



Branded Entertainment The 2023 Review

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K7.Media

INSIGHT
REPORT

Contents

Introduction: What happened in BFP in 2023?	3
1. The Landscape Changed	5
2. The Big Production Groups Got Serious	7
3. Some Territories Grew Their BFP, Some Adapted Their Models	19
4. Streamers Started Figuring Out How Branded Entertainment Could Fit Their Model	26
5. Some Brand Categories Were More Active Than Others	32
6. Brands & New Platforms Started Partnering On 'Content With Impact'	33
7. Everyone Worried About Measurement	36
About K7 Media	39
Appendix: List of Titles	40

Introduction: What happened in BFP in 2023?

In the three years K7 Media have been producing in-depth reports on Branded Entertainment (or Branded Funded Programming/ BFP), we have seen increasing numbers of successful examples continuing to appear in multiple territories and genres: we laid out which territories and genres in our first report [Brand Funded Programming: Why It Matters Now](#) in January 2021, then tracked how streamers were differing in their approaches to BFP in [Brand Funded Programming in the VOD World](#) in December 2021, before diving into [Brand Funded Scripted](#) in November 2022.

With each new successful case study to point to, and recommissions for brand funded formats like *The World Cook* (Amazon), *Changing Rooms*, *The Great Garden Revolution* (both Channel 4) and *Cooking With the Stars* (ITV, now in production on series 4), it seemed that the appetite from brands to do more in this area would grow.

But despite plenty of activity, Branded Entertainment in 2023 is a mixed picture. Given the tough economic climate, understandably cautious brands are tightening their belts when it comes to investing in big or risky new TV ideas.

So for this end of the year round-up report, we've spoken to sources in multiple territories to get their sense of the current BFP commissioning landscape - which bits are stalling, which bits growing, what are the challenges, case studies and new models worth noting in the year just gone, and to come.

And at the back of this report - the thing we get asked for more than anything else - a list of all the latest examples of BFP globally that we've managed to track or unearth this year.

Here's **seven key things** that happened in BFP in 2023...

Author



CLARE THOMPSON - Non-Executive Director

Clare is Non-Exec Director at K7 Media, regularly writing and presenting on global content trends for their international broadcast and production clients, and at festivals around the world.

Alongside this she runs development and pitching workshops, team training sessions and channel/ commissioning strategy projects for clients including the BBC, Channel 4, ITV Studios (UK & US), Endemol Shine, All3Media and MTV, and for most of the major Chinese broadcasters through the UK's China Media Centre. She consults on the development slates of several indies in France, Ireland, and the UK and runs masterclasses and panels for Indielab's various accelerator programmes, as well as for Channel 4's Emerging Indie Fund companies.

Clare's background is in entertainment and factual entertainment development: in-house at ITV from 2000 - 2008, she headed up their Entertainment Development team, steering work on international formats and returners like *Ant & Dec's Saturday Night Takeaway*, before moving over to run internal innovation unit Imagine. In recent years she has also Exec Produced documentaries including *Girls With Autism* (ITV) and *Trafficked in Suburbia* (YouTube's Real Stories channel).

1. The Landscape Changed

In a world of TikTok and 60 second attention spans, linear advertising is coming increasingly under threat. Fast-forwarding, ad-free subscriptions and streaming have all contributed to a world where adverts are escapable; hence the attraction of integrating a brand within content itself.

And yet brand funded content still remains a small proportion of the content that gets made in most territories. We don't have global figures – it's very hard to measure across territories - but as an example, in the UK out of £3.2 billion spent on programming in the UK each year, generally no more than £100 million is spent on BFP – usually somewhere between £50 and £80 million. It's a small percentage and can fluctuate year to year depending on spend, appetite for risk, and the ad market.

But as the cost of living crisis tightened production budgets across the globe, broadcasters and production companies are being forced to seek out alternative methods of maintaining production standards. This was exacerbated by the writers' strike in the US, which impacted international co-productions, leading to an increased interest in brand funding as a method of offsetting the fall in cash in the production sector.

And then the **Barbie** movie came along, and reminded everyone that content with a brand at its heart can also still be cool, popular and culturally significant, as well as shifting lots of product.



BARBIE THEATRICAL RELEASE, 2023

**LUCI SANAN**

FOUNDER OF 53
DEGREES
NORTH MEDIA LTD.

As 53 Degrees North's Luci Sanan put it, on Content London's 'Branded Entertainment Renaissance' panel, *"Barbie has made people realise you can influence the culture with branded entertainment"*, and from UTA's Sam Glynne, *"it made branded entertainment 'kosher', proving that you could have peak artistry and mass commercial appeal in one package."*

While it's true that not every brand has the global resonance and appeal of a Barbie, or Lego, its impact has encouraged brands to think about what they could achieve too, if they pay their money to the right storytellers and directors to do something with. And that there are incredibly talented people in both film and TV, as well as advertising, who can help them do it.

**CARLOTTA ROSSI
SPENCER**

HEAD OF BANIJAY
BRANDED
ENTERTAINMENT

As Carlotta Rossi Spencer, Head of Banijay's new Branded Entertainment division, BBE, puts it, *"There's a 400 billion ad spend globally: whether that drops or rises, the problem is still that audiences aren't watching ad spots anymore. Attention is what brands want and we can help make the content that gets it. Content that enhances their brand values, rather than just shifting products."*

2. The Big Production Groups Got Serious

In the last few years there have been lots of smaller production companies who have managed to make branded entertainment, and built reputations with brands and commissioners for doing so.

In the UK, Rumpus Media built on Channel 4's *All Star Driving School* with ***The Great Garden Revolution***; and Beyond Productions UK (not then part of Banijay) ended up delivering ***Mind Games: The Experiment*** with ASiCs for Amazon, thanks to various contacts.

In digital and social there have also been a range of smaller producers supplying platforms like Channel 4's 4.0 with short-form brand funded content, including ***Mother's Best Child*** (*"great for comedy"* according to 4Studio's David Amodio) and Ranga Bee, also working specifically with comedians on projects like comedy cooking series ***Flex Kitchen*** for Heinz.



MIND GAMES: THE EXPERIMENT PRIME VIDEO, 2023

But this year it's become more apparent than ever that doing good Branded Entertainment is really helped by being part of a big group, with infrastructure, deal-makers and business affairs support around them. And those larger production groups have been ramping up their activity this year, with Banijay, Fremantle and ITV Studios all either launching or rebranding their Branded Entertainment divisions in the last month.

In November, **Banijay** announced the launch of Banijay Branded Entertainment (BBE) - a dedicated division within the business - under the leadership of Carlotta Rossi Spencer.

Rossi Spencer's role involves collaborating with all the teams and producers working in this area across the group. That currently stands at eleven, all working on long-form, digital and short-form projects with brand involvement, in numerous territories.

Within this centralised unit, the remit is to get in global briefs from agencies and brands, and then to offer local support on pitches and productions to the Banijay indies working on them.

To date, they've brought in a high volume of agency briefs at global level, in some cases partnering with agencies, *"to help produce content audiences want to watch"* as Rossi Spencer says.

*"We're working on getting brand funded formats we can roll out, like **Cabelo Pantene** from Brazil, which went on to do four seasons in Portugal. We can do that for brands across territories and mitigate the risk on something that's proven to work."*

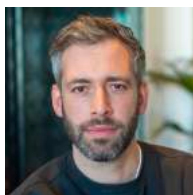
CASE STUDY

The Banijay company creating original BFP formats for streamers: Electric Robin, UK

Within that stable, Electric Robin are the UK company currently riding high in the branded entertainment space, notably with several high profile series for Amazon: **Beer Masters** (AB InBev); **Live Italian** (Birra Moretti), **Niall Horan's Homecoming: The Road to Mullingar with Lewis Capaldi** (Guinness) and **The World Cook** (Tui), which is currently in production on its second season.

The company was founded ten years ago by Ross Brandon and Kevin Batchelor – friends from the age of five who both had ambitions in film and TV. While Kevin trained in documentary film-making and became a commercial director, Ross went to the Northern Film School and ended up in TV. Eventually they came back together with the idea to create narrative-driven TV content with a commercial look, and Electric Robin was born.

Starting out with VTs for the 2012 Olympics, they quickly built a reputation for delivering quality branded content and short-form films for a variety of leading entertainment shows, before being acquired by Endemol in 2016 and now sitting within Banijay in the UK as a label that includes premium long-form branded entertainment as one of its unique/core offerings.



ROSS BRANDON
CO-FOUNDER OF
ELECTRIC ROBIN

And yes, they do find that being part of a bigger group brings certain advantages in this space. Says Ross: *“Banijay gave us production support and backing that allowed us to be creative and focus on that. And now branded entertainment is a big priority for Banijay as a business; they see a lot of growth in that space which is exciting.”*

“Our first venture into a multi-episode branded entertainment series was Beer Masters. Going to pitch to a big brand like AB InBev is tough - they've got their policies, they're a huge company. So having the stamp of approval that we're part of Banijay, one of the biggest independent production companies in the world, gave them that assurance on what is a big investment.”

“We're leaning on Banijay's experience for legal counsel, business affairs, work and practices, and even programme making - it's definitely helpful from the admin and legal side, to have that centralized support on the activation, the production, the strategy, the distribution of the content.”

When the company were pitching *The World Cook* to Tui it was certainly useful. *“If we're offering up a cooking competition it's definitely reassuring when the brand managers can say in a meeting, 'Who's making it? Oh, it's the group that have the world's biggest food format, MasterChef.' That definitely does help.”*

But once off the blocks, a growing raft of successful brand funded shows become its own calling card to brands. *“The Banijay name helps us get through that door, but now I'd like to think that people would go with us off the back of the work that we've produced. We're*

attractive in that space, because we've got numerous case studies of successful work – like Niall Horan's Homecoming, Live Italian with Birra Moretti. I like to think of us as market leaders in the world of branded entertainment."

Niall Horan's Homecoming: The Road to Mullingar (Electric Robin / Guinness for Amazon Prime Video)

Electric Robin partnered with talent and branded content specialist The One Partnership to make **Niall Horan's Homecoming: The Road to Mullingar with Lewis Capaldi** - an Irish 'buddy travelogue' with Niall Horan and fellow musician mate Lewis Capaldi.



NIALL HORAN'S HOMECOMING: THE ROAD TO MULLINGAR WITH LEWIS CAPALDI PRIME VIDEO, 2022

The One Partnership's Matt Lench says: *"Many brands the size of Guinness may not have put that trust into an indie, thankfully Guinness did and it was a success. On Homecoming, the brand were more than happy to work with an indie, but in the future I believe the support of Banijay can only enhance our offering to brands especially from a distribution perspective. Often creating a close knit relationship with major brands is made harder because of their existing partners; hopefully Homecoming is a good example of what can be achieved by integrated thinking."*

Matt Lench began his company during Covid, approaching talent agencies and brands with an

offer to help better monetise their talent through content.

"We did that to relative success with some really good names. One of those relationships was with Niall Horan and his team, who are brilliant. He had a gig at the Albert Hall for the charity 'We Are Crew' and wanted to try and raise as much money as possible. I approached various brands, and Guinness were the best fit. They supported it, it did amazingly well and the content was seen by hundreds of thousands of people around the world during Covid, as a live, subscription-only stream."



MATT LENCH
FOUNDER AT THE
ONE PARTNERSHIP

"Off the back of that we just felt like we could do more with Guinness, so we created a 30 second social piece to go through Niall's platforms to support Guinness's Welcome Back campaign that they were going to run when pubs reopened. Unfortunately the UK went back into lockdown and the content wasn't seen before Christmas as scheduled. It was eventually released in May 2021 and seen by millions of people globally. In the interim we worked with the brand on St Patrick's Day."

The One Partnership and Electric Robin were then brought into briefings for the new brand platform, briefed alongside Guinness's retained agencies - with access to information and insight about the brand - and *Homecoming* was born. *"So we'd built a good relationship, and that's the key – being across briefs is ultimately the most important thing, because that gives you the opportunity to really dive into the brand and understand what they need. And then you're coming up with targeted ideas that are the entertainment-first formats we would naturally develop, but aligned to a brand's marketing ambitions."*

"It was very collaborative, brainstorming with them all to create the idea for Homecoming," says Ross. *"But working with a major brand with its own creative, media, and PR agencies, like Guinness, could be a challenge. You have to collaborate without overstepping the roles of these agencies. So the only way to go into it is to be ego-free, focusing on leveraging your talent access and creative ideas."*

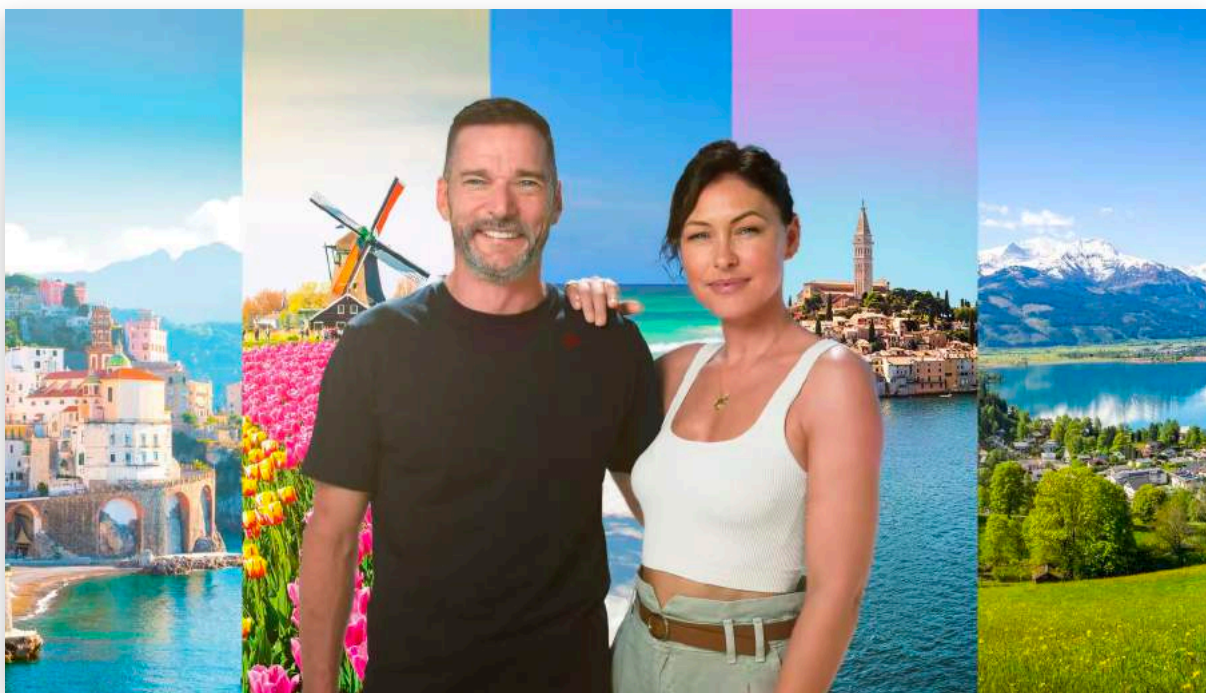
"We see ourselves as offering a complementary service to their existing roster of agencies. Our world is anchored in quality long-form content but we welcome the input of the other agencies to help us see how our project fits in alongside the wider marketing objectives and strategy of the brands."

It was a twelve month project from pitch to activation, but for the first nine months only a very small team were involved, with very few voices on the brand side.

"As it grew, the media agencies, and PR agencies were more involved. This is regularly what happens with BFPs, because they're not just a piece of content for TV; that piece of content is the centre piece, with a 360° activation that goes around it and this is how we develop all our concepts. Once we reached the activation phase agencies are rightly involved and we collaborate with them to get to the best outcome and one that can be tracked and measured."

But as production companies become more experienced in BFP, they can take more ownership over the production and measurement of those assets. Says Lench: *"It's crucial to understand the value our content is driving for the brand towards their broader objectives. Branded Entertainment is an incredible market and will be pivotal to standing out over the next 10 years. But the market is complex, we know we have to deliver more than just a nice piece of storytelling, so we develop these campaigns with assets across a multitude of media channels and platforms, alongside robust evaluation models. It is this holistic approach that is so important."*

And they also stress how important it is to have the talent fully on board for all of that.



THE WORLD COOK PRIME VIDEO, 2022

"In our shows, we feature well-known talents like Niall Horan, Lewis Capaldi, Fred Sirieix, Emma Willis and James Blunt - not as brand ambassadors, but as integral parts of the entertainment. It's a really good deal for the brands, because we're using our TV production expertise to create an entire series/documentary of quality content at investment levels that are comparable with what a traditional 30" ad shoot would cost."

For the talent to be willing to bring all that extra added value, producers have to have built that strong relationship with them in the first place, and made them feel bought into the process.

As Matt says: *"With Homecoming we developed a creative framework for Niall and Lewis, so they knew exactly what we were aiming to achieve. Beyond this framework we gave them creative control. It's something we champion, it is so important – people forget you employ*

these people because they are talented – give them the reins, within reason, and you make better content.”

“An example from the programme itself is the trip to Lowden’s Guitars. Niall decided that it was a good idea. He has a genuine love for George Lowden Guitars and that suggestion led to an incredible scene between George and two globally recognised artists. They went on to make and keep their guitars, which then played a part in the remainder of the week as the lads used them both on and off screen.”

And now it’s for Electric Robin, and replicable shows like *Homecoming* and *The World Cook*, to help Banijay and Carlotta Rossi Spencer achieve the ambition of a catalogue of branded entertainment formats that can travel.

“We’re really pushing to take shows like Homecoming global,” says Brandon. “That one did come out of a global budget [at Guinness], but if we’ve got a project that’s big in the UK, we can chat with Carlotta and the global team and think ‘Hey, Guinness is big in Africa, why not pitch this to Guinness there?’ or maybe even take it to South America.”

*“The hope for **Beer Masters** was to start with the Pan European show, then maybe do a UK version, a Dutch version, Italian or Spanish, and grow the Beer Masters format in the same way the Banijay team do with any other format in the catalogue. It hasn’t quite happened, but we’re still working on it.”*

“We’re tapping into Banijay’s network, trying to make our shows travel more. It’s a bit tricky with global budgets because they’re usually set already, but for stuff that’s more UK-focused, we’re looking to expand - seeing what’s worked well in places like Spain or the Nordics and bringing those ideas here. It’s still early days, and there’s a lot to figure out, but I think we’ll start seeing some of our formats popping up in different places soon.”



THE WORLD COOK PRIME VIDEO, 2022

And what really helps with the sale of those formats to other territories is of course proof that it worked well enough for the brand to be doing a second series - as is the case with Tui and the *World Cook* cooking format they funded on Amazon Prime Video.

As Brandon explains: *“The World Cook is a big milestone for us, because that is our first recommission of Branded Entertainment. Hopefully over the next few months we’ll have more than that, but it takes time to master it.”*

“With some of those deals the brand has a level of ownership because you co-create it; on other ones we just license the idea for a period of time. The World Cook was an idea we had

in development for around six years, and when we were chatting to EssenceMediacom, they said they were looking for something for a travel brand, so it fitted perfectly.

“Off the back of series one we knew the format worked and the talent loved doing it, so we had an idea of other brands that could easily slot in. Tui had to wait for certain reports to come around, and there were budgets to be assigned, but luckily they decided to go for it again and we're so happy to have them come back on board.”

And now the trick is to do the same with the other types of show they have under their belt too.

*“We’ve now got a few ideas in the pipeline that could follow on from Homecoming, with other buddy road trips. The same with **Live Italian** – it’s a travelogue that doesn’t reinvent the wheel, but we’re looking to build on that with other territories, different brands.”*

“I think as budgets are getting tighter and advertising spend is down, television will look more and more at the branded space. And, as programme makers, if we make the most entertaining show possible then viewers won’t mind, if the brand’s only going to make the show better. Because the brands can help supplement production budgets in a way that works for everyone – like providing stunning locations, covering travel costs or unlocking top talent.”

Fremantle has also recently launched a new global branded entertainment strategy for the company. Roberta Zamboni (Global Head of Branded Content and Sponsorship) and Katie Deeley (VP of Global Branded Content and Sponsorship) are leading the group’s charge in this area.



ROBERTA ZAMBONI
GLOBAL HEAD OF
BRANDED CONTENT
AND SPONSORSHIP AT
FREMANTLE

As Zamboni says, *“Now buyers are struggling to find the funding, attitudes to BFP are really changing. We are launching a Branded Entertainment catalogue that will include existing formats that could work for brands who want to integrate into the storytelling (rather than just showcase products), along with new ideas from the development teams in the group that could work for them.”*

Fremantle’s reach across multiple territories will give them the opportunity to interchange different formats and funding models. This ranges from the make up artist talent format **Call of Beauty** in Italy, to TikTok and social media platforms, to funded workplace access series, a speciality of Fremantle's Moskito in Finland.

CASE STUDY

Fremantle's Funded Workplace Reality Specialist: Moskito, Finland

The Nordics have always been relatively open to brand funded content, but it's Finland – known for its appetite for innovation, but also its small budgets - where there is perhaps most interest and need. Both main commercial channels have done it for some time, but it's mostly being driven by Samona and their Nelonen channel, where there is a Head of Formats and Branded Entertainment (Lasse Nikkari) responsible for it.

And within the Finnish market producers Moskito have carved out something of a niche in brand funded workplace reality.

The company's journey with brand-funded projects began around 2016-2017, starting with a successful collaboration with the National Railway. The project involved creating a work-based reality series about railway workers, leading to the production of two seasons for MTV from 2018-20.



PETRA MARTIKAINEN
HEAD OF NON-
SCRIPTED AT MOSKITO

Says Petra Martikainen, Head of Non-Scripted at Moskito: *"They were interested in finding new ways to send a message to their workers, as well as making their image better. And it turned out to be pretty successful on both counts, as well as with viewers."*

Following this, Petra's team has created six similar series, all fully funded by brands, most of which have run to two seasons each, including one on the Post Office (***Me Postilaiset*** for Sanoma, 2021), ***Taxi Stories*** (Tollpalla, MTV 2021-22), and one on the work of truck drivers funded by Volvo (***On the Road / Rekkakuskit***, also Sanoma, 2023).

Moskito work with both commercial channels and Discovery, but for them Sanoma has become a key customer due to their understanding of funded programming.

"The models can vary: sometimes we approach brands with potential TV show ideas but since the success of the National Railways show it's also been the brands connecting with us and giving us a brief that about their needs so we can build something together."

As ever it's not straightforward to manage both brand and TV channel, but for Moskito it has become a useful area to become known for, with the complex process getting a little easier each time they do another one.

"It's more work, of course - you have two customers instead of one and you have to convey the message the brand wants to send as well as making a great TV programme. In most cases we build the team the same way we would on any other show, but you have to factor in that the producer needs to be having that triangular conversation going on all the time."

With ***Taxi Stories***, a workplace reality format focusing on taxi drivers and their customers, Petra's team had the idea first and then found the right taxi company to pitch it to before taking it to MTV.



TAXI STORIES MTV, 2021

"We knew that we could make it work, so then it's about figuring out which companies have the big enough marketing budgets to do it. So our job is now also making sure we are aware of the opportunities that are out there."

On the current Finnish market, Petra observes a stable yet slightly increasing interest in brand-funded programming, with a challenge in finding suitable brands in the current global economic climate.

"Some brands are cautious, but others, like those in the travel industry, are thriving. We're looking at things we could do in Lapland for example, with travel companies that operate there. And with these workplace shows it's good if they have the dual motive of attracting both customers and new employees."

The challenge for Moskito is that in Finland channels keep the rights to sell visibility inside the shows, so the fully brand funded shows are the only opportunity to make business in this space and drives them to be more creative with the brands.

"Of course we can also make other shows from Fremantle's branded entertainment catalogue now we have the reputation. And having enough trust from brands to let you go behind the scenes of their company is worth a lot. It's a big investment for the brands, but it doesn't seem as a big risk if they know you've done it successfully before. You have one shot - your first commission with a brand, and then that works as a reference for the rest of the shows to come."

Not to be outdone by their big rivals, **ITV Studios** also took the opportunity of their Palooza event in November to announce the launch of BE Studio - their 'full service creative studio to produce Ad Funded Entertainment (AFE)', co-creating formats with brands, and headed up by Bhavit Chandrani, previously Director Digital & Creative Partnerships at ITV.



CHAMPIONS ITV1, 2024

ITV's brand funded slate has grown significantly in the last couple of years, with shows including **Cooking with the Stars** (with M&S), **DNA Journey** (with Ancestry), and forthcoming food travelogue **John and Lisa Down-Under** (with Trailfinders).

The recently announced **Champions** series, which goes behind the scenes of the world of jump racing (in association with Flutter Group and Racecourse Media Group), will be the first BE Studio production and ITV is now actively taking more AFE opportunities to market for brands including fashion, travel and food.

While ITV say they are open to brand funded shows from outside their own studio labels, it's clear that the preference is to keep much of this business in-house, where it can be overseen by the commercial team and the formats that result can be exploited internationally across the group, as with Banijay and Fremantle. For the moment it's probably South Shore that has the strongest reputation for BFP within the ITV Studios stable, although all of the group's labels will be free to operate in this area.

CASE STUDY

The ITV company on season 4 of a returning BFP primetime format: South Shore



MELANIE LEACH
JOINT CEO OF
SOUTH SHORE

With **Cooking With the Stars** now commissioned for a 4th season on ITV with Marks and Spencer, and several more shows in the pipeline for 2024, South Shore CEO Melanie Leach is seeing the fruits of long-standing efforts in BFP.

"We had a branded entertainment division at TwoFour and it's always been something I've tried to do, but it never really landed in the past. In the last couple of years the market's changed and Cooking With the Stars has shown that a brand funded show can sit in the heart of primetime, do well with viewers, achieve the brand's objectives AND return."

That success has made South Shore an attractive option for brands interested in doing something similar, and as a result they are now coming to the company directly. And, like Electric Robin, she sees the benefits of being part of both a channel and production group when it comes to reassuring brands and building those relationships.



MAD WOMEN CHANNEL 4, 2023

“There are lots of routes to getting one of these shows away but at ITV the conversations must flow through ITV Commercial, and that’s when being part of the ITV group can help. We’ve got a strong relationship with ITV Commercial and through them with the brands they speak to regularly, and who brief them on what they’re looking for.”

And once you have that access and can build trust with the brand it can lead to lots of other, non brand-funded opportunities, like the behind-the-scenes of Marks and Spencer series South Shore just made for ITV. *“They’ve never let anyone else behind the scenes before. We were careful to always keep the two things separate, but they probably wouldn’t have trusted us to do it if we weren’t already in a production relationship on Cooking with the Stars.”*

“And this is something we’re looking to do more of. BFP can be a really good way into opening doors to build those relationships with brands, and then to use that relationship to get behind the scenes, or do other things with them.”

Cooking With The Stars came through ITV’s existing relationship with M&S as one of their biggest advertisers, and from a clear ambition to change perceptions about the brand and to make people realise they were the place for scratch ingredients as well as for ready meals. The cooking contest *South Shore* developed was the right fit for that brief.

And once you have delivered successful BFP, brands will come with other proposals, for other channels, like the one-off **Mad Women** that South Shore produced for Channel 4 this year.

“Mad Women came about in a totally different way, and had a totally different objective, which is always the key to coming up with the right show. It came to us from the WACL [Women in Advertising, Communications and Leadership], who wanted to celebrate 100 years of women in advertising. They’d already reached out to big brands to see who wanted to come on board; had negotiated all the investment and then brought us in to make it.”

But becoming one of the 'go to' companies for Branded Entertainment comes at a price, and companies have to be prepared for the extra staffing, time and resource it takes up.

"There's a very steep learning curve you go on; it's not as simple as a straightforward commission, and figuring out all the integrations, the regulations, and how to manage the brand each time is not easy."

Leach admits that this can create a bit of a barrier to entry for smaller companies without the resource or bigger infrastructure to help with all that.

"Brands require a lot of work - dealing with the agency, the commercial team, supplying data, case studies. At South Shore we have a dedicated Brand Producer on every BFP to manage all that side of it and make sure the brand is happy."

"We also have someone helping to bring in new clients and bring in new business - it can take two years or more to get a brand comfortable enough with you, and an idea, and the slot, to be in a position to write the cheque. Katrina Murray, who does that job for us, comes from an agency background so she knows these people and can pick up the phone to see what brands are looking for. Most TV people are not in that network."

She suggests that although it can be a complicated market to navigate, there are opportunities, particularly at Channel 4, for smaller indies in the UK, and the commissioners there are often keen to help find a brand to plug a gap in the budget for a new idea they really want.

But despite all these added challenges, she also believes it's important to treat the creative development side of BFP as you would any other project on the slate.

"We have a core development team who work on the BFP shows alongside the other ideas. It's really important that they treat the development of a BFP idea just as they would any other idea. Because what brands and audiences want are not always the same, so it's very important that we can be strong enough creatively to say 'trust us!'"

And while it might be frustrating to smaller indies that it's the bigger production groups who are making some of the highest profile moves in the BFP space, it is probably their efforts that are going to make the whole area more reputable, lucrative and navigable for brands in the long run - hopefully benefiting the industry in general as brand funded content evolves.



SAMANTHA GLYNNNE

HEAD OF EMEA,
ENTERTAINMENT
AND CULTURE
MARKETING AT UTA

Speaking on a 'Branded Entertainment Renaissance' panel at Content London this month, Samantha Glynnne (ex-Fremantle, now Head of EMEA, Entertainment and Culture Marketing at talent agency UTA) was championing their role in that evolution. *"The ITV BE division announcement is a big statement of the group's commercial ambition and joined up thinking in this space.... Fremantle, Banijay, All3Media - they can all help deliver the scale, digital and international distribution on repeatable series that the brands need in order to reach their customers globally; they are now the key players."*

3. Some Territories Grew Their BFP, Some Adapted Their Models

While these global groups are now leading that charge, it's still usually the case that it's easier to start local with a piece of BFP than attempt to go global from the outset.

As Cathy Boxall from The Story Lab observed in our first report **Brand Funded Programming: Why It Matters Now**, *"it's hard for global clients to develop or pitch one from scratch, with local teams and marketers with different budgets and priorities. And if it's not for a global channel like Nat Geo or Discovery, they also have different broadcasters to pitch it to. Nat Geo and Discovery can seem like an easier one-stop solution for that reason, but to a local marketer they often don't really provide the reach to make it worth a big chunk of their annual marketing budget. They will always prefer their big mainstream terrestrial channel. So better to pick a strong lead market, do it there first, and then you can potentially take it on into other territories."*



CATHY BOXALL

SVP BRAND
ENTERTAINMENT
AT THE STORY LAB

That has changed slightly in the last year with the growing interest from global streamers like Amazon Prime in BFP (see more on this below), but broadly it still pays to target the territories where branded entertainment is becoming ever more established and do-able.

In China, Korea, and indeed much of Asia, brands have been firmly integrated into most content for some time, but often as part of a package of sponsors. Now they are starting to sometimes see the virtue in being the only brand, with more influence and ownership of the message.

Singapore has been particularly active in this area, with lots of funded content in the areas of food and travel especially.

In India, BFP has moved more into the regional markets. Previously, it was very much mainstream for the Hindi speaking audience. Now shows are being produced in Hindi, Telugu, Kannada and Marathi languages, enabling brands to penetrate the different states and target different pockets which is far more efficient. India is the base for Banijay Asia's brand funded work and Carlotta Rossi Spencer sees a lot of growth there.

The same is true of Australia and New Zealand for Fremantle, and for the dedicated teams and consultants working on it at Endemol and Beyond for Banijay.

In the US there has traditionally been a split between cable, where there's a fair amount of BFP, and network, where brands regularly sponsor shows but still rarely fully fund.

In Latin America, Brazil is particularly well-known for innovative branded content series, with companies like Endemol Shine Brazil producing shows such as **O Próximo Número 1 Villa Mix**, sponsored by AB Inbev, and P&G-sponsored **Cabelo Pantene** for Pantene Brazil's

YouTube channel. Again, Carlotta Rossi Spencer sees a lot of potential for growth in Latin America - Mexico and Brazil in particular.



CABLE PANTENE YOUTUBE / TVI, 2017

Europe is a mixed picture. Rossi Spencer works with teams in eleven territories actively pursuing BFP, and is therefore tasked with keeping across brand strategies in some of those key markets - for her it's Germany, Italy, Spain, Portugal, and the UK that are most active in Europe.

"The appetite is certainly increasing in Germany; the Banijay effort there is very structured, with a team and both product placement and branded entertainment opportunities. Banijay Iberia also has a central commercial team bringing in briefs and clients, and has four or five brands they are working with across live channels, digital content and BFP."

Where Italy was once considered great for sponsorship and brand integration deals, but more difficult for BFP originals (with broadcasters often wanting the brands to spend up the same amount in media as on the programme budget), the landscape there seems to be opening up, with more opportunities.

Roberta Zamboni, head of Fremantle's newly relaunched Branded Entertainment division, is based in Italy herself, and gave us a bird's eye view of the breadth of activity there now.

CASE STUDY

From an 'Integrations' market to more BFP: Italy in 2023

There have always been opportunities for integrations in Italy, but what was significant for Fremantle this year was doing it for one of their biggest programme brands - **Got Talent** - on a streamer.

This season **Italy's Got Talent** aired on Disney+ - the first version of the show on a streamer, aimed at specifically targeting a much younger family audience after years of *Got Talent* on Sky.

Italian train company Trenitalia came on board as sponsor - a very traditional transport brand that wanted to use this partnership to transform their image into a modern, sustainable mobility partner.

An all-new judging panel was assembled, including massive Senegalese / Italian TikTok star Khaby Lame, with +150M followers on TikTok to attract a younger demographic.



ITALY'S GOT TALENT DISNEY+, 2023

Trains took the contestants to auditions, and in a digital spin-off on YouTube the two young hosts became conductors on the 'talent train'. There was a big launch event to inaugurate *Got Talent*'s custom train with all the judges and hosts there, and special codes for travellers during the on-air weeks to book their own trips on the special train.



ROBERTA ZAMBONI
GLOBAL HEAD OF
BRANDED CONTENT
AND SPONSORSHIP AT
FREMANTLE

Says Zamboni, *"Disney+ was really able to work with the brand to integrate into the show and to amplify both the series and the partnership when it launched. It was much more than just a product placement deal."*

Roberta is hoping to see less resistance from the streamers now to brand involvement in general: *"Disney+ is now starting to sell ads and has a partnership team which is set up to do projects like this. It's easier of course when it's a well-known IP like Got Talent as we already had the knowledge for brand partnerships and integrations from doing the show previously with linear TV."*

"Since it was now an on demand show we had to re-think everything from scratch - from the digital output (making sure there were no spoilers!) and touch points, to the editorial and the partnership models."

"It was the first time Trenitalia had done a 360 partnership within a big format like Got Talent so we had to educate them. With a streamer there aren't numbers and insights to share, but the brand were pleased with the buzz and the earned media."

For Fremantle, this partnership has been very significant for what could now happen with *Got Talent* integrations at a global level, and as the group's first big bit of IP on a streamer.

On the BFP side, the objective for Fremantle is to move into this opportunity more widely: the barrier of broadcaster appetite seems to be receding, as they begin to realise that production groups can deliver good quality shows even if they are branded.



CALL OF BEAUTY DISCOVERY+ / REAL TIME / TIKTOK, 2023

Call of Beauty is one of them - a fully brand funded talent show, produced by Fremantle Italy, that sees eight beauty TikTokkers compete to become brand ambassadors. The first series aired as a long-form reality series on the Real Time channel and on Discovery+, but also across social media platforms, including TikTok. A well-known make up guru and a host serve as judges, and *Call of Beauty* has become a scaleable format, across more territories.

"In Italy the main sponsors are [make up brands] Smashbox and Douglas, with Samsung as tech partner featuring in some of the challenges. We took requests from Smashbox and Douglas into consideration, but we also wanted to keep the editorial neutrality" says Zamboni.

What worked especially well was that the more mature female audience watching on Real Time ended up getting driven to TikTok to get more content and tips, and the younger TikTok audience migrated to Real Time to watch the hero content.

*"We're scaling it for a second season and also looking to roll it out globally with different brands, in the new Branded Content catalogue we're launching. We also see the potential for other spin-offs like **Call of Beauty: Fashion Edition** to come."*

Zamboni's final Italian example is a comedy travelogue, **Together At All Costs**, which was co-developed with the finance partner Bancomat for their 40th anniversary – they have 50% of market share but their aim was to educate their older customers about digital payments, so they needed a piece of content. The series airs on Rai2 and RaiPlay, with added content on Instagram, Facebook and other platforms. While it's fully funded by Bancomat, the integrations are very subtle and the series has been praised for being a genuinely comedic piece of television that would happily stand alone without brand involvement.

Each episode sees two contrasting characters of different tastes and habits – a young TikTokker and an older TV host – hang out for a weekend in cities from Rome to Naples. They try out different activities together, to a fixed budget that can only be spent via digital Bancomat payments.

Its 50" episodes rated pretty well, with a 3% share that is above most branded content series. Rai were looking for more travel and discovery shows so it fitted their editorial needs, and they

said they would have commissioned it without the brand: a second season is on the way. Although not as strict as some, they are still a public broadcaster so care had to be taken to maintain a strong editorial approach.



TOGETHER AT ALL COSTS RAI2 / RAIPLAY, 2023

For Bancomat, the impact they were able to measure also deemed it a success, with lots of feedback about people finally understanding how to do things like pay on the metro with their phone.

As Zamboni says, *“Now we just need to scale these local experiments globally, integrating them amongst the territories, and tailoring formats to suit the needs of the brands that come to us.”*

In the UK, the appetite for brand funded content is also growing, with both ITV and the UK team at Amazon looking seriously at the sector. In our previous reports, much of the activity was being driven by Channel 4, but a tough couple of years meant something of a slowdown in their BFP output, as it did across the board in commissioning at the channel. But new examples are emerging once again, and any proposition that comes with extra funding is to be taken seriously in the current climate.

CASE STUDY

The UK broadcaster fighting slowing ad spend: Channel 4, UK

While the brand spend on digital and social content has grown over the last couple of years at Channel 4, linear BFP was considerably scaled back post-Covid, thanks to a combination of budget challenges from commissioning overspend and shrinking advertiser revenues, along with a lengthy re-organisation of how the commissioning of brand funded content works at the channel.

The priority instead became managing the return of existing BFP shows like *Changing Rooms* and *The Great Garden Revolution*, which both achieved second seasons, but won't be returning for more), and the commissioning of select 'fewer, bigger, better' projects.

We don't have a financial value on these for 2023, but it amounted to around 15 or 16 in total, including one-offs.

Of the three routes that Channel 4 used to use to commission BFP shows, the producer-led model has become the focus, with indies encouraged to look for brand funding themselves, to top up budgets and help projects get over the line.

While linear BFP commissions slowed down, the Branded Entertainment team at Channel 4 spent time developing a Playbook for producers to help them with this process, spelling out the responsibilities and resources required to manage a brand partnership successfully - from contracts to co-ordination and communication.

Commissioners who have dealt with more BFP, like Jo Street in Daytime and Features, are supporting the roll-out of the Playbook with interviews and best practice case studies, along with key agency BFP leads like Claire Prince at Essence MediaCom - all as part of Channel 4's remit to upskill and support the UK indie sector, in this area as in others.

Into next year, the channel expects things to pick up a little more in terms of linear BFP, and in the last few months some talent-led projects have emerged, including car show ***Bangers: Mad for Cars***, part-funded by eBay and fronted by Tinie Tempah. eBay's brief to C4 for *Bangers* was to "*drive credibility, conversation and cultural kudos for eBay, positioning them as the single destination for all car part and accessory needs*" on their Certified Recycled Hub. The show, produced by Plum Pictures and Tinie's own company Imhotep Studio, had the star and F1 analyst and stunt driver Naomi Schiff taking a nostalgic look back at the cars from the 70's, 80's

and 90's and battling it out for the best in class, Top Trumps style, across 4 categories (4 x 4, Hatchback, Family and Sports).



BANGERS: MAD FOR CARS CHANNEL 4, 2023

Within the show, Tinie used the eBay app to search for products for contributors, and to check in on the 'eBay Enthusiast Poll', which used real data from eBay's customers to help decide the best car model if there was a draw in the final challenges.

Outside of the series, eBay bought additional TV and digital ads to amplify their involvement and used key clips and stills from each episode to create conversation with customers across Channel 4's Snap and YouTube Social Sales, TikTok and Meta. A brand ambassador deal with Tinie had him selecting his own favourite parts and accessories and, in a first for a Linear Branded Ent project, they even built a driving game on Snap where you could steer your own *Bangers* car by moving your head left to right to win points and avoid obstacles.

According to the data that 4Sales publish online for many of their brand funded content case studies, the first episode (launched straight after the England vs. Italy Football on 17 October 2023) was up +43% on volume and +46% on share for ABC1Ads (50% of profile) and +133% on volume and +142% on share for Men (65% of profile).

Channel 4 are also now looking for other ideas in the travel and escapism area, potentially following the model of **Remarkable Places to Eat** (which migrated over from the BBC for its third series and was funded by Italian beer brand Piretti) in terms of airing on More4 with a Channel 4 weekend repeat.

4. Streamers Started Figuring Out How Branded Entertainment Could Fit Their Model

In December 2021, we released our report on **Brand Funded Programming in the VOD World** – by popular demand due to interest in whether and how streaming platforms were going to integrate brands into their funding models.

As numerous contributors noted at the time, “get us on Netflix!” was the perennial cry of brand marketing officers trying to migrate to where they perceived those younger audiences especially to be.

We looked at some examples, chiefly of integrations like the **Stranger Things** co-marketing deals on Netflix, but concluded that it was tough, due to the fact that for platforms like Netflix it is fundamental to their subscriber model that they are free of it. So while Netflix might approach the brands, in very particular circumstances, when it benefits the production in question, as with Coke and *Stranger Things*, it has to be as a promotional trade-off, rather than the brand paying to be in the show.

But now both Netflix and Amazon have happened upon another way to seamlessly integrate brands into their content – the ubiquitous sports access documentary.



DRIVE TO SURVIVE NETFLIX, 2019

Perhaps the most successful piece of brand communication in recent years has been **Drive to Survive**, thanks to the fact that every brand that sponsors an F1 team got huge amounts of free advertising and exposure. The same applies to shirt sponsorship and Amazon's **All or Nothing** series.

So the rise of the sports docs on streamers isn't entirely incidental. Box to Box, producers of *Drive to Survive*, have built their business on managing brand stakeholders, and now the sports organisations and sponsors have realised the benefits so are only too ready to grant access. The budget hasn't changed and Netflix are happy as no financial transaction has taken place, allowing them to be editorially

pure. It's a win-win for all parties involved, and a pretty unique model.

But it is on Amazon Prime Video where many of the highest profile new BFP shows have appeared in the last year - taking a route in via the Amazon Ads team, but to all intents and purposes appearing on the platform as high quality entertainment series that can sit alongside other Amazon Originals commissioned content.

CASE STUDY

The service scaling up branded entertainment: Amazon

Many of those shows are the ones we've already heard about from producers Electric Robin, and come from alcohol brands who find it much harder to invest on more regulated broadcast channels.

So in recent months we've had Birra Moretti's *Live Italian*, AB InBev's *Beer Masters*, and Guinness funding Niall Horan's *Homecoming: The Road to Mullingar with Lewis Capaldi*. Others include cooking contest *World Cook*, funded by Tui, and Asic's *Mind Games: The Experiment*, the latest campaign from the brand to combine science and technology with ASICS' positioning – 'Sound Mind, Sound Body'.

Narrated by Stephen Fry and produced by Beyond Productions (now part of Banijay), it follows four inactive 'mind gamers' – a World Memory Championships winner, a competitive mahjong player, an ambitious Street Fighter esports competitor and an aspiring chess grandmaster – as they undergo a new physical training programme to see if sport and exercise really can sharpen the mind.

Danny Imperiale is the man currently overseeing brand and content partnerships at Amazon Ads UK, with special emphasis on Brand Funded Programming in the UK and Europe.



DANNY IMPERIALE
SENIOR AGENCY
DEVELOPMENT
MANAGER, BRAND &
CONTENT
PARTNERSHIPS AT
AMAZON

Imperiale started his career in New York at the branded entertainment division of a major production company before joining creative agency DDB New York to work on digital and branding campaigns. Switching to client side at Johnson and Johnson, he was responsible for accelerating their US consumer products retail media business, particularly in collaboration with Amazon.

When life took him to London, joining Amazon Ads felt like the next logical step, and he is now responsible for growing a Branded Entertainment model that is focused on *"helping brands reach new audiences in an authentic way where they're already spending their time"*.

While brand funded content on Prime Video is wholly owned by the brand and doesn't get "commissioned" in the traditional way, Imperiale is keen to stress that it still has to reach the same high technical and editorial standards as their other Prime Video programmes shows.

"Amazon Ad's BFP model involves collaborating with brands to facilitate the distribution of their content on Prime Video, it's important to note that all content remains editorially independent from Amazon. Brands also play a key role in funding traffic drivers that promote discoverability of the content, once it's live on Prime Video."

"The content we feature has to meet the same level of quality that Prime subscribers see from our original programming. It needs to sit alongside and share the same space as Prime

Video Original Series like Lord of the Rings: The Rings of Power, Tom Clancy's Jack Ryan, Citadel, The Boys and many more."

And of course the beauty of having your piece of content sit on Amazon is that it can reach global audiences from the start – something that is far more difficult for big multi-territory brands to achieve via local broadcasters.

Says Imperiale: *"We're adopting a completely global approach to brand funding programming. Many of the shows we publish are available in multiple countries. TripAdvisor is a great example, with their show **The Wanderer**, which is currently being actively promoted in the US, UK, Canada, Germany and France while available in many more territories. Additionally, we've seen brand funded shows that are exclusive to specific territories, like the [Spanish bank] La Caixa's show **Las Vueltas Que Da La Vida** – content made especially for Spain, that aligns culturally with that region."*



THE WANDERER PRIME VIDEO, 2022

The One Partnership and the team at Electric Robin agree that that is particularly appealing for brands and talent that they have worked with. *"Amazon gives you the opportunity to open the show up globally straight away. And talent like the idea of being on global streamers – it's good for their profile - so that helps too. If you go to a broadcaster (which we still also do, all the time) you also don't have as much control, you don't know when it's going to air necessarily, as it needs to fit in with commissioners and their long term slate and schedule, which might not necessarily match the brand's advertising calendar."*

Electric Robin have clearly built a strong relationship with the team at Amazon and have become one of their biggest suppliers of BFP. *"As Banijay we have a lot of our back catalogue uploaded to Amazon, so there's already a relationship there... it's an interesting prospect right now,"* says Ross Brandon.

"We chat monthly with the Amazon team, and let them know what we've got on our slate; and they come to us with the brands that might want to onboard there and vice versa. If there's an idea we pitch it in and explain how we're going to integrate the brand. They can say no if it doesn't feel right for them, but now we've found a good way of working - constantly in contact, sending them scripts and edits to make sure they're happy. So even though it's not the Amazon commissioning team as such, they've also had eyeballs on it, because they have to sign it off."

However there are plenty of other production companies bringing ideas, and different routes in.

Says Imperiale, *"There's no one size fits all approach to how these projects come together. Sometimes a brand approaches us with the idea of creating long form content and in those cases, we might recommend a production company that has experience with successful BFPs on Prime Video. In other situations, a production company might pitch their concept to brands and agencies among other scenarios."*

The Tripadvisor-funded show he cites, *The Wanderer*, is one he thinks has been particularly innovative in how it has used Amazon's unique content-to-commerce model. *"They take the audience who's watched their series, and within Amazon Ad's product suite, direct them to a special branded page, so that viewers can dive deeper into the locations featured in the series, find hotel deals, fun things to do while travelling and more. It really shows how Amazon can take the view all the way from watching a show to making a booking."*

If it always seemed strange that Amazon – the service most set up to do this - wasn't really offering this joined up model to brands, now it seems that it is becoming more possible and more common.



WE ARE AYENDA CHANNEL 4, 2023

*"If there's one that was published this past year that stood out it was the **We Are Ayenda** documentary that tells the story of a group of young female players who had to escape Afghanistan to evade the Taliban," says Imperiale. "It was really captivating, and what was particularly impressive was the clever integration of the WhatsApp brand. They ingeniously used the actual conversation that girls had on the encrypted app as an on screen plot device to advance the story and depict what happened. The documentary has also been shortlisted at the Brand Storytelling event at the Sundance Film Festival."*

While funding models can differ between broadcasters and platforms, at Amazon they are all fully funded by the brand. But within that there are still variations in the model. As Ross Brandon at Electric Robin explains, *“For example, Beer Masters is a global project for AB InBev, but each brand had an episode. So Camden Hells took an episode; Hertog Yan in the Netherlands took an episode. And that worked really nicely because each episode has X amount of money in, and each sub-brand could come in and add their episode. Now we’ve got a few things in development where we’re bringing different brands together, like tourist boards and travel brands.”*

But in addition to funding the content itself, the brands are also paying for the discoverability of that content on Amazon. So for example as part of the package that Amazon Ads offers, there is the opportunity to run Fire TV native ads that catch viewers attention when they're searching for something to watch.

As Imperiale explains, *“We use Amazon audience insights to make sure we show these promos to viewers who are most likely to enjoy the content. Furthermore, starting in 2024, Prime Video will include limited advertisement breaks, some of which could be for brand funded shows.”*

Despite the continued pre-dominance of scripted on most streaming platforms, that area is still far less well-developed in terms of brand funding. For the brands anything long-form can be very expensive and time consuming, as we discussed in our **Brand Funding in Scripted Content** report last year. But Danny is noticing brands who want to do some short-form scripted pieces, and particularly at certain times of the year.



CHRISTMAS ALWAYS FINDS ITS WAY PRIME VIDEO, 2022

“We're witnessing an increasing interest from brands in the scripted content space, and recently had a major brand create a series of films around the holiday season that were scripted and fictional lighthearted type content.”

Coca-Cola are one example brand who dipped their toe in the water on this – making an anthology series of Christmas films last year, produced by Ron Howard and distributed on Prime Video.

This year they’ve gone again with two more festive season short films on Prime Video, entitled **The**

Santa Stories, directed by *Transformers: Rise of the Beasts* director and screenwriter Steven Caple Jr. and *The Mandalorian* director Bryce Dallas Howard, and released on Prime Video Direct on 8 December, as well as on Amazon Freevee and Coca-Cola’s YouTube channels.

Forming part of the brand’s wider Christmas marketing campaign *The World Needs More Santas*, each film is a reminder of the Santa Claus in all of us and reimagines the representation

of Santa in a different way. ***The Note*** (directed by Bryce Dallas Howard) stars Irish actor Colm Meaney as the lead protagonist, 'The No Man', whose festive goodwill is restored by a mystery message in a bottle. And ***Ho Ho Heist*** (directed by Steven Caple Jr.) is a heist-thriller in which Santa finds himself in jail.



THE SANTA STORIES PRIME VIDEO / AMAZON FREEVEE / YOUTUBE, 2023

5. Some Brand Categories Were More Active Than Others

As we've already mentioned, some brand categories (like alcohol) have been particularly active in the BFP space on streamers, as there is more leeway than on traditional linear broadcasters. But that said, it's not a free-for-all on VOD platforms.

As Ross Brandon at Electric Robin says, *"We are still bound by Ofcom. So when we do play stuff on Amazon everything we do is still run past compliance, for us to make sure that it's doing what it needs to do, we're not overstepping the mark, and it's good for the consumer."*

But as Danny Imperiale says, amongst those creating BFP via Amazon Ads *"the brand categories are really quite diverse. I think travel brands are a natural fit. We've seen a lot of that. Beyond that, we're also seeing appliance brands looking to align themselves with home improvement and interior design-themed shows. The upcoming Olympics in Paris is generating a lot of buzz amongst sports brands. It's really fascinating to see the range of brands looking at new ways to connect with different types of audiences through brand funded content."*

And Mel Leach at South Shore concurs: *"Even though the ad market has been tough, we're seeing resilience and continued interest in BFP in the categories you'd expect - food and drink, supermarkets, travel. And broadcasters seem very up for travel brands and shows in particular. Any brand with that direct to consumer relationship."*

At Fremantle, Roberta Zamboni is expecting to see more interest in sustainability formats, from car and energy brands especially, while Carlotta Rossi Spencer at Banijay says, *"we'd like to do more high end content with luxury brands. They have dipped their toe into scripted and movies and are starting to do more with high-end documentaries. There is a world of opportunity for them which hasn't yet been fully explored."*



DNA JOURNEY ITV, 2019

On the Branded Entertainment panel at Content London, meanwhile, it was genealogy business Ancestry that got name-checked for their investment in ITV's **DNA Journey** format, following celebrities on a journey to track down long lost relatives. As UTA's Sam Glynne says, *"it's so moving, and they don't even need to be in the show, it just reminds people to do the [DNA] test when they see the ad in the break."* And of course, the other brand getting plenty of attention for funded content is Footasylum, with their creator-led **Locked In** reality series continuing to return on YouTube and drawing big viewer numbers and new customers.

6. Brands & New Platforms Started Partnering On 'Content With Impact'

While we've talked in our previous reports about the brands funding 'content with purpose' – often feature documentaries – that conveys some kind of message about their brand values, what has also begun to emerge in the last couple of years is the entire 'platform with purpose'.

On demand platforms have sprung up like the social media app WeAre8, which invites brands and creators to upload content that supports social and environmental causes, with viewers able to earn rewards for following them.

The other new but fast-growing business in this space, with longer-form content and partnerships with big brands and NGOs, is UK-based online platform WaterBear.

CASE STUDY

The free platform partnering with brands on purpose-driven content: WaterBear

WaterBear launched three years ago during the pandemic with a mission to change media and build a new model – *“one that's different to the sensationalist, depressing, ratings-driven misinformation of most of it”*, as founding team member Poppy Mason-Watts explains.



POPPY MASON-WATTS
CHIEF GROWTH AND
IMPACT OFFICER AT
WATERBEAR

Mason-Watts has previously worked at Fox and Nat Geo, and for brands such as Unilever, and came together with a group of others from NGO and TV backgrounds to build a content business *“not driven by clicks, likes and reach but by impact metrics. A totally different model for brands looking to establish mission and purpose.”*

As WaterBear's VP of Content and Development Lisa Cadwallader put it on the Content London 'Branded Entertainment Renaissance' panel: *“There's a real appetite from brands to 'own' more storytelling: but what everyone has also realised is that if anything is going to have cultural impact and drive behaviour change, in the end it's going to be good storytelling.”*



LISA CADWALLADER
VP OF CONTENT AND
DEVELOPMENT AT
WATERBEAR

WaterBear has a production house, platform, FAST channels and an app and is set