



PRESS REVIEW

MARCH 2016



NEWEN DISTRIBUTION LAUNCHES NEW FORMATS AT MIPTV 2016

Newen Distribution, the distribution arm of Newen, introduces 5 new exciting formats: TAHITI QUEST, the ultimate family adventure, ON FIRE, a brand new game show, PASSION MANSION, a love cure for broken hearts, THE BEST MATCHMAKERS, an innovative dating show and WELCOME TO MY LIFE, the total immersion of a bachelorette into the life of 4 different suitors.

TAHITI QUEST (weekly 90') is a new family adventure taking place on the dream island of Tahiti. During five weeks, five families (kids and parents) compete in physical & think game challenges. Broadcasted prime-time on French family channel Gulli, it is now up to 4 seasons.

ON FIRE (daily 30') is a new TV game show from Aurélien Lipiansky, the creator of *Divided*. It features a duo of contestants who will try to save as much money as they can from the flames by answering general knowledge questions. In front of them, 10 checks from 1000€ to 1 million euros! The rule is simple: At each right answer the smallest check will burn; At each wrong answer the biggest one will burn in flames!

THE BEST MATCHMAKER (daily 30') is a surprising and innovative dating competition where 3 matchmakers compete to be the best matchmaker of the week. Each matchmaker introduces 1 potential partner to the singleton of the day and organizes his/her perfect romantic date. After the 3 dates, the singleton chooses his favourite match. At the end of the week, the matchmaker credited with the higher number of points wins the competition !

PASSION MANSION (daily 30') is a new factual entertainment TV show, broadcasted daily afternoon on Free DTT commercial broadcaster NT1 (France). During eight weeks, 6 boys and 6 girls, who have experienced problems in their lovelife, will live together in a dream villa, looking for a fresh start. With the help of a love coach running activities for them and selecting singles to date with, the broken hearts will try to find the true love. Bachelors live in a second house near the villa and are waiting to be picked up for a date. PASSION MANSION fully integrates innovative technologies to the dating genre as viewers can see on-screen each of the SMS being exchanged by the candidates and anonymous singles can interact with the broken hearts through a real dating website in order to perhaps be invited to join them in the Villa.

WELCOME TO MY LIFE (daily 30') is a brand new original dating show in which a bachelorette gets to spend 24 hours in the life of 4 different suitor's life's environments. She will visit each suitor's home, meet his friends and do one activity of his choice. At the very last episode of the week, the bachelorette will choose her ideal match based on her week's experience and finally meet him !

NEWEN DISTRIBUTION PRESENTS ITS NEW DOCUMENTARY LINE-UP AT MIPDOC

Newen Distribution brings several hot documentaries produced by CAPA Presse.

Newen Distribution will showcase the first images of its event film **TERROR STUDIOS** (1x52' or 1x90') which is commissioned by Canal+. The film offers an in-depth decoding on ISIS propaganda, and reveals how the terrorist organization produces its clips using our pop culture codes to turn them against ourselves. This mind-blowing investigation has already been pre-sold to 15 international broadcasters.

CHERNOBYL OUT OF CONTROL (1x52') is an autopsy of the nuclear tragedy for its 30 years' anniversary. More than just focusing on the disaster's devastating effects, the film explores the technical aspects that led to the nuclear plant explosion, using interviews, stock footage filmed during the tragedy as well as a technical approach tailored to a large audience.

WHO'S THE KILLER (95x52') the French hit factual crime series, is back with new investigations for a total of 95 episodes. Each film takes a fresh look at a crime that made headlines. Through exploring the chain of dramatic events, **WHO'S THE KILLER** compels a mix of testimonies (family of the victims, police officers, attorneys and legal experts) with archive footages and reenactments to give viewers an in-depth look at the most fascinating criminal cases.

HIGH TECH BORDERS (1x52') takes us on a worldwide investigation on how borders are getting more and more technology driven and the business it represents. Over the past decade, Europe transformed its borders into militarized zones and entered a high-stakes battle with the U.S. and Israel in the race to control the border surveillance industry.

THE ROADS OF THE KALACHNIKOV (1x52') follows a reporter on the roads taken by gun trading throughout Europe. It shows how the Kalashnikov has moved on from guerilla warfare to become a mainstay of "sensitive" inner-city districts. From the Balkans to the ghettos of France, this investigation takes us into the networks of illegal underground weapon trafficking. Broadcasted in Germany on ZDF, it gathered 1.85 million viewers with a 9.3% market share.

