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FRAPA NEWSLETTER: APRIL 2020

‘We will survive. It’s what we do’

Dear FRAPA members and friends,

I hope that you are all safe wherever you are in the world.

This week, many of us would normally have been enjoying business and friendship, exchanging formats and drinking wine in the south of France. FRAPA had planned another in our growing series of Mini Summits with an impressive line-up of speakers and information. The opportunity for face-to-face networking, always a vital part of our industry, would have been the order of the week.

Sadly, we are in the midst of a health crisis rarely seen on such a global scale. It is precisely at times like these when we realize how precious life is, and how valuable staying connected to our families, friends and colleagues is to our mutual well-being. We all choose to work in an international business – but when that business comes to a halt, we all suffer.

Thankfully, we are part of the international entertainment food chain. People will always need to be entertained, informed and connected. It is what we all do best. While there are no studio shows or global formats currently in production in many

countries – we know they all will soon come rushing back.

As creators, producers, distributors and globalists, we face the blank page or screen and think, “What if?” It’s what we do instinctively and by training. Our skills will be needed globally again, and so during this time we must all keep creating, keep thinking, keep being the actively positive people we definitionally are. We are in show business, damnit! We figure shit out!

FRAPA continues to plan its 20th Anniversary activities. The Management and General Board are in communication always about better ways to serve our community. We are blessed to live in an age of easy telecommuting and teleconferencing. You can still create intellectual property and register it with our Format Registration Service. We still are here for your questions and guidance, and if called upon can offer our Format Analysis Service. The rest of our tools are up and running and available all the time. By the end of the year we hope to have a new website and app to better serve our community. And formats still need to be protected.

Many companies have had to reimagine how they do business. Distributors with finished tape may have new opportunities. But we FORMAT CREATORS – we few, we precious few (sorry, Shakespeare) – can use this time to develop new formats, new ways of doing business, new ways to do the work that feeds our families. We may have challenges to overcome, and the struggles will be very hard for many of us, but we will survive! It’s what we do!

See you digitally, and hopefully see you in Cannes in October.

Let’s be careful out there...

FRAPA co-chair Phil Gurin, president of The Gurin Company

MARCH IN REVIEW

THE HEADLINE news this month is that Mike Beale has been elevated to FRAPA’s management board from the general board, on which he has served since 2015.

The move will allow Beale — whose day job is managing director of ITV Studios’ global creative network — to play a more active role in shaping FRAPA’s ongoing objectives as it prepares to celebrate two decades at the forefront of the global formats industry.



As Phil Gurin, co-chair of FRAPA, puts it: “Mike is a world-class creative leader. His unrivalled global perspective makes him the perfect addition to the management board as we launch our FRAPA 2020 Vision Plan to mark our 20th anniversary.” Those anniversary initiatives include a new suite of soon-to-be-announced services for FRAPA members and associates, a series of foundational documents designed to codify key aspects of the format industry, a new membership pricing structure based on company size and several in-depth reports. Once the world returns to normal in the wake of the coronavirus pandemic, FRAPA will also roll out an expanded programme of mini summits and panel debates at key industry events and conferences.

There’s no question that Beale’s knowledge and experience will be invaluable to FRAPA as it negotiates its future role in a booming but unpredictable formats market. Since joining ITV Studios in 2011, he has presided over the UK production company’s rise into a global formats powerhouse, helping to give the world such super-brands as *The Chase*, *I’m A Celebrity... Get Me Out of Here!*, *Hell’s Kitchen*, *Come Dine With Me* and *Love Island*.

As for his new role at FRAPA, Beale says: “Protecting the value of IP and creative ideas is one of the most important aspects of the formats business. I’m looking forward to working with my colleagues on the board in representing our global members, so that they may continue to concentrate on coming up with brilliant and unique ideas.”

And his talents don’t stop there, according to Gurin: “Mike also rocks set of magnificent pocket squares — a colourful addition to any group photo!”

PERSPECTIVES ON COVID-19

General board member Michael Schmidt, founding partner of Gotham Grit:

“This crisis is an opportunity to rethink your production workflows. If you’re in post right now and on a delivery deadline, you’ll have been exposed to cloud-based post-production virtualisation possibilities, machine learning-based content analytics and content sorting, and AI-supported production elements around rights management, editing and content delivery. If you haven’t, I shamelessly plug myself at mps@tv-scout.com — I’m happy to help and introduce you to some fantastic emerging companies, as



well as old players in this space that have exciting new products. As a friend who runs a Manhattan-based prodco and has just sent all his editors to work from home said: “If this setup works out as I think it will, I’ll save on the rent for post from here on forward.”

Meanwhile, I’ve been pushing teleworking the last 10 years and video conferencing as a standard over phone calls long before it was cool — and probably annoyed a lot of people. But if you’re new to video conferencing, here are my unasked-for tips — all gained from experience:

- Be there give minutes early to check your tech
- Don’t film yourself against a bright window or light. Try to get the cam on eye level. A desktop lamp shining in your face can do wonders
- Good audio is still more important than good video, so invest in a good microphone/headset combo or a USB noise/echo cancelling speakerphone (Jabra has great ones). Mute yourself when you’re not speaking to reduce noise in the conference
- If your partner likes to run around the house *very* casually dressed, perhaps keep the door to your office out of the frame.”



General board member Andrea Jackson, managing director of Magnify Media:

“I’d suggest that, for every production-company owner, the smart move right now is to check inventory. Do you have any catalogue titles that can be re-edited into new programming? Or completed programmes that can be sold? Broadcasters have — and will increasingly have — huge holes in their schedules and, ironically, more people are consuming content than ever before. Broadcasters will likely consider programming now that they might not previously have considered, so it’s time to look at the material that you already have and think of creative ways to re-purpose it.”

General board member Jin Woo Hwang, founder and president of Something Special:

“This is a dark time for all media-industry personnel. However, the COVID-19 issue is the very first time that media-industry guys like myself have been able to stay at home and spend long periods of time with their family. As matter of fact, April 5 is my wedding anniversary and I’ll be



able to enjoy it with my family for the first time in 11 years.

I've missed every single anniversary so far due to trips to Cannes or production issues. And speaking of work, it's definitely time for new thinking about development. Some people spend more time on monitoring new shows and the ideation process. Now, we all have the time to think twice — and good ideas and new formats will come from that. Eventually, this storm will pass and it will shine brighter after. And we shall be more than ready for that time."



Management board member Lisette van Diepen, content consultant at Marphes Media:

"This is an unprecedented crisis and one that impacts everyone on many levels. As a freelance worker, I anticipate I'll be financially impacted — clearly, we are less protected than full-time employees, so we'll have to be more flexible, more creative and resistant than ever. But there's nothing I can do to change that, and it doesn't compare to physically suffering from the virus, or seeing your loved ones suffering from it.

"Working from home full time has given me some little gems too — like spending more time with my teenage kids. We're playing more board games, going for early-morning family hikes, having more open chats... Time to take stock and count blessings. I'm fully intending to take some of the positive things back into my new life. For starters, I'll definitely be more critical of how often I fly to European cities for those one-day trips. Nothing beats a face-to-face meeting, but Zoom and Teams have out of the blue become highly effective."

General board member Hayley Babcock, head of formats, international programming and production at A+E Networks:

"As a full-time executive, wife and mom — with all of us locked into one household — I've found the following to be essential in keeping the peace, our sanity and getting work done in the COVID-19 environment:



- Get up at a regular hour and get dressed — and I mean really get dressed! Nothing fancy but no pyjama bottoms and slippers.
- Transition from home mode to work mode by creating a new 'commute'. If you

can do so, go out for a walk. If you're not allowed outside, create a physical routine to mark the transition. It really helps.

- Set up a workspace and keep it. Don't move from the sofa to the desk to the kitchen table and back. Find a place, plant a flag there and call it your office. Basta.
- Plan the wi-fi use with your family/roommates. Make sure everybody knows when you have a vid conference planned — your job takes priority over the PS4 or YouTube or Netflix...
- Schedule calls and video conferences. Virtual meetings with colleagues and clients not only keep you connected but give you a visual peak into other people's lives and homes.
- Do the same thing with your friends. If you're dealing with multiple time zones, just pick the right drink for your time of day and join in.
- Exercise every day. That makes a huge difference to the way you feel, physically and mentally. And get your kid(s) to join you — even if you have to bribe them.
- Treat yourself and everyone around you with a lot of patience and understanding. And don't sweat the small stuff. It will help keep the peace in your home and your peace of mind.”

NEW MEMBER PROFILE

In the first of a new series to mark the relaunch of the FRAPA Newsletter, we profile a new member of our global FRAPA family. First up is Netherlands-based Rob & Joep Productions, founded in 2016 by Dutch scientists turned comedians, Rob Urgert and Joep van Deudekom, to offer audiences “something useful using humour”.



First off – how are you adapting to the current situation with Covid-19?

A situation as this also creates opportunities. For instance as a result of no Euro Soccer, No Olympics, No Tour de France, No Wimbledon, a lot of timeslots are vacant this summer. So, when you think of a suitable format, coronaproof and cheap, there is a good chance of selling something.

What's the story behind Rob & Joep?

“We’re two ex-scientists who became comedians who became TV presenters who became a format/ideas company. Our mission is to work as autonomous as possible. And we not only devise formats, but we sometimes participate in them as presenters.”

Tell us about your latest, greatest formats...

“Our biggest success is a popular-science format called *The Institute*, which ran for two seasons on NPO1 in the Netherlands. We took 100 people, locked them up for a week and did all kinds of experiments with them. The format’s been picked up by Netflix, where it airs as *100 Humans* — and we’ve also licensed it to Kanal 5 in Denmark and ICI Explora in Canada. In 2017, *The Institute* won first prize in the EBU’s contest for the best format of the year.

“Our latest format is *The Opposites*, which has done very well in the Netherlands, pulling in 1.3 million viewers for NPO1 — and our distributor tells us that international interest in the format is building. In a way, *The Opposites* is a continuation of *The Institute*: via a series of experiments, we compare two groups who lead opposite lives, such as meat eaters and veggies, young and old, religious and non-religious...”

What's special about your approach in 'normal' times?

"We don't work for a production company and we don't want to be a production company. We create our own formats, which we pitch and sell ourselves and then look for a suitable production company. In this way, we hold all the cards and that's a good position from which to start any negotiation."

Are you worried about IP/format theft?

"Not really. In the Netherlands, television is a small world and everybody knows each other. We also work with reputable partners like Warner and All3Media, and that gives us some protection. But we think you should always be careful about sharing your ideas, because ideas can get copied unintentionally."

www.robenjoep.nl

What's the format scene like in the Netherlands?

"There are a lot of big production companies but, if you have the right ideas and contacts — and we do, fortunately — it's still possible as two-man outfit like Rob & Joep to breakthrough."

Any last thoughts?

"Often, 'new' formats are not original ideas, but derived from existing formats. That's a pity. Too many formats consist mostly of form rather than substance. For us, a format should always be about content first."

TRACKING THE GIANTS

It will come as no surprise anybody involved in the formats industry that 2019's format star was *The Masked Singer*, the surreal Korean singing format that started life on MCB in 2015 and has subsequently rolled out around the world. Since it premiered on Fox last January, the most talked-about format since *The Voice* has notched up 50 licences — and there's more to come, according to K7 Media's annual *Tracking The Giants* survey, which offers a definitive guide to the world's fastest



moving global formats and the most successful distributors.

“*The Masked Singer* delivers appointment TV, co-viewing and conversation, thereby ticking a number of important boxes for linear broadcasters as they counter the challenge of the streamers,” says FRAPA board member, Keri Lewis Brown, founder and CEO of K7 Media “And it also embodies the current trend for ‘positive competition’.”

In 2019, 15 formats secured at least five new local versions. Trailing some way behind MBC/Fremantle’s *The Masked Singer* with 22 sales was Lineup’s *Emergency Call* with 10 sales, followed by Fremantle’s *Got Talent* (eight), *ESG’s All Together Now* (eight) and ITVGSE’s *Love Island* (seven).

As for the top buzzwords of 2019, Lewis Brown cites “society, dating and generations”. She adds: “While much of our world may be changing, basic human interests and values remain in place. Dating and relationships, family and kids, inter-generational communication, cooking, homes, talent, hobbies and pets are always going to be around.”

Download your free copy of K7 Media’s *Tracking The Giants: The Top 100 Travelling Unscripted formats 2019-20*:

[Click to download](#)

FRAPA SERVICE SPOTLIGHT

We’ve seen a surge in the use this month of our Format Registration Service (FRS). This service enables you to register your creative work by uploading treatments, scripts, story lines, etc online. FRAPA’s format registry offers you tools to prove that your registered work existed the moment you created it. The increase in registrations we’ve seen in the last few weeks shows that the crisis does not stop

creativity and development is on the rise.

NEW FORMAT OF THE MONTH

MUTE IT!

Genre: game show

Producer: Nippon TV

Nippon TV is banking on the fact that, in a world that gets louder by the day, silence is indeed golden. From the creators of *Silent Library* — held to be one of the most influential primetime comedy shows in Asia — comes new game show *Mute It!*, in which contestants have to follow one simple rule: absolute silence.

The game plays out in one location, the Hall of Silence, where 25 contestants are asked to complete a series of increasingly demanding missions without making a noise louder than 50dB — that's the equivalent of the hum of a refrigerator. The challenges, which consist of four levels of obstacles and hazards, are made trickier by the fact that contestants are playing against the clock. The winner is not only the quietest contestant but the one who has the greatest reserves of physical stamina and mental concentration.



Create evidence of your work on FRAPA's FRS (Format Registration System)

[Read more](#)



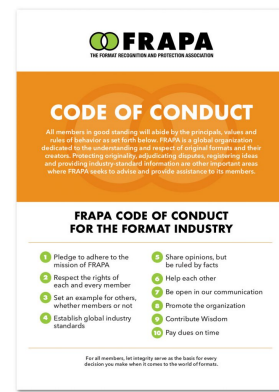
FRAPA is one of the founding partners of the The International Format Awards.

[Read more](#)

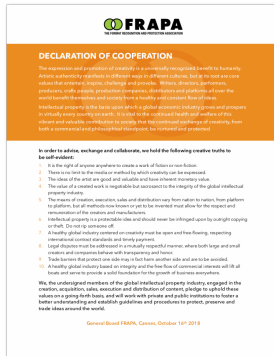
CODE OF CONDUCT

“FRAPA believes in and fights for the protection and recognition of formats worldwide. As a global organization it represents the

international community of format creators, distributors and producers and, as such, believes passionately in the principles of freedom of expression and the right to fair trade. All persons associated with the creation, production and distribution of formats should have the right to be heard without fear of political interference or injection. The opportunity to exercise these basic creative rights is to be enforced regardless of ethnicity, religious beliefs, political affiliation, race or gender. We appeal to our members to respect one another's right for free expression."



Read more



DECLARATION OF COOPERATION

Intellectual property is the basis upon which a global economic industry grows and prospers in virtually every country on earth.

Find the declaration in your own language

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