

Distributor viewpoints: Rethink

This week executives from WGBH and two of Canada's leading factual sales houses, Octapix and **Rethink Entertainment**, give their views on the market on the eve of Mipdoc.

Susan Boshcoff, director of production & development, Rethink Entertainment (Canada)



Trends: "With docu-soap style reality programmes, it's not enough to invite the viewer along as a passive observer anymore. Many lifestyle broadcasters in North America are still looking for programmes that feature real 'larger than life' characters, but they want them to interact with real people in a tangible way. It's definitely a progressive step away from old school reality, which did little more than entertain."

Challenges: "With projects in development, the main challenges are timing and budgets. We definitely pitch a lot of ideas; the key is coming in at the right time, with the right project to the right broadcaster. It requires a constant survey of the networks, and staying on top of changes and trends.

"Budgets are another challenge as they have not increased on par with the cost of production, especially when it comes to HD. Often we are trying to cover a budget with multiple broadcast partners and we are

constantly looking for creative ways to create high-end content within the restraints of what's available."

Misconceptions: "There is a misconception that a proposal for a programme in development will be accepted in its first draft, original form. A lot of producers are tied to their original concepts, but they have to be open to changing and tweaking their idea to suit the needs of the broadcaster. Broadcasters know their audiences better than anyone and that's who we're catering to."

MipTV highlights: "In development, Cubers (1x60') reveals the bizarre and cut-throat world of Rubik's Cube fanatics; The Death & Life of Julius (6x60') is a male-skewed doc series about bringing a sailor's dream back to life; Arabic Fashion Files (1x60'), our first official coproduction is a film that challenges negative stereotypes about Arab women through high fashion.

"On the finished slate, The Steam Room (22x30') is a sexy romp that answers every question either sex may have or be afraid to ask; Slip-pin': Ten Years With the Bloods (1x90') is a new doc that follows the lives of five LA gang members over a decade. It was coproduced by the godfather of hip-hop, Kurtis Blow, with music by Run (Run DMC) and Grand Master Flash."

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