WORDS OF MIGRANTS CHILDREN (1x52') is a film about the recent migrations taking a different standpoint. It is only told by children coming from Syria, Afghanistan, Iraq and other lands. They are flooding into Lampedusa, Italy and Lesbos, Greece, fleeing war and hoping to find a way into Europe. This original film allows children to tell their own experience of exile and describe the life they dream of.

NEWEN
DISTRIBUTION

USTICA'S CRASH (1x52') deeply investigates the mysterious plane crash of the DC9 which leaves Bologna in 1980 with 81 passengers and disappears forever in the sea near the Italian island of Ustica. It focuses on 35 years of state's lies and manipulations, from governments, militaries and secret services of Italy, France, the United States and Libya.

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NEWEN DISTRIBUTION PRESENTS AN EXCITING MIPTV DRAMA LINE-UP

Newen Distribution comes up with a great line-up thanks to the launch of new series and TV movies but also counting on some of its already successful returning series.

First of all, Newen Distribution is proud to launch « BEYOND THE WALLS », a 3x52' stylistic fantasy tale series centered in a young woman who gets trapped within the walls of a mysterious house she inherited. A closed door story that flirts with several genres in a unique and intriguing atmosphere. Beautifully directed by Hervé Hadmar (**Witnesses**) and starring Veerle Baetens (**Broken Circle Breakdown, White Queen, Code 37**), Geraldine Chaplin (**Doctor Zhivago, Nashville, The Impossible**) and newcomer Francois Deblock. The series is scheduled to premiere late 2016 on Arte.

CANDICE RENOIR (38x52'), the hit police series, now airing in 8 countries, is back with a 4th season for a total of 38 episodes. After the historical success of the third season, the female detective makes a very expected come-back to solve new cases.

AFTER I'M GONE (1x90') is a heartbreaking modern drama based on the true story of Marie Laure Picat and her book. This TV movie, broadcasted on March 7th on TF1, scored an amazing 6.7 million viewers with an impressive 27.6% market share. Starring Alexandra Lamy, it tells the fight of a mother, diagnosed with a general cancer, who will do her best to protect her family and ensure to her 4 children the brightest possible future after she's gone.

LEBOWITZ VS LEBOWITZ (8x52'), the latest character driven procedural series on France 2, immediately met a huge success with more than 4,3 million viewers for its launch. Every episode chronicles a legal investigation carried out by two rivaling attorneys, starring Clémentine Célerié.

STOLEN BABIES (1x90') is a new TV movie to be broadcasted soon on France 2. Based on real events between France and Spain, it follows the life of Ines Barras and depicts the destiny of a devastated mother desperately searching for her daughter after a mysterious and tragic separation. Blending family drama, old wounds and youthful lie, it features Sandrine Bonnaire (Best Actress César for **Sans**).

NINA (18x52'), the French medical drama series is coming back with a 2nd season of 10 new episodes. After the success of the first season on France 2 (3.7 million average of viewers / 16.30 pda), the series will soon makes its international debuts in Brazil (Globosat).

THE BASTILLE KILLER: A WOMAN'S FIGHT (1x90') is a breath-taking TV movie based on the true story of a police commissioner hunting down the infamous East Paris serial killer who's targeting young women walking home alone at night. This realistic psychological thriller, featuring Mathilde Seigner and Philippe Torreton has scored the best season audience achieving a 24.5% market share and attracting 6.1 million viewers on France 2.

WITNESSES (14x52') sees the arrival of Audrey Fleurot, (**The Intouchables, Spiral, Un village français**), as lead actress of its 2nd season. Marie Dompnier and Jan Hammenecker will return as detectives Sandra Winckler and Justin. Newen Distribution was rewarded for the French Export award for best drama series in 2015 for Witnesses season 1.

Last but not least, Newen Distribution will also preview its new high profile drama OURO (8x52'), a modern day thriller adventure series set in the Amazonian jungle. Part of the Canal+ original dramas (**The Returned, Versailles, Spiral, Braquo**), OURO tells the story of Vincent, a 20-year-old geology student, who goes to French Guiana to do an internship in a gold mining company. His love for danger prompts him to join forces with the local "gold lord," Serra to explore an abandoned mine...

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**GLOBOSAT ACQUIRES NEWEN DISTRIBUTION'S
MEDICAL SERIES NINA**

The French medical drama series (18x52') produced by Barjac Production which aired on France 2 has been sold to GloboSat and will start airing soon on +Gast.

Following the success of the first season's broadcasting, the second season (10x52') will start airing in France next Spring.

NINA :

Nina, 39 years old, trainee nurse and a mother with a kid!

Forced to interrupt her studies in medicine for 10 years to raise her daughter Lily, who was stricken with cancer, Nina put her career on hold. Now that Lily is cured, 39-year-old Nina intends to take life back into her own hands by becoming a nurse at the Madeleine Brès Hospital.

There's never a moment's rest on the Internal Medicine ward; plus Nina has to cope with the defiance of her superiors, who merely see her as the ex-wife of their own boss, Dr Costa, and who are perturbed when she diagnoses patients as well as she cares for them. But Nina is passionate about her work and refuses to bow down before her seniors. Every day, she has to deal with the moods of Dr Proust, who dreams of becoming Head of Department, with constant questioning from young intern Kevin, with Léo, her mentor and roommate, and with the need to identify the sometimes-misleading symptoms of the patients on her ward.

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Globosat acquires Nina

Posted By *AndyDickens* On 30-03-2016 @ 8:51 am In News | [Comments Disabled](#)

NEWS BRIEF: Brazilian broadcast group Globosat has acquired Newen Distribution's medical drama Nina.

The 18x52' series, produced by Barjac Production for France 2, will air on Globosat's +Gast channel shortly. A 10x52' second run of the show, which follows a 39-year-old trainee nurse, has just been ordered by France 2.

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French Fusion

French television veteran **Bibiane**

Godfroid will be one of the keynote speakers at MIPFormats this year, the formats conference unfolding on the eve of MIPTV.

★ It will be her first industry address since taking up the post of CEO in charge of content at Newen Group last November, shortly after the acquisition of a 70% controlling stake in the company by broadcaster TF1.

She will unveil two new formats developed in-house by the group, "Dance Floor Date and On Fire". The latter – a game show in which contestants try to save as much money as they can from the flames by answering general knowledge questions – has been devised by another recent Newen recruit, games creator Aurélien Lipiansky, who previously worked for Talpa and then FreemantleMedia France.

Speaking to "Écran total" ahead of the presentation, Godfroid explains one of her objectives in her new role is to make Newen – already a market leader in French-language scripted and factual content – a key player in light entertainment, or so-called "flux" programming.

Many of the industry professionals in the audience at the MIPFormat presentation will also be eager to hear what she has to say about Newen Group's general direction following its acquisition by TF1.

The €300m TF1-Newen deal prompted controversy in France after the group's main client, state-owned France Télévisions – which spends roughly €100m a year on its programmes – protested the purchase of their main supplier by a private competitor.

The public broadcasting group suspended negotiations for future projects with Newen and it is still not clear if future series of popular shows like "Plus belle la vie", "Faites entrer l'accusé" or "Les Maternelles" will air again on its channels.

One of the first challenges for Godfroid – a respected industry figure with her long experience as head of programming at M6 and before that as CEO of FreemantleMedia France – will be calming the waters. "Our aim is to work with all the television groups and



Newen has moved further into the international market with its high-end drama series "Versailles".

associate ourselves with talents with links to all the channels," she says.

At the time of the deal, TF1 said that one of the drivers for the acquisition was a desire to branch out internationally. But many in the television industry question how taking a majority stake in Newen will help the broadcaster achieve this.

Although CEO Fabrice Larue has attempted to steer Newen in a more international direction in recent years – with shows like "Versailles", produced by subsidiary Capa Drama, and formats such as "Harry" that sold well abroad – most the programmes produced by the 30 companies in the group are aimed at the French market.

Godfroid points out, however, that the deal with TF1 gives Larue the means to push on with his international plans. "Domestically the deal doesn't change much. Our aim is to work with all the TV stations, equally, without favouring one channel over another. Internationally it changes everything. It means Newen now has extra funds to expand internationally and move rapidly when it sees an opportunity," she says. "It doesn't change much in terms of co-productions. Newen has already proved it can do high-end international series with 'Versailles'. Where the deal is important is in enabling the company to acquire distribution or production companies internationally."

No such purchases are currently on the table, says Godfroid, but Newen's management is researching various options across Europe. "It's not my remit so I can't say much more than that," says Godfroid (see page 8).

Aside from bolstering Newen's in-house development of flux programming, Godfroid wants the group to produce more high-end series in the vein of "Versailles" and embark on bigger budget, international documentaries.

She says her biggest challenge will be to maintain the status quo and ensure that the companies in the Newen group continue to produce content that represents "value and quality".

"We're the biggest company in terms of fiction and documentary and reportage and the third for flux. It seems obvious but maintaining that is already a huge challenge," she says.

Operationally, little will change at the group, she says. The aim is for its three key subsidiaries, the Telfrance Group, Capa and 17 Juin Production to continue operating independently within the group. Its in-house sales and development divisions will also remain intact. "There are no plans for a vertical integration. The idea from the start was for Newen to retain its independence," says Godfroid.

The TF1-Newen deal is among a wave of mergers and acquisitions to hit the French television sector in recent months.

Merger and acquisition wave

The biggest among them has been the Banijay Group and Zodiak Media merger. The merger has created a group spanning 17 territories with revenues in the \$1 billion range, in a league with European production giants FreemantleMedia and Shine Endemol.

A handful of top staff – including Zodiak Media CEO Marc Antoine d'Halluin and international distribution chief Emmanuelle Namiech – have departed the company after the deal went through but most of the group's 5,000 posts are expected to remain intact.

Under the deal, the new entity is 73.8% owned by a company co-owned by French businessman Stéphane Courbit's LOV Group (50.1%) and De Agostini Group's DeA Communications (49.9%) with multimedia conglomerate Vivendi taking a 26.3% minority stake.

It is the latest in a string of acquisitions for cash-rich Vivendi – owner of troubled French pay TV giant Canal+ and Universal Music Group – driven by its desire to invest in original programming and sports as it pursues plans to create a European content and distribution giant on a par with US players like Netflix.

Bolloré shopping spree

Vivendi CEO Vincent Bolloré, who had a war chest of around \$10b at the end of 2015 due to asset sales, currently has his eye on several other acquisitions.

In the lead-up to MIPTV, the company was reportedly on the verge of signing a content and distribution agreement with Silvio Berlusconi's private Italian broadcaster Mediaset.

According to reports in the Italian press, there could be an exchange of around 3% of each company's shares with Vivendi also taking a stake in the Mediaset Premium pay-TV platform.

Some analysts suggests the deal could be a precursor to Vivendi buying Mediaset outright but Berlusconi told Italian media that he would never sell the whole company to Bolloré, however much he respected his ambition to build a pan-Europe media giant.

In the backdrop, Vivendi's film and high-end TV division StudioCanal has been attempting to become a major European production player with the acquisition and joint creation of a string of top drama production houses across Europe, including the UK's Red and sister production boutique Guilty Party, as well as taking stakes in Germany's Tandem and setting up the Nordic firm Sam.

The jury appears out on whether the Vivendi strategy will deliver the European giant of Bolloré's dreams. "Does Vivendi have the capacity to do it? Yes. Do they have a strategy? I'm not sure," says François Godard, European Media and Telecoms analyst at London-based research firm Enders.)

He suggests StudioCanal's slow and steady approach – which pre-dates Bolloré taking control of parent company Canal+ – makes good sense but questions whether it is coherent with Vivendi's recent acquisitions. "Canal+ and StudioCanal have been advancing their pawn in a careful manner for years, step by step but it doesn't seem to fit with Bolloré's strategy. He is looking towards the Latin world while Canal+ is looking to the Anglo-Saxon world," says Godard.

Altice

As Bolloré figures out how to best exploit and create synergies between Vivendi's various entertainment and media subsidiaries, Israeli-French billionaire Patrick Drahi has also entered the sports and entertainment market, looking for premium TV content to draw clients to the services of his telecom operator Numericable-SFR.

Last July, his holding company Altice Group took control of French news channel BFM TV. Under the deal, Altice also took a share in the NextRadioTV Group – which owns the news channel as well as the thematic channel RMC Découverte and radio services RMC and BFM Business – with an option to buy it outright in 2019.

Altice already owned a string of thematic channels including Vivolta, Shorts TV and Kombat Sport.

All of the group's audiovisual media units were recently regrouped in a single building in Paris 15th arrondissement close to the offices of TF1 and France Télévisions.

The group has also muscled in on sports rights. Last November, it secured the rights to broadcast the English Premier League in France and Monaco for three years – at an annual price tag of around €100m.

The group now appears to be moving into high-end original content. In February, it hired Nora Melhi, the respected head of drama at Shine France who worked on series such as Tunnel and Malattera, as head of original creation and non-linear content across all Altice's territories, which include France, Portugal and the US.

Isabelle Giordano, head of French cinema promotions body Unifrance, also briefly joined the Numericable-SFR board in mid-March but stepped down after three days in the position, reportedly due to pressure from the film industry which felt the position was incompatible.

Godard questions whether Altice truly has the patience and commitment to develop a successful original content unit. "Altice's plan is to use television to sell its broadband services. In the same way BT is using sport in the UK," he says. "Does it really make sense for the company to launch into original series. Pulling off good original content requires time, investment and savoir-faire. It took Netflix the best part of two years to pull its first original



"Section de recherches" ("Prise au piège") with Xavier Deluc and Franck Semonin (Auteurs Associés/TF1).

French series Marseille together. It's not something you do overnight."

Talent spotting

Beyond the big corporate acquisitions and mergers on the table over the last few months, there has also been a wave of talent-driven deals such as FreemantleMedia France's acquisition of Thomas Bourguignon's production company Kwai and creation of a new scripted drama company Fontaram with creative partners François Aramburu and Pascal Fontanille.

Monica Galer says the aim of both operations was to secure talent that could help FreemantleMedia France break into the scripted drama scene. Until now, the company has focused on light entertainment programming. "We've wanted to get into fiction for some years now," says Galer. "By acquiring Kwai and setting up Fontaram with two people who we strongly believed in we were able to accelerate our entry into the fiction market." Both deals have proven fruitful. Bourguignon was in the middle of production on political intrigue drama Baron Noir for Canal+, with respected film director Ziad Doueiri at the helm, at the time of the deal.

A wave of talent-driven acquisitions is also sweeping the French TV sector.

The show, which aired on Canal+ at the beginning of March, proved to be something of a catch-up hit drawing another 2.5 million viewers on top of 500,000 to 800,000 spectators per episode who watched each episode on linear television.

A second series could be in offing and Bourguignon is also working on another high-end drama for Arte and has orders for a pilot from TF1.

Fontaram, meanwhile, is in the throes of shooting "Meurtres à Grasse" for France 3, the latest installment in the state-backed channel's Meurtre à TV movies series and has another two TV movies on the boil.

Galer says she may well make other acquisitions in the coming year but reiterates that they are not part of a larger expansionist plan by parent company RTL, but rather prompted by a desire to move into scripted drama content.

Her words are chimed with a recent interview with Guillaume de Posch, CEO of the RTL Group, FreemantleMedia's parent company, who is a keynote speaker at MIPTV this year. He told French financial newspaper Les Echos that he wanted to shift the group to produce more high-end drama rather than mainly light entertainment formats as is currently the case.

Other deals

Other recent acquisitions in the French television sector include AB Groupe's acquisition of veteran producer Pascale Breugnot's Ego Productions.

Under the deal, AB Groupe picked up Ego's catalogue of popular drama series such as the ongoing "Alice Nevers The Judge" is a Woman and Doc Martin, starring popular actor Thierry Lhermitte, as well as a number of factual titles.

Breugnot – whose long career spans provocative talks shows such as "Sexy Folies" in the 1980s and reality shows in the 1990s – is believed to be developing new drama and factual shows under the accord.

Prior to the Ego Acquisition, AB Groupe also bought Auteur Associés, producers of the procedural drama Sections de recherches which is currently shooting its 11th season.

Company boss Claude Berda is believed to be on the lookout for other acquisitions. In the backdrop,

tentative talks to become part of the growing Altice family appear to have been shelved.

More activity predicted for 2016

Many in the French television industry expect the current period of consolidation to continue apace into 2016.

There are question marks, for example, over the future of Lagardère Studios. The group was rebranded from Lagardère Entertainment and restructured last year with the aim of growing the unit and giving it more of an international footprint.

In the backdrop, its parent the Lagardère Group has been cutting back on its print media activities, saying it wants to focus on audiovisual. There are rumours, however, that Lagardère Studios may also be spun-off.

Media analyst Godard suggests it would be the sort of purchase that could interest Vivendi. "It's a strong division with a lot of savoir-faire, experience in co-production and a strong portfolio," he comments.

Independent producer Matthieu Viala – founder of Paris-based MakingProd who also manages the audiovisual grouping Makeover, associating several production indies including JPG Films and Scarlett Productions – suggests that the current merger and acquisition activity is nothing new and the consolidation afoot has already been seen in other territories across Europe, with the likes of ITV's buying sprees in recent years. "I suppose where it differs this time is that it's focused on drama production. Up until the distribution of flux programming has been well managed whereas there are no really big European players managing the distribution of drama. That's what some of the actors in the sector are trying to set up now," he says.

The lower level acquisition deals currently sweeping the French industry he says are a natural phenomenon seen in any industry relying on talent, he notes. "It's a cyclical thing. Groups get built up, buy in talent, the talent stays for a while, gets restless, moves on, leaves and sets up a new activity. I think that's the nature of creative, talent-led industries the world over," he adds.

Newen's Godfroid suggests that France is playing catch-up with the consolidation movements already seen in the UK and Germany. "The audiovisual sector in France is undergoing a period of restructuring, both at the level of the independents and the groups. This re-organisation of the market has already happened at an international level with deals like the Shine-Endemol merger. We're just started a little later here. It will take time for the sector to digest what is going on because the paradigms are really changing."

Melanie Goodfellow