

C21 kids

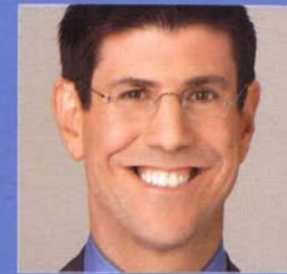
FALL
2008



Media millionaire
Waheed Alli on his
plans for Chorion



Top picks likely to
stick at Cartoon
Forum and Mip Jr



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The international children's entertainment business magazine

Channel 21 international - It's about content

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KRO falls for Lemming series

Amsterdam-based producer Lemming Film is developing a new shortform animation series for Dutch pubcaster KRO involving 3D stop-motion characters on a 2D illustrated background.

Rintje (13x5') targets a three- to six-year-old audience, exploring the challenges and learning curves experienced by this young demo through an anthropomorphised dog.

In the series, Rintje begins school, loses a tooth, stays away from his parents for the night and gets his first injection. The show will also concentrate on Rintje's relationships with his two best friends, his mother and his grandmother.

The series is based on the books by writer and illustrator Sieb Posthuma, who will draw the backgrounds for the TV show and assist in the development and production of the stop-motion to ensure his distinctive style is carried across to the new medium.

The books will be adapted by award-winning Dutch screenwriter Mieke de Jong, who has worked on several other

Lemming Film children's properties including the feature *Lepel*.

While Lemming Film has secured KRO as a broadcaster, it is still seeking co-financing and broadcast partnerships and will debut the loose tooth episode as a pilot at Cartoon Forum in Germany.

Lemming Film's production partners for the series are Pedri Animation, which will create the 3D animation, and German studio Motion Works.

Vegetable hero picked for Forum

French production company Basora Animazioa and Spanish toon house Somuga Produktora have teamed up to develop a new animated series called *Le Velu: The Adventures of Captain Vegeto*.

The comedy toon is about a superhero who protects plant life and is being unveiled to potential copro partners and investors at Cartoon Forum in Germany in September, alongside 60 other projects.

German kids' channel KiKa is heading to Cartoon Forum seeking animation with a long shelf life. Sebastian Debertin, head of fiction, acquisition and coproduction, speaks to **Martin Buxton**.

KiKa's goals

As a joint venture between German public television channels ARD and ZDF, KiKa (short for Der Kinderkanal, or The Children's Channel) has the same responsibilities as a PSB – which means trying to be everything to everyone, albeit with a kids' skew.

The channel has a target demo aged under 13, and its creative ambition is "to offer high-quality programmes for young viewers, to address our viewers' needs and interests and to supply them with orientation in life and transport the values of a humanistic society," says Sebastian Debertin, KiKa's head of fiction, acquisition and coproduction.

Sitting under a PSB umbrella means the channel has a social responsibility to inform as well as entertain, says Debertin. Explaining that while KiKa doesn't look to continue school lessons by other means, it does try to tackle issues its young viewers may have to face.

Building the correct relationship with the audience is a real concern for KiKa, even a social responsibility. "We feel we are a mouthpiece for children's opinions and represent their interests," says Debertin. "Any potential sellers or copro partners must share the same values."

The channel favours youth-friendly themes presented from a child's perspective, and stories and characters that the target audience



Making a splash – KiKa's morning preschool slot features *Dive, Olly, Dive!*

"Children are inquisitive," Debertin continues. "They want to know about things, and KiKa provides up-to-date information for children every day."

KiKa's schedule targets three main age groups, 3-5, 6-9 and 10-plus, and includes slots aimed at these age brackets. Morning programming is dedicated to popular preschoolers such as *Au Schwarte!* (*Jakers! The Adventures of Piggieley Winks*), *Kleiner Roter Traktor* (*Little Red Tractor*), or *Tauch, Timmy, Tauch!* (*Dive, Olly, Dive!*), along with in-

house productions *Mit-Mach-Muehle* (*Will-Ya-Join-Us-Mill*) and *Tanzalarm!* (*Dance Alert!*).

In March 2007, KiKa introduced an afternoon programming slot for pre-teens, which has seen success with live-action series such as *Schloss Einstein* (*Einstein High*) from Askania Media Filmproduktion, a soap based in a boarding school; *Krimi.de* from Studio Hamburg, a crime series for children; and fantasy series *H2O – Ploetzlich Meerjungfrau* (*H2O – Just Add Water*).

Children's primetime starts at 18.15 with preschool shows including *Kleiner Dodo* (*Little Dodo*), *Hexe Lilli* (*Lilly The Witch*) and *Rudi & Trudi*. From 19.25, the channel broadcasts pre-teen edutainment shows

Lizzy McGuire and *Blue Water High*.

Debertin explains that KiKa's programming is split into 60% acquired and coproduced and 40% locally produced, aimed at all age groups from preschool to tweens. Its notable successes have included acquisitions such as *Teletubbies* (Ragdoll Productions), *The Tribe* (Cloud Nine, Channel Five), *Pocoyo* and *The Secret World of Benjamin Bear* (Amberwood Productions).

"The mixture of acquired and locally produced shows offers great variety," says Debertin. "It shows different perspectives on the world, and introduces viewers to other cultures. Also, acquired programming offers good animation and storytelling, core values and universal stories, and it is attractive to kids around the world."

One area KiKa does not stray into, however, is acquired formats, and instead prefers to locally produce original content.

As for programming for the coming year, Debertin says the network is always interested in hearing new ideas, for both animation and live-action, as long as it has something to teach kids. "We're look for animation with strong storytelling, innovative narratives, accessible design and a long shelf life. It must have the potential for more than 26 episodes, and be aimed at mainly the 6-9 demo with a good mix of

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The channel favours youth-friendly themes presented from a child's perspective, and stories and characters that the target audience can relate to. Through a diverse mix of magazine programming, interactive live shows, plus fictional and entertainment programming, KiKa's mission, Debertin says, is to accompany children in their "educational development."



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Sebastian Debertin, KiKa

house productions *Mit-Mach-Muehle (Will-Ya-Join-Us-Mill)* and *Tanzalarm! (Dance Alert!)*.

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variety," says Debertin. "It shows different perspectives on the world, and introduces viewers to other cultures. Also, acquired programming offers good animation and storytelling, core values and universal stories, and it is attractive to kids around the world."

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As for programming for the coming year, Debertin says the network is always interested in hearing new ideas, for both animation and live-action, as long as it has something to teach kids. "We're look for animation with strong storytelling, innovative narratives, accessible design and a long shelf life. It must have the potential for more than 26 episodes, and be aimed at mainly the 6-9 demo, with a good mix of entertainment and education.

"But we're also interested in live-action series for older kids, aged 10-plus, with universal stories, relatable characters and good storytelling, that take their viewers and their problems seriously and address kids' issues." ■

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Serious Ocean sails around the globe

TV distributor All3Media International has announced a raft of new deals for CBBC's *Serious* franchise as it kicks off with its latest series, *Serious Ocean*.

Although launched only in July, *Serious Ocean* has been licensed to TV Ontario in Canada, TV3 in New Zealand and YLE in Sweden.

The series offers the biggest expedition in the franchise, so far as eight young adventurers travel to the southern-most part of Chile, searching out unexplored islands in the heavy seas of the Pacific to survey penguins and sea mammals, both on land and under water.

Serious Ocean joins CBBC's *Serious Jungle*, *Serious Desert*, *Serious Arctic*, *Serious Amazon* and *Serious Andes*.

Louise Pedersen, MD at All3Media International, said: "The *Serious* strand has rapidly become one of the mainstays of our children's factual catalogue. An increasing number of international broadcasters are recognising the universally informative and environmental theme running through each series."

Dinosaurs brought back for more

Big Apple-based kids entertainment house 4Kids Entertainment will be at Mipcom 2008 with 26 new half-hours of its time-travel toon *Dinosaur King*, hoping for a number of new international sales.

The property, a mix of cel and CGI, follows a group of children searching for the secrets that can bring dinosaurs back to life. In the US, it airs on the 4KidsTV block on Fox.

The show has been sold on both sides of the Atlantic, to channels including Mediaset (Italy), RTL2 (Germany), France 3, Canal J (France), TV2 (Denmark), TV4 (Sweden), MTV 3 (Finland), TVI (Portugal), Jetix (UK, Scandinavia, Spain, Latin America), MNet (South Africa) and YTV (Canada).

Brian Lacey, exec VP for international at 4Kids Entertainment, said the company expected to close deals for the new episodes with a number of broadcasters at Mipcom, including in the UK, Ireland and Australia.

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