	RATING
M.A.S.H.	1983	CBS	106m
Cheers	1993	NBC	80m
Seinfeld	1998	NBC	76m
Friends	2004	NBC	53m
Magnum, P.I.	1988	CBS	51m
Game of Thrones	2019	HBO	19m
The Big Bang Theory	2019	CBS	18m

Source: Axios



Sopranos



True Blood



Lost

old TV from the 80s and the 90s... In fact, their finales placed 18th and 17th, respectively.

In first place is *M.A.S.H.*, the war comedy show from CBS that ran from 1972 to 1983. 106 million people tuned in for the final episode of the show, a record that has remained unbroken. Compared to shows like *M.A.S.H.* or the finales of sitcoms like *Cheers*, *Seinfeld* and *Friends*, which all boast viewership of over 50 million, the number for *Game of Thrones* (19 million) is relatively modest. Its end has many critics wondering if appointment television — where groups of people sit and watch a show live together — will continue. But if we consider the fact that entertainment now offers numerous ways and different channels how to consume it, the numbers for *Game of Thrones* are still pretty impressive. Add to this that all shows ahead of *Game of Thrones* aired on free broadcast channels — as opposed to the paid HBO. Not only did it edge out *The Big Bang Theory*, but it also broke several HBO records for. One record, though, was bested by *Chernobyl* shortly after *GoT* reached it - HBO is touting the fact that *Chernobyl* actually has drawn 52% of its audience from HBO Go, HBO Now and other add-on services. That breaks the previous record of 46%, held by *Game of Thrones*, and makes it the first series to pass the 50% mark in that realm.

The series finale of *Game of Thrones* did not only deliver high ratings to HBO; it also offered the most-controversial end in the history of TV — an unprecedented 1.6 million viewers from all over the world signed a petition to rewrite the last season of the show, unhappy with how it ended. However, the cabler is seemingly ignoring the considerable backlash the final season got and suggesting some of the worst episodes of season 8, which also happen to be the worst in the entire show, for the Emmy Awards: the last three episodes of season 8 — “The Last of the Starks”, “The Bells”, and “The Iron Throne” — have the poorest ratings in *Game of Thrones* history: 5.6, 6.1, and 4.3 stars (out of a maximum of 10 on IMDB) at the time of this writing. These are the episodes that prompted over 1.6 million people to sign a Change.org petition asking HBO to remake the final season with competent writers (which isn’t going to happen).

On the other side of the spectrum was *The Big Bang Theory*’s finale. CNN said the series, “closed with a big dose of heart” while website Indiewire said the finale “delivers an ending true to itself,” adding “perhaps some fans wanted more. Certainly, Chuck Lorre and the 11 other credited writers could’ve spiced things up a bit. But that’s not what *The Big Bang Theory* was. That’s not what made it work for so long... The series understood itself, understood its audience, and understood what it needed to give them in order to keep everyone happy.”

Television — being art — has always been pretty subjective so we can’t really say that one series finale was a disaster and the other was a marching success — there will always be people who have hated it or loved it. One thing is certain though — HBO has been offering us fantastic series but at the same time has the habit of messing up their finales, at least in terms of social resonance. *Game of Thrones* was not an exception; it was perhaps the best proof of how a good series cannot always satisfy all of its fans and most often — the critics as well.

If we try to compile a list of the most “controversial” series finales, HBO would definitely get three places, winning the trophy with *The Sopranos*, *True Blood* and most deservedly with *Game of Thrones*.

The crime drama about the mafia is undoubtedly one of the best TV series ever produced and its finale in 2007 attracting 13 million viewers is a proof of that. The open ending, however, denied viewers with a conclusion to the story and many of them felt cheated. Some critics, however, found the ending ambitious and experimental.

*True Blood*’s ending simply did not live up to the level of the earlier seasons of the show. Many viewers expected such an outcome, i.e. an ending that won’t be on par with the high level that was set by the series in earlier seasons simply because the indications were present by the end of season 2.

The biggest “tragedy” of *Game of Thrones*, compared to the aforementioned HBO series, is that it did provide answers, it did give closure, it did kill off many important characters (not as many as expected) which was actually staying true to its character, but it did so hastily. And the tragedy is that the



The Big Bang Theory



Game of Thrones

authors of the series had over a year and a half to prepare the finale but in the end it was rushed and did not stay true to the immense complexity of the earlier seasons.

Another “honorable” mention would be ABC’s *Lost* which simply polarized viewers with its finale. “The End” attracted 14 million viewers (ranking right after *Game of Thrones* and *The Big Bang Theory*, placing 19th, just ahead of *The Sopranos*). According to the website Metacritic, “The End” received “generally favorable reviews” with a Metascore—a weighted average based on the impressions of 31 critical reviews—of 74 out of 100. The Guardian and The Daily Telegraph both reported that “The End” had received negative

reviews and disappointed its viewers. David Zurawik of the Baltimore Sun gave the episode a highly negative review, writing “If this is supposed to be such a smart and wise show, unlike anything else on network TV (blah, blah, blah), why such a wimpy, phony, quasi-religious, white-light, huggy-bear ending...”

No matter good or bad ending, all good things must come to an end... and all of these legendary TV shows will not be remembered only for their finales. Thru the years, they formed a new culture and understanding of how TV is being made and consecutively perceived by the audience. We just have to hope that we will witness many more good things to come. ■

# Q2 TRENDING STORIES ON TVBIZZ

These are the most read news stories on TVBIZZ from April to June 2019.

[www.tvbizz.net](http://www.tvbizz.net)

## PROGRAMMING



### M6 drops *All Together Now*

The new M6 proposal, *All Together Now*, will be taken off air. Endemol Shine France's show disappointed with its first two episodes and the channel will replace it with *Recherche Appartement ou Maison* on May 14. The show premiered with 1.38 million viewers and reached 1.08 million with its second episode averaging 5.95% market share.



### RTL4 preps launch of *All Together Now* and *The Masked Singer*

RTL4 has revealed details around the upcoming premieres of *All Together Now* and *The Masked Singer*. The channel confirmed that Chantal Janzen will be hosting the singing show whose jury include Jamai Loman, Dionne Slagter, Henk Westbroek, Défano Holwijn, Leona Philippo, Gerson Main, Dots Esther Oosterbeek and Anita Heilker, Brainpower, Julia and Sarah Nauta and the German schlager singer Dennie Christian. Meanwhile, CEO Sven Sauvé told AD that Ruben Nicolai will be fronting the local version of *The Masked Singer*. The launch dates of both shows are still to be confirmed.



### Fort Boyard returns in the fall

MTV3 has confirmed a new season for *Fort Boyard* set to premiere in the fall. The new episodes will be shot at the end of May. Banijay Finland is producing.

## RATINGS



### Montepèrido and *Bake Off* end well

TV E1 reports a good score for its thriller series *Montepèrido*'s finale. The series drew 2.2 million people before the screen and averaged 15% market share. It was the most followed proposal in the prime-time in Spain. During the eight episodes, *Montepèrido* averaged 2.2 million and 14% share. Cuatro's version of *The Great Bake Off* delivered strong as well. The culinary show ended its opening season with 958,000 viewers taking 5.6% share. During the first edition, *Bake Off* averaged 847,000 viewers.



### Dutch viewers not interested in *The World's Best*

*The World's Best* launched on SBS6 last week with 320,000 viewers and the second episode last night dropped to 260,000 resulting in 5.3% share. RTL4 led the primetime with *Chantal Comes to Work* (21.6%) and *Everyone Has Had It* (19.6%).



### Super finale for GNTM

*Germany's Next Top Model* remains one of the biggest hits for ProSieben and Heidi Klum has now announced six more seasons for the years to come. Klum has just renewed her contract and is going to do six more seasons. The current edition is the best one in seven years with 17.9% share in 14-49. It has generated over 149 million video views online.

## M&A/FINANCIALS



### Mediaset to buy two more DTT channels

Mediaset is close to acquiring two more DTT channels, 45 and 55, which are currently operated by Sony Pictures Television Networks as Pop and Cine Sony. Il Sole 24 Ore reports that negotiations are in the final stage. According to the report, Mediaset will buy Channel 45 in cooperation with Turner and it will remain a kids channel, while Channel 55 will be 100% owned by Mediaset.



### Discovery and BBC sign major global content partnership and agree on future of UKTV channels

Discovery, Inc. and BBC Studios today jointly announce a series of agreements, reigniting their historic relationship with a significant multi-million pound global content partnership spanning a library of premium factual series to power a new global streaming service, and a bespoke development deal for BBC Studios' iconic genres of natural history, animals, adventure, science, travel, space, history and civilization documentaries. Additionally, the two companies have concluded the future of UKTV's channels business in the UK with a structured split that complements the strategic focus.



### TV 2 increases revenues in Q1

TV 2 Denmark increased its revenues with 5.6% in Q1 2019 to 730 million DKK. The ad income grew with 4.1%, while subscriptions increased with 6%. However, spending increased with 8.1% to 709 million DKK, which resulted in lower EBIT of 21 million compared to 34 million for the same period last year. The increased spending is due to investments in fiction and entertainment content as well as the digital segment. The TV 2 channels had a combined share of 40.4%, while the total viewing time dropped with 6%.

## APPOINTMENTS



### Mastiff MD joins TV 2

Kathrine Haldorsen has been appointed Program Editor at TV 2 Norway. She will join the management team of the broadcaster and report directly to CEO Olav T. Sandnes. She joins from Mastiff Norway where she has served as development chief and last as MD. She commented for Kampanje that she will be responsible for the local content on the TV 2 channels and TV 2 Sumo.



### DR names news chief

Lisbeth Langwad has been named head of the news Facts & Actuality division at DR Denmark. She held the position temporarily following the creation of the new department last year. Before that, Langwad was news editor at DR Medier.



### Disney distribution exec joins Discovery

Discovery Networks Sweden announced yesterday that Franca Rossander will fill in the newly created position of Senior Director Partnerships and Distribution. She joins from The Walt Disney Company Nordic where she served as GM for Media Distribution. She will be tasked with maintaining and creating new opportunities for distribution of the company's channels and content on various platforms. Rossander starts her new job on May 7.

## DISTRIBUTION



### Bodyguard heads to China

ITV Studios Global Entertainment has signed an agreement with Huanxi Media Group Limited for the exclusive broadcasting rights in mainland China for the biggest drama of 2018, the critically acclaimed, award-winning terror thriller *Bodyguard*. Huanxi Media has secured the exclusive rights for the mainland China market for its streaming service platform, huanxi.com, which provides its viewers with both films and scripted television drama produced domestically and from abroad.



### Armoza sells two formats in South Africa

Armoza Formats has announced today that South African prodco The TVSMITHS has picked up two of their formats for local adaptation; prime-time entertainment format *I Can Do That!* and comedic factual entertainment format *The Gran Plan*. Armoza has recently seen great success in South Africa with two hit adaptations of docu-reality *Marry Me Now* - one in Afrikaans and one in English - as well as the factual entertainment format, *The Ex-Team*, set to air soon on channel VIA.



### RTL4 in the Netherlands Gets the Message

The International Emmy Award-winning hidden camera show *Did You Get the Message?* has now been commissioned by RTL4 in the Netherlands for broadcast later this year. The first Dutch series of the successful format will be produced by Skyhigh TV, Be-Entertainment announced today. After two phenomenally successful seasons in Belgium that saw the ratings of the second series surpass those of the first with an average market share of 36.4% in the 18-44 target (compared to the average market share of the channel of 24.5% in 2018), VTM has also renewed the program for a third season.

## ADVERTISING



### ITV to launch new addressable advertising platform

ITV, the UK's biggest commercial broadcaster, today announces that it has signed an exclusive UK and Ireland licensing agreement with Amobee, a global digital advertising technology company, for end-to-end programmatic buying and selling of premium video inventory on the ITV Hub. This will enable ITV to launch a new, fully programmatic, premium advanced advertising platform, uniquely built using Amobee's advertising technology which allows advertisers complete control over the purchasing of their campaigns across ITV's premium VOD service, the ITV Hub.



### CSA drops the TF1 Publicite investigation

CSA announced it is dropping its case against TF1 Publicite, which was accused of harming the competition offering ad discounts. M6 filed a case with the watchdog in 2014, considering that TF1's ad division is offering discounts only to direct investors in the media this way trying to speculate with their budget. However, CSA didn't find any reason to continue the case in court.



### Authorities to crack down on TV and radio gambling ads

Police and the Transport and Communications Agency Traficom have announced they are joining forces to intensify the surveillance of illegal gambling advertisements on television and radio. Only the state-owned gambling firm Veikkaus is permitted to run and market gambling of any kind in Finland. The marketing of any other gambling operations in Finland, or aimed at consumers in the country, is prohibited.

## DIGITAL



### DW launches Turkish YouTube channel, +90

Deutsche Welle and three other major international media partners have launched a new YouTube channel they say aims to provide "a range of new journalistic information" to users in Turkey, as well as Turks living abroad. DW has collaborated with the BBC, France24 and Voice of America to create the channel and will join with them in providing video content for it.

### YouTube aims to include more content creators in trending, promises to solve copyright claims

Following the rapidly increasing concerns of content creators, YouTube chief Susan Wojcicki took matters in her hand and explained how the "Trending" tab handles content while giving equal chance of desired promotion to every YouTuber. The official statement was released via blog and the company has also vowed to look into copyright claims. Moreover, she also threw some light on the striking of comments on videos by children as well.



### Reuters: Apple revamps its TV app ahead of streaming service launch

Apple Inc on Monday rolled out a new television-watching app for its devices and some Internet-connected TVs, an effort to gain more revenue from reselling other companies' programming and, later this year, its own original shows. The redesigned Apple TV app aims to solve some of the headaches that have emerged in the streaming media era. A show's past seasons, for example, might be available on Hulu, Netflix Inc or iTunes, while current episodes require cable or purchase, leaving customers juggling multiple remotes.

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