

October 16, 2017

Breakfast workshop on the Creative Europe MEDIA MIPCOM umbrella stand

### **ANIMATION BREAKFAST: HOW CAN YOUR IP BECOME A GLOBAL HIT?**

Moderated by **Christophe Erbès** and **Daniel Zimmermann**, media-stands.eu experts, with panelists:

**Lars Wagner**, Vice President Digital Innovation, The Walt Disney Company EMEA

**Olivier Dumont**, Managing Director, Entertainment One Family & Entertainment One Licensing

Daniel and Christophe led a discussion on how to find smarter ways to connect with funders by having a vision for your property during the development phase that includes the development of a brand and associated values, paving the way to creating a worldwide success.

- The key is to understand the market and what is out there, so that you can find your niche.
- The vision for your brand can be similar to something that has already been done, but you have to show how you'll do it better.
- For Entertainment One it is key that what they take on is complementary to what they already have instead of cannibalising it.
- For licensing you are limited by physical shelf space; you need to be one of the best properties in your target demographic to be successful.
- It is the "golden age of content", especially where commissions are concerned; while in licensing, the odds are not in your favour – you need to be very focused and do your market study very well, to know where your property will fit.
- It is rare to find that "white space" that your commercial proposition can fill, and it is important to employ someone who can present in an effective way where your property fits in. It is easier to find someone to produce and develop an idea afterwards.
- For Disney, three key components are: 1) a believable world; 2) something you can build on; and 3) characters that are appealing (attention to detail is important here). Your property has to have an overarching theme that ties into core values. For example, Sofia the 1<sup>st</sup>: values are being brave, having fun in learning, believing in herself.
- If you want to succeed in licensing, you have to know what aspects of your show can become retail products. It's good to have ideas about this from inception, both for physical merchandise and for digital products, which are "make or break" for IP success.
- Entertainment One's example of a hit show that doesn't generate a lot of revenue is Ben & Holly, because the concept does not translate to licensing and merchandising. Despite its appeal, the show is not dependent enough on its main characters. To merchandise successfully, the main characters have to be aspirational – this explains the success of, for example, Peppa Pig or Frozen. It is also important to think longer term about how your world can develop over the years.
- It is hard to make money on preschool-targeted programmes without licensing/merchandising. For the 6-9 year demographic licensing and merchandising is more difficult so TV and digital sales/commissioning are more key.
- It is good to pitch your idea at the very beginning of the inception period if you have a really original idea that is a first. In this case just one paragraph of description can be enough to sell

the idea. If you have something that is similar to things done before and is just a quality, heart-felt programme, it's necessary to push harder and develop the idea more.

- To create games based on a TV programme, generally something that has simply been licensed is not going to be good. The best games have the involvement of the show's creators.
- Finally, although it is important to be strategic, it is important that "the formula can't overshadow the heart."