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A BETTER SET OF NORMAL



Fragility, power and connection.

To me, those are the first words that spring to mind in light of the COVID-19 pandemic. And I think they are the wake-up calls that western society might have needed for a very long time.

First of all, it has highlighted the fragility of our world. It is a scary realisation to think how drastically lives have

On a lighter note, it has highlighted the positive effects of all the technological, scientific and medical resources we do

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affect our lives and the world forever. While a handful of us have the physical, financial and mental capacity to cope with this isolation, many more lack those resources. Those are the ones experiencing the real crisis. We are all in the same storm, but we don't have the same boats.

how it has underlined the importance of real human connection. Save an alien invasion maybe, I struggle to imagine any other scenario that would have united this fractured, angry planet like this apolitical virus has. It's a global phenomenon, crossing borders, creeds and cultures.

With a pinch of irony, that last sentence could also describe the best formats — which brings me back to our corner of the entertainment world. Of course, life after lockdown will be different for the formats industry, at least in the short term. It's inevitable. We're going to see market contraction, increased competition and a lot of redundancies. As always in tough times, it'll be the survival of the fittest. The superindies will survive; many small and medium-sized companies might have to close down.

In short, it's not going to be great, but I don't believe that it will be all bad either. In fact, I think this turbulent period will result in several positive changes to the way we live, work, and treat each other and our planet. I'd even go as far as to say that I don't want things to go back to the normal we knew it before.

I hope the one thing we take from this crisis is that reducing our carbon imprint is not only imperative, but possible. Working from home has become the new normal for most of us, and events and even entire TV festivals have been taking place online. It's not the same — and it's certainly not as much fun — but business is getting done. As much as I love meeting people in person, I think the time for justifying travelling as much as we do is over.

When we eventually emerge from this moment in time, we'll have discovered new things about our leaders, our society, our friends, our enemies and ourselves. I hope that it will inspire global democratic action. Both in terms of dealing with the climate crisis, and also possible future pandemics.

And that, I believe, is where we in the formats industry come in. Our job is not to just to entertain and provide escapism, but to hold up a mirror to the world around us and help people make sense of their lives. To see the world. Realities have changed for creators and viewers alike, and will continue to do so in the aftermath of COVID-19. I hope to see that reflected in future storytelling and formats.

I'd like to leave you with this [film](#), which many emerge from the pandemic seen. I think it captures beautifully why and how the world can emerge from the pandemic

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FRAPA co-chair Jan Salling is head of BBC Studios Nordics Production and founder of formats consultancy Missing Link Media

Listen [here](#) to Jan talking about how the formats industry is faring under lockdown. “It’s a great time for bringing perspective to our industry,” he tells Tellycast

Read Phil Gurin’s think piece for Prensario Internacional about [20 years of FRAPA](#). In the early days of formats, “it was the Wild West in terms of copyright theft and infringement”, Phil writes in the leading Latin American TV-trade publication. Now, thanks to FRAPA, the formats business is a respected and respectful global industry operating to an ethical set of ground rules. But if anybody thinks FRAPA’s work here is done, think again: the age of streaming is bringing new IP-protection challenges along with new opportunities.

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FORMAT REGISTRATION

Proof, perhaps, that creativity is alive and well under lockdown can be seen in the spike in new formats that have been registered with FRAPA in the last month. Most have been submitted by small production companies, according to FRAPA managing director Bianca Rootsart, who also notes that many of the new concepts use the device of online video conferencing — a communication tool that has exploded in popularity as the business world reconvenes in cyberspace.

There has also been a rise in the number of comedy formats registered in the past month, suggesting that format creatives are reacting to the growing global demand for light-hearted content as audiences seek distraction from the COVID-19 crisis.

FRAPA SERVICES

Protection and sales in the ‘new normal’ world were among the most-asked questions to FRAPA’s hotline in April. One of FRAPA’s most popular services, the

Given the uncertainty generated by COVID-19, it is perhaps unsurprising that the hotline service has had one of its busiest-ever months. The majority of queries were focused on format protection, with many uncertain about how best to protect concepts when pitching them online, as has become the norm in recent weeks. The cancellation of MIPFormats in Cannes also sparked a number of inquiries from members seeking advice on where and how to pitch ideas outside of the big industry events.

With production shuttered for the duration and the consequent rise in repeats, there were also questions about the impact of re-runs on potential format sales into neighbouring territories.

NEW MEMBER PROFILE

Ruckus Media is only four years old — but its two founders, Mitchell Hawkes and Arwen O'Connor, have been producing award-winning documentaries and factual series for more than 20 years. Now, the New Zealand-based producers are moving into formats with a millennial-focused competition-reality series...



Describe a typical Ruckus show?

“We focus on ideas and concepts that improve people's lives — we're not into negative or mean-spirited stuff. But that doesn't mean we're all Pollyanna-ish about the world. We use grit, humour, originality and surprising concepts to make our shows stand out.”

What are you doing in the formats space?

“An RFP [request for proposals] was issued recently by a local broadcaster looking for reality shows. We decided to create our first one, which won the pitch and is now in post-production. It's an exciting concept that has tested very well with millennials,

on the way back from a meeting during which the pitch had been rejected, we figured out a way to fold the series idea into the tropes of reality television. Now, we're stepping into the world of format sales for the first time."

What's special about your approach?

"We always look after the people we film with and we make sure they're happy with what's going out into the world. We took that attitude to our reality series, too. It means you end up with a friendly, warm tone like *The Great British Bake Off* or *Lego Masters*. This feels like the kind of attitude people want to see at the moment and reflects the fact we all have to work together to deal with the current pandemic."

How are you coping with COVID-19?

"We were lucky to be in post-production on two series so, other than dealing with remote delivery, nothing much has changed. New Zealand has eliminated COVID-19, which means we'll be up and filming again soon. We're optimistic that other countries may base their productions here in the short term, providing more work for the local industry — especially as New Zealand gives great tax breaks to international co-productions."

www.ruckus.media

How worried are you about IP/format theft?

"Without wanting to sound naïve, we believe we have to trust reputable broadcasters. As someone told us, 'You can't sell a secret.!'"

Why join FRAPA?

"We hope it'll help us become better informed and protected with the format that we're about to take to market. We'd love to have a friendly, informal chat with other FRAPA members who have sold a format and would be happy to give out some advice!"

For more information, please visit:

<https://www.ruckus.media>

NEW FORMAT OF THE MONTH

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Genre: *Cooking Competition*

Producer: *CBC and The Gurin Company*

Chefs are forced to face against the clock and make an extraordinary meal using only the ingredients taken from the ordinary fridges of two everyday families?

This is the starting point of *Fridge Wars*, a new primetime culinary competition co-created by CBC, Canada's public broadcaster, and FRAPA co-chairman Phil Gurin, president of The Gurin Company. With cooking one of the few pleasures untouched by the coronavirus pandemic, the format certainly ticks the topical box. A fun primetime experience for the whole family, it also offers a fresh take on the classic chef-competition format.



Fridge Wars premiered on CBC in a primetime slot in late February, hosted by comedian Emma Hunter, and is set to launch in the US. Each episode starts with a surprise fridge raid on one of the contestant families. The host makes off with the entire contents of the fridge, from last night's left-over pizza through the condiment collection to that suspicious bag of long brown things in the permafrost of the freezer. Back in the studio, the two celebrity chefs are given 45 minutes to create a culinary masterpiece from the looted ingredients. It's then up to the family to judge the results, marking the dishes on look, taste and originality. Their scores go into the *Fridge Wars* vault and the process is then repeated with the second family and another fridge full of random ingredients. In round two, the chefs are thrown a surprise in the form of the What The Fridge (WTF) Challenge, in which they must cook their way out of culinary crisis. After the second impromptu meal has been

Relevant, inclusive and authentic, *Fridge Wars* is not only a showcase for a country's top chef and hosting talent, but it is also the perfect vehicle for brand-friendly product integration.

Photographs courtesy of CBC



FULL STREAM AHEAD?

FRAPA's Guide to Producing Shows for VOD Platforms

We are living through transformative times, not least in terms of viewing habits. The arrival of the streaming platforms has disrupted not only the formats market, but the entire entertainment ecosystem. Most TV industry professionals are optimistic about SVOD, seeing it as a brave new world of opportunity. Few, however, would disagree that navigating the transition from old to new is a challenge.

Some producers claim that the new digital platforms, being unconstrained by slots, schedules and running times, allow them greater creative freedom in terms of expanding storylines and exploring narratives. However, the more established streamers are now starting to tighten their briefs, as viewing-data collection begins to reveal which formats are performing well and which aren't. Diego Buneul, Netflix's former EMEA doc chief, summed up the changing mood at last year's Sunny Side of the Doc when he said: "We understand now that, when you do more than four or five episodes, there's a huge drop in audience. So when we are pitched projects with 10-12 episodes, we tell people to be more concise with their storytelling and to be more sharp."

FRAPA's Guide to Producing Shows for VOD Platforms is designed to help its members to adapt to the new market realities. Understanding how the formats community can and should do business with the new platforms is pivotal to the industry's future development — as is understanding that, in the SVOD space, perpetual motion is the new constant. What's true today is unlikely to be true next year, never mind the year after. "We can expect a lot of experimentation, learning on

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Meanwhile, don't be seduced by the tales of the VOD services splashing cash — analysts are predicting a more conservative approach to original content as competition increases and subscription growth flattens post COVID-19. Lastly, find out everything you can about your chosen online partner before tying the knot, the guide advises: "Remember that long hoped-for positive decision marks only the start of an even longer journey, from negotiating the most favourable deal terms... to delivery of the final product to the required technical and creative standard."

Download your copy of A FRAPA Guide to Producing Shows for VOD Platforms:

Download A FRAPA Guide to Producing Shows for VOD Platforms



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

[Read more](#)

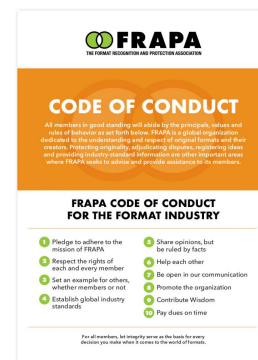


FRAPA is one of the founding partners of the The International Format Awards.

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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



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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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