



VIDEOAGE

DAY 1

INTERNATIONAL

www.VideoAgeDaily.com

April 13, 2015

More Buyers Than Sellers at MIP? Figures Don't Lie

Today's buyers, unlike those of yesteryear, have to contend with a market inundated with conflicting rights and consolidation — which has left fewer sellers. Fragmentation, on the other hand, has created far more buyers.

According to MIP-TV organizers, there are 3,800 buyers, of which 1,000 are there for VoD rights and 1,600 are exhibitors. Assuming that of those sellers 800 are offering some new content and that out of 3,800 buyers, 1,500 are actually pure buyers (not buying to re-sell), at close to 2:1 the buyer-seller average ratio is still good for the seller, and the ratio increases as the sellers become bigger, with the U.S. studios capturing the largest number.

For many large companies, MIP-



TV is considered a two-day market, in the sense that top executives from those companies tend to leave after the second day, thus leaving the bulk of the buyers to smaller companies, which complain that for them, the four-day event in reality becomes a three-day market since the last day is usually packing-up time.

The problem, though, is not the

(Continued on Page 4)

RAI Com's New Boss Wants To Leave a Mark

Big changes are in store at RAI's commercial division, now under powerhouse Luigi De Siervo, a 15-year RAI veteran who, reportedly, is aspiring to the post of RAI's director general.

When the name of RAI's program sales division, RaiTrade, was changed to Rai Com, the entity absorbed Rai World, the unit in charge of distributing RAI's radio and TV channels outside Europe. And, at the same time, Rai World's old management was replaced with former Mediaset executive David Bogi, who originally came from RAI.

This relatively simple move is said to have brought RAI Com some

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My 2 Cents: The debate over the future of FTA and poverty levels

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INSIDE: Fox film chief in Delta's "Sky" magazine

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COMING UP: Latin American TV fare highlights

April 15

VideoAge Daily on the go



MIPers To Close Deals, Cut Costs

"Each MIP-TV is different...and that's why we have been attending every year, for many years, with enthusiasm," said Patrick Elmendorff of Studio 100 Media.

Jonathan Ford of Content Television & Digital explained that in addition to discussing new shows, he uses MIP-TV to "get an overview on how previous acquisitions have performed, and trends in each market."

When not in meetings, Cisneros Media Distribution's (CMD) Marcello Coltro reported that he is "interested in the MIPFormats showcase, the MIP Digital Fronts events, and the International Digital Emmy Awards." The Fremantle Corporation's Diane Tripp was also enthusiastic about the fact that MIPDoc brings more documentary buyers to the market, as well as the fact that the "digital business is

(Continued on Page 4)





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(Continued from Cover)

MIPers' Deals

booming; as a distributor, we are going after all the new platforms and creating digital packages to reach all territories and untapped markets.”

But many exhibitors acknowledged that they hardly have time to attend any of the extracurriculars MIP-TV organizer Reed MIDEM has put on the agenda. “So many events, so little time!” said Peace Point Rights’ Les Tomlin.

Chris Knight explained that last year he attended as a buyer for Canadian food and lifestyle channel Gusto TV. “This year we’re launching our new distribution division, so we are attending as both a buyer and seller...As a buyer our schedule is very busy, and as a new distributor...our schedule [is] solid.”

“This is our one-year anniversary, and we’ll showcase our new content with an eye on building strategic partnerships,” said Blue Ant Media’s Solange Attwood.

Among other goals, CMD “expects to follow up on and close any remaining negotiations we started during MIPCOM and NATPE,” said Coltro. “We also plan to intensify our reach to new platforms since the pay-TV and free broadcast sector has changed due to the growth of digital offerings.”

Asked whether organizers could do anything to help make MIP-TV as well attended as MIPCOM, Coltro said, “They are [moving] in the right direction by increasing the presence of digital businesses and expanding the range of media businesses.” Peace Point’s Tomlin concurred, adding, “Although MIP-TV tends to be smaller in scale, we find both critical markets to attend.”

Yet, Tomlin added that one reason attendance at MIP might not reach the numbers of MIPCOM is that “the sheer cost of attendance [is] problematic, some of which is beyond the control of the organizers, but...it’s the single biggest hurdle to getting attendance up.” The Fremantle Corp.’s Tripp concurred that Reed MIDEM should focus on creating a “more affordable option or incentive to attend both events [because] budget is usually the issue.”

Breakthrough Entertainment’s Jodi Mackie would like to see organizers “lower the prices proportionally for exhibitors. Reed MIDEM has not taken a hard look at the drop in attendance over the past few years and factored in the economic challenges so many companies are facing,” she said.

On the bright side, Tomlin believes that MIP-TV is benefiting from the fact that “global economies are generally rebounding (with a few exceptions, of course) and the [fact that] the appetite for content is robust. We’re excited to hit the Croisette running.”



RAI Com



10 million euro in assets, from a profitable Rai World operation.

Under the strong political influence of the 46-year-old De Siervo (pictured above) — who’s close to Italy’s Prime Minister Matteo Renzi — RAI Com is now changing the operations of RAI’s international channels (which include flagship station RAI Italia, RAI World Premium and RAI News 24). Reportedly, RAI Com will operate without the full services of the International Network Distribution/ART (IND/ART) company, which carried and sold RAI’s channels in the U.S. (with ART’s affiliate ReachMedia, which also provided technical support in Canada), Latin America (with All TV) and Australia and New Zealand (with My Sat) from the beginning in 1995. Other territories were handled in-house.

Reportedly, De Siervo’s new distribution structure is modeled after Mediaset’s international channel (Mediaset Italia), which is subject to satellite and distribution service costs. Plus, it has revenue sharing with distributors but doesn’t include a minimum guarantee. On the other hand, RAI World’s agreement with IND/ART called for a minimum guarantee to RAI, plus revenue sharing and no satellite costs.

On the international content sales side, RAI Com is here at MIP-TV with a new sales force and is facing complaints from some buyers for delays in approving and closing deals (though some contracts were recently expedited). In addition, RAI Com’s traditional April screenings in Italy were canceled and replaced by a promo screening dinner during the RAI Com-sponsored MIP-TV opening night party.

Unquestioned is the dynamism of De Siervo, who speaks French like a native, but not English. He seems to be constantly on the road, attending markets that span from Europe to Latin America to the Middle East to China to the U.S.

After requests for comments, RAI Com officials did not specifically respond to *VideoAge*’s questions. Instead David Bogi, who’s also RAI Com’s head of Marketing and Business Development, sent a descriptive note about the group’s mission. Over the phone, a different RAI Com official stated that the new “RAI World is not modeled after Mediaset Italia, which nonetheless showed a 30 percent profit”.

More Buyers?

back-to-back meetings up to day three, but the fact that the high front-end expenses have to be amortized over three days instead of four, as was the case when MIP-TV lasted five days.

Then, there is the fact that buyers for markets such as MIP-TV are considered expenses since organizers have to offer (at least to major buyers) hotel accommodations and/or reduced registration fees, which are then amortized by inviting some of them to be on panels. In doing so, however, buyers are removed from the exhibition floor. Indeed, trying to balance the organizations’ economic requirements with those of the exhibitors is not easy. But ultimately what counts are the sales results, and if they’re good everyone is happy — regardless of the weather and the costs.

An in-depth report about “tools” that buyers use to stretch their acquisition budgets (a topic never addressed at conferences) can be found in the April 2015 edition of *VideoAge*.

Not surprisingly, buyers surveyed did not want to be quoted, and neither did the sellers that were interviewed. Many buyers and sellers declined to comment because they were afraid to give each other tips or ideas here in Cannes.

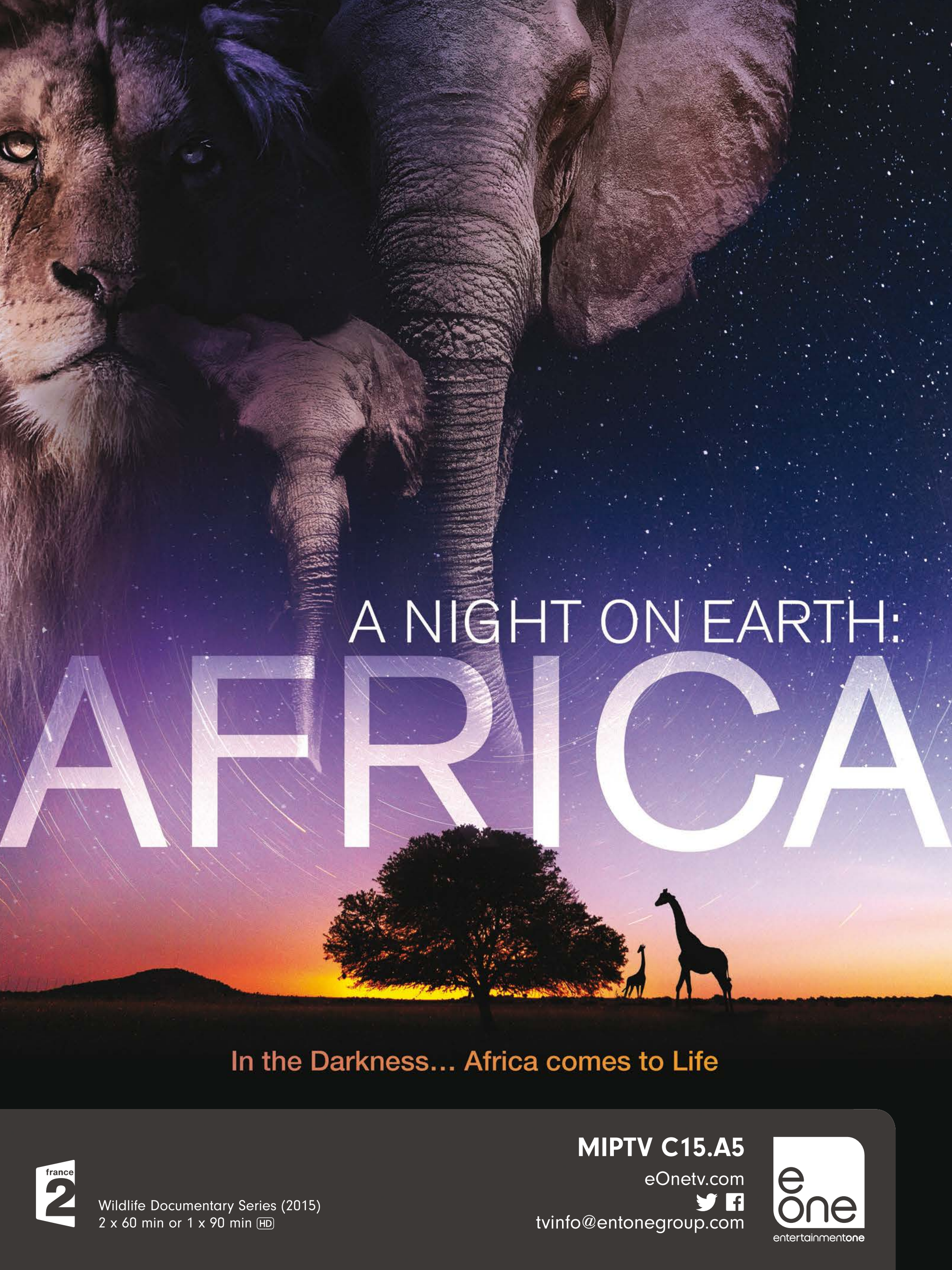


Priority Matters at MIP-TV

Priority PR is a Los Angeles-based global publicity, marketing and creative agency with a specialty in traditional media and entertainment. Clients include the industry’s top companies and leaders in the U.S., Latin America, Europe and Asia. Priority PR’s domestic and global footprint facilitates strategies for maximum engagement and expanding a client’s target audience or consumer with impressive results. Services can be tailored to accommodate various company sizes. For companies that would like to learn more, Priority PR’s team is in attendance at MIP-TV 2015. Please email lionel@prioritypr.net to arrange a meeting.

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Sellers Did Well at EFM

Among the international film distributors that attended the European Film Market (EFM), associated with the Berlinale competition (held February 5-13 in Berlin, Germany), was Ken DuBow of Lightning Entertainment (pictured on the right). He reported that, "We were looking at a number of titles from both screenings and producers meetings, but nothing to announce at this time."

On the distribution side, from his exhibition stand in the Martin Gropius-Bau, DuBow reported that all his titles did well, "especially *Bravetown*, with Josh Duhamel, Laura Dern and Lucas Till; *Goodbye World*, with Adrian Grenier and Gabby Hoffman and *Dark House*, with horror legend -Tobin Bell."

The Martin Gropius-Bau, formerly a museum and now an exhibition hall, housed 400 exhibitors, while another 90 were located at the Marriott Hotel. Both venues attracted a total of 1,568 buyers. Commented DuBow, "EFM is a global market. We see buyers from everywhere."



Delta's Sky On Fox's Film Chief

Usually, Delta's onboard magazine, *Sky*, is ignored by passengers as much as their safety announcements, but not the latest February issue, which featured a front cover story about 20th Century Fox's Jim Gianopulos.

The four-page feature titled, "The Fantastic Mr. Fox" explained in the sub-head that, "Jim Gianopulos, CEO and chairman of 20th Century Fox, has managed to blend an appreciation for creativity with the ability to make a profit on the studio's portfolio of movies, from blockbuster to animation to Oscar favorites."

The same *Sky* issue also featured an extensive report about Los Angeles, where Gianopulos is based and lives (in the Brentwood area) with his wife and three daughters.

"[Last year] was a triumphant year for 62-year-old Gianopulos — his second full year solo at the studio's helm (co-chairman and CEO Tom Rothman was ousted in late 2012)," explained *Sky*.



The magazine reported that Gianopulos took film courses at Boston University and attended law school at Fordham and New York Universities. After working at Paramount and Columbia Pictures, he landed a job at Fox Filmed Entertainment and this month (April 2015) Gianopulos will celebrate his 23rd year at the studio.

"When you're using somewhere between a half billion and a billion dollars in capital to make movies... you certainly owe an obligation to make a fair return on that," Gianopulos is quoted as saying.

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Breakthrough Gets Brainy

Kids could learn a thing or two from Breakthrough Entertainment's new shows. **Science Max** (pictured) is a new series that turbocharges all the science experiments you've ever done at home.

In **Sports Lab**, kids learn to better understand sports. The show demonstrates how the scientific elements work while we play sports.

Brothers Kevin and Andrew Buckles retreat to their cottage sanctuary to complete DIY cottage building projects in **Projects**.

A Day Without Cancer attempts to answer the question of whether we can tackle cancer in our lifetimes. Leading experts from around the world give updates on how far we've come.

Simon Donato and Paul "Turbo" Trebilcock set off on an adrenaline-filled worldwide quest to challenge their limits and test their friendship in lifestyle/reality series **Boundless**.

In **David Rocco's Dolce Vita**, David makes classic, easy-to-follow recipes while living the Italian lifestyle in Florence, Sicily and the Amalfi Coast.

Friends Scott and Justin search for unique experiences and adventures abroad in **Departures**, all while trying



to find new perspectives on everyday life.

Stand P-1.Ao

www.breakthroughentertainment.com

Travel Off The Map with Tricon

Topping the Tricon Films & Television slate is new scripted series that's interspersed with stand-up comedy, **Real Rob!** The series is directed by and stars comedian Rob Schneider, along with his real wife, Mexican TV producer Patricia Azarcoya, who co-wrote the series with Schneider. The series, from Front Out of Florida Productions, gives an honest depiction of Schneider's life, including his career ups and downs, his younger wife and their new baby. (pictured)



Documentary series **Rock Icons** showcases the rock 'n roll world's greats, from their beginnings to present day.

An impassioned caseworker with The Innocence Initiative struggles to stop the impending execution of a death row inmate in **The Divide**.

Kim Cattrall stars in **Sensitive Skin** as a woman of a certain age who sells her home and moves to an ultra-modern new condo downtown with her husband in an attempt to stay relevant and begin again.

Scripted comedy series **Maron** follows comedian Marc Maron, who is starting to put his life back together while broadcasting a podcast from his garage. After being an angry, drunk and self-involved man for most of his life, sobriety is a refreshing change.

Custom Built breaks the rules of standard home renovation, as designer/builder Paul Lafrance tackles projects that he customizes for clients.

Actresses and former co-stars and real-life friends Shannen Doherty and Holly Marie Combs star in travel reality series **Off the Map with Shannen & Holly**, where they explore the southeastern United States.

Stand R7.J7

www.triconfilms.com

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Family Matters at Gaumont

Gaumont International Television's got a roster full of drama at MIP. **Hannibal** (pictured) explores the unique early relationship between psychiatrist Dr. Hannibal Lecter and a young FBI criminal profiler who's haunted by his ability to sympathize with serial killers. He has no clue that he's face-to-face with the most gifted killer of all.

In **Hemlock Grove**, a once-vibrant town unravels after a mysterious death, and the town's secrets force viewers to reconsider what constitutes the true nature of a monster.

From the Colombian government to DEA agents to policemen, **Narcos** provides an inside look at the men who would stop at nothing to take down drug lord Pablo Escobar.

Animated half-hour comedy **F Is For Family** follows the Murphy family in the 1970s — when smacking your kids, smoking inside and bringing a gun to the airport were all acceptable.

Four families gather for a month-long vacation every year at **Hotel De La Plage**. They think their behavior has no consequences as soon as vacation ends and everyone returns to their normal lives.

Stand R8.C1



www.gaumontinternationaltv.com

Nippon TV Is Not Ordinary

Nippon Television Network Corporation travels to Cannes with formats, dramas and anime. Engineers and craftspeople are challenged to re-invent their own inventions and take them to the extreme in **Breaking Ordinary** (pictured).

Wife (blank wife) tells the story of one woman whose entire



life is dedicated to appearing to be the perfect housewife. But the facade is too good to be true.

A hopeless high school student joins forces with a genius speechwriter to revolutionize her school in **The Girl's Speech**.

My Love Story!! is a comedy that's being remade as an animated series that follows the gigantic rugged hero Takeo and the people who touch his life.

Celebrating its 25th anniversary, **Old Enough!** captures the wonder, amazement and charm of little kids going on big adventures.

Stand R7.K5

www.ntv.co.jp/english

Gusto TV Gets You Hungry

Canada's Gusto TV takes gastronomic television to a new level. **One World Kitchen** (pictured) is the future of food TV, showcasing stunning



and delicious international cuisine from Italy, India, Thailand, Argentina and Japan. Over 120 webisodes are available, plus photos and recipes.

A Is For Apple is an innovative food TV show shot on a one-of-a-kind set that comes with an interactive website and more than 120 recipes with videos and beautiful photography featuring delicious dishes.

Stand P-1.E17

www.gustotv.com

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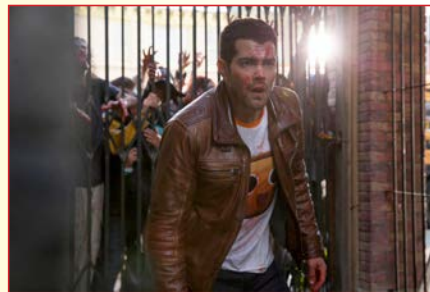
Documentaries — and the undead — are all the rage at Content Television. Viewers will go on a wild ride through the ancient world of humans, gods and monsters with live-action and CGI-animation in drama series **Olympus**.

The race is on to discover the source of a zombie epidemic after a mandatory government anti-zombie vaccine doesn't do the trick in drama thriller **Dead Rising: Watchtower** (pictured). But does the government really want to put a stop to the epidemic?

The Eichmann Show is a feature-length drama about televising the trial of Adolf Eichmann, who was one of the masterminds behind the Holocaust. Martin Freeman and Anthony LaPaglia star.

Island nations Tonga, Fiji and Samoa prepare to show their worth against larger nations at the Rugby World Cup. Feature-length documentary **Pacific Warriors** tells their story.

Documentary feature **Mandela, My Dad and Me** follows Golden Globe-winning actor Idris Elba as he works on his album titled *mi Mandela*, which was inspired by his role as Nelson Mandela in *Mandela: Long Walk to Freedom*.



The documentary follows Elba's creative journey and the impact of his father's death.

Stand C15.A6

www.contentmediacorp.com

Power: From London with Love

Power's got wildlife and TV movies at MIPTV. A family of meerkats struggles to survive in Africa's Kalahari Desert through territorial battles and love affairs in new wildlife series **The Kalahari Meerkats** (pictured).



The company's TV movies slate is topped by new romance feature **I Do, I Do, I Do**. An architect keeps reliving her disastrous wedding day until she discovers what she really wants.

Lawyer Jaxon Stone is faced with a choice — his life or his license — in thriller **Beyond Justice**, when he is tasked with helping Juan Torres, his family and friends escape a human trafficking ring.

Ellie Molaro investigates a conspiracy of "fixers" who she thinks are behind the worst disasters in the country in **The Fixer**.

Recruited to assassinate a drug dealer, an ex-operative begins to suspect a link between a drug smuggling operation, a sex trafficking ring and the U.S. government in action/thriller **Mercenary: Absolution**.

After years of unsuccessfully searching for her parents' approval on her dating choices, Josie brings an old high school flame to a party as a joke-date in **Surprised by Love**. But soon she finds their romance being rekindled ... and it's no joke.

After a child is shot dead in a violent drug bust, two narcotics detectives get involved in an intense investigation in **Badge of Honor**.

Stand R7.C31

www.powerentertainment.tv

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eOne Looks Back

Toronto-based Entertainment One Television is delving into one of the most interesting times in NYC history. **The Making of the Mob: New York** (pictured) is a docu-drama that traces the rise and fall of some of the world's most notorious gangsters, including Charles "Lucky" Luciano, Meyer Lansky and "Bugsy" Siegel, with a combination of dramatic scenes, archival footage, interviews and in-depth interviews.

David Attenborough's **Great Barrier Reef** takes viewers on a journey through the past, present and future of the Great Barrier Reef, the Earth's largest living structure, revealing never-before-seen secrets.

The Enfield Haunting is a chilling series based on the bizarre events that happened at an ordinary house in 1977, when an 11-year-old girl was terrorized by paranormal activity... or so she'd like everyone to believe.

Becca — a divorcee who gets cold feet on the eve of her second wedding — is transported back to 1995 in **Hindsight**, a series that's high on the nostalgia factor.

Set in early 1985, **Halt and Catch Fire Season 2** centers on the rise of Mutiny, a start-up company built on the most revolutionary idea — the Internet. Allegiances are tested and everyone wants to do something remarkable.



In Revolutionary War-era drama series **Turn Season 2**, the cunning agents of King George are pitted against the operatives serving General George Washington. An ordinary farmer feels he has nothing left to lose and is willing to risk everything.

Emma and Bruce prepare to get married, while Bruce still tries to get used to life in Stockholm, in **Welcome to Sweden Season 2**.

Stand C15.A5
www.eonetv.com

dick clark Has Best in the Biz

And the award goes to... Dick Clark Productions. The company is at MIP to showcase one of the most recognized celebrity-studded events in the world, **The 73rd Annual Golden Globe Awards** which honors the year's best in TV and film.



The voiceover-based series **Fail Army** returns for a second season featuring an average of 60 blooper clips in each episode.

The **2015 Billboard Music Awards** will deliver some of the hottest performances from the biggest names in the music business, and honor the best of the year.

Each week a panel of comedians analyze user-generated videos in **World's Funniest Fails**. Host Terry Crews crowns one "Fail of the Week."

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The **43rd Annual 2015 American Music Awards** will pay tribute to today's most influential musical artists and feature over 16 musical performances.

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Stand P1.B6
www.dickclark.com



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Matters of Love at ITV Inter Medya

Istanbul-based ITV Inter Medya brings a slate full of drama to Cannes. Mustafa and Ali are both orphans and partners in the police service. The story of **Filinta** (pictured) begins with a conspiracy against these two best friends.

Resurrection (Dirilis: Ertugrul) revolves around a man who determined the fate of the world. In 1071 the Turks had entered, and now the Crusaders and Mongolians wanted a piece of the same land. Within this turbulent scene, Ertugrul emerged searching for a home for his camp of 400 tents and an end to their suffering.

Mehmet, an ordinary man who works in a bar, has a complicated past that he slowly begins to remember in **Black Box (Kara Kutu)**. As his memories start coming back to him, he learns that he used to work for a secret organization, and that he has a wife and daughter.

When Omer's fiancée and Elif's father are shot in the head in the same car, they soon realize that the murder is related to diamonds in **Black Money Love (Kara Para Ask)**. They learn to trust each other and work together but the secrets they hide keep them apart.

In Between (Fatih Harbiye) tells the story of Neriman, a young traditional woman who dreams very big. While she's expected to marry the decent and educated Sinasi, Neriman begins to question his integrity. After Neriman encounters Pelin and Dugyu, the daughters of her wealthy uncle, surprises are in store for everyone.

Two brothers are at war in **Black Rose (Karagul)**. And when Murat is killed, his wife Ebru becomes stuck between her husband's first wife, the son she thought she'd lost, her husband's murderer, his brother Kendal and her daughters, who are rebelling against her.

The Karahanli family faces a major test when their shoe shop burns down in one night in **Tree of Life (Hayat Agaci)**. Will Murat be able to keep his promise to his father?

Stand R9.A14



www.itv-intermedya.com

Inside Versailles with Zodiak

London-based Zodiak Rights takes us back to the 17th century. Viewers get a glimpse into the monarchy of King Louis XIV of France in drama series **Versailles** (pictured). A glamorous world of pomp, power, betrayal, love and lust surrounds this historical "rock star."

Two British backpackers get involved in a supernatural murder mystery in the Cook Islands in drama **Tatau**. After taking a local hallucinogenic that seems to unleash supernatural powers, Kyle is convinced that a crime will be committed.

In **Rachel Hunter's Tour of Beauty**, international supermodel Rachel Hunter travels around the world to discover indigenous beauty secrets and elixirs of youth and longevity.



Preschool series **Floogals** — a combination of CGI and live-action — follows the comedic adventures of three tiny aliens who've landed in a suburban home and find everything from ice cubes to bubble baths truly fascinating.

A former FBI agent will solve cold cases and bring criminals to justice in format **The Detective**. Each episode will tackle a different investigation, with new suspects being identified, evidence being gathered and new arrests being made.

Format **The Secret Life of 4 Year Olds** allows viewers to watch as 10 four-year-old children meet for the first time at nursery school.

Stand R8.D3

www.zodiakrights.com

Escape with Peace Point

Canada-based Peace Point Rights gets real at MIP. Dean Gunnarson may very well be the world's most daring escape artist and in each episode of **Escape or Die!** he prepares for a new stunt.

Season two of **Colin and Justin's Cabin Pressure** follows two international design sensations (and committed urbanites) as they transform a rundown lakeside cabin of their very own.

Each episode of **Bake with Anna Olson**'s second season starts with a foundation baking skill and builds on it, offering up tips and tricks that give viewers a better idea of the science behind baking.

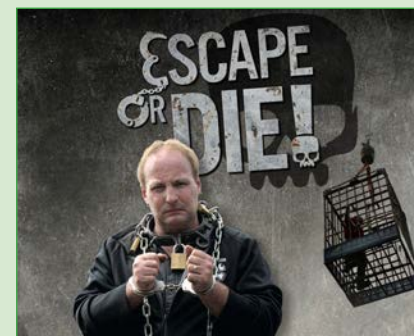
In **Space: 50 Years of Space Exploration** shows how space travel has enhanced our knowledge of the universe and looks to the groundbreaking future ahead.

Over-confident 9-to-5ers go head-to-head on ice covered obstacle courses and racetracks in adrenaline-fueled series **Ice Racer Showdown**.

King Tutankhamen rises to power and struggles to lead Egypt amid scheming advisors, friends and lovers in special event series **TUT**.

Stand P-1.F40

www.peacepointrights.com



9 Story Sure is Animated

Kids can meet some funny characters thanks to Toronto-based 9 Story Media Group. Animated versions of the Kratt brothers meet amazing new animals in each episode of **Wild Kratts** and use their Creature Power Suits to rescue their friends in the animal kingdom.

In **Peg + Cat**, an adorable little girl and her sidekick encounter unexpected problems, but figure them out on their own, proving it's never too early to learn the magic of numbers.

In **Get Ace** (pictured), Ace McDougal was a regular nerdy school kid until he was fitted with a set of top-secret, ultra high-tech experimental braces that catapult him into adventure after adventure.

An adaptation of the bestselling picture book, **Guess How Much I Love You — The Adventures of Little Nutbrown Hare** relates the adventures of the Nutbrown Hares and their friends.

Two half-witted woodchuck vigilantes use non-existent kung-fu skills to protect the lives of all citizens of Ding-A-Ling Springs in **Numb Chucks**.

Three nerdy kids and a star football player who's a bit thick-headed become



castaways on an uncharted island in **Nerds and Monsters**. They must use their brains to survive attacks from the island's hideous but hilarious monsters.

Tween prankster McGee was headed for camp when his bus took a wrong turn and landed in the spooky **Camp Lakebottom**. Monsters

are the counselors, French fries are for lunch and "killer" waves are available for surfing.

Stand R7.K28

www.9story.com

My 2¢

The debate over the future of FTA should not be a comparison between free television and pay television, but about rising poverty levels and the shrinking of the middle class in the U.S. Yet, if poverty is up, how can something free be down?



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Recently, on a National Public Radio (NPR) program it was said that the U.S. is moving toward becoming a developing or “Third Country” nation. In effect, NPR was saying that the U.S. is “devolving,” if such a term can be used to describe the process of reverting from a developed to a developing country. The topic is of interest because it could also apply to the current debate over the future of U.S. free-to-air (FTA) television, which, in my view, by focusing on the challenge from pay-TV, is taking the wrong path. Indeed, the question is: How anyone, especially the poor, can compete with free?

A “Third Country,” designation began as an E.U. term referring to people who are not from one of the E.U. countries or the E.U. country where they are living. Earlier, in 1952, the French have called “Third World” nations not aligned with the U.S. (first world) or the Soviets (second world). But the term was originally developed in 1789 when the French classified society in three categories: royalty, clergy and peasants and a few centuries later, applied to developing nations.

Now, how can a nation like the U.S. regress from a “developed” to a “developing” country? Obviously, when the middle class shrinks and the poverty level increases, and when 16 percent of Americans live in poverty (same as in Indonesia) and when most Americans will spend at least one year below the poverty level at some point between the age of 25 and 75.

In the U.S., FTA used to be the equivalent of a “developed” country: it had money, political power, cachet, high-quality programming, top stars and revered executives. However, FTA in the U.S. went from capturing 55 percent of primetime viewing in 1984 to 25 percent in 2013. Therefore, the trend could be considered a “devolving” one. Now, what can FTA in the U.S. do to avoid becoming “developing” or a sector from the Third World?

Like the U.S.’s GDP, FTA is still rich; in this case, with \$41 billion in advertising revenue in 2013 (cable

TV was \$35 billion), but the trend is not promising, as the outcome of the upcoming Upfronts in New York will demonstrate, though FTA networks will point out that FTA stations are now platforms: over the air, on cable and digital on-demand over any device, which, during primetime are delivering (at least for CBS) more viewers than 11 years ago.

In any case, if in the U.S. the poverty level increases and the middle class decreases, how could “free” television devolve? Are there any cheaper alternatives?

Actually, free television could be completely free, but in actuality it isn’t, since only 10 percent of U.S. households receive the free broadcast signals, while the rest pay some form of subscription to receive them. However, cable, satellite and Internet TV are all more expensive propositions. Yet the more the U.S. is impoverished, the more it rejects free TV and

embraces some form of pay-TV, be it subscription or video-on-demand. Understandably, for some viewers VoD could be the cheapest form of pay-TV since consumers pay only for the shows they want and they don’t even have to buy a TV set.

But is it possible that consumers’ priorities have changed? Years ago, one of the criticisms of poor people being on food stamps (a government subsidy) was that with those

vouchers they bought junk instead of nutritious food.

Perhaps today consumers prefer to pay for what they consider “quality” television, instead of getting for free what they view (if mostly unfairly) as junk television.

And, if this is the case, what can FTA do to reach the majority of Americans who will spend at least one year of their life below the poverty line?

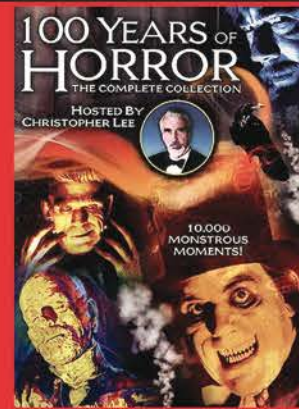
The debate is not about competition, but about the economy. Indeed, there should be no competition between free-TV and pay-TV for poor people (which, according to the U.S. census represents the majority of Americans at one point or another).

Dom Serafini



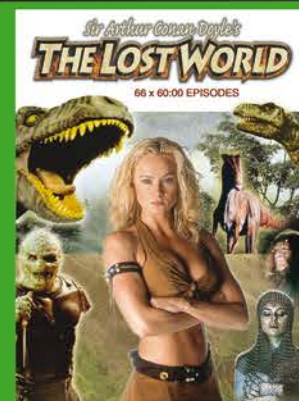
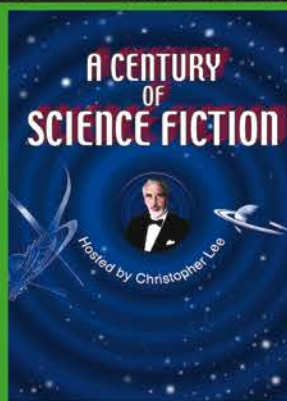
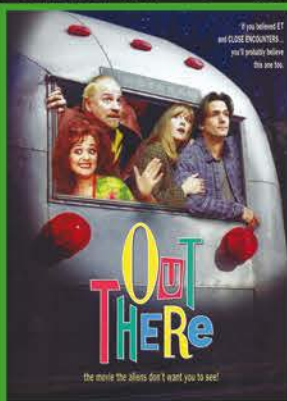
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HORROR | SLASHER | THRILLER



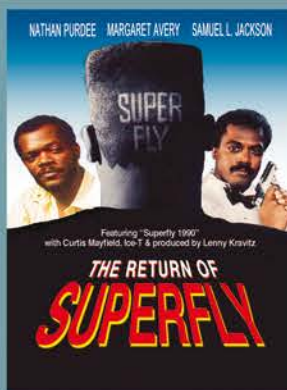
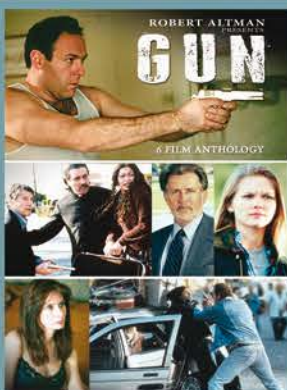
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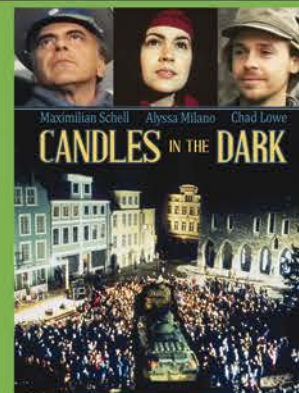
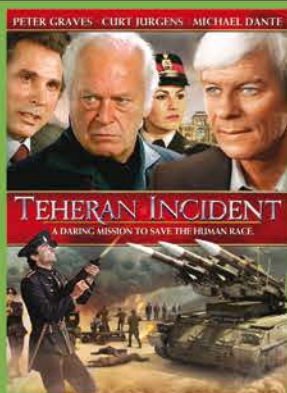
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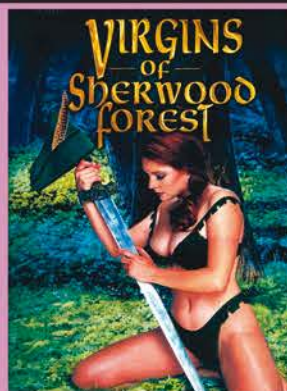
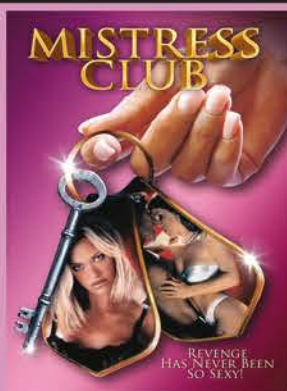
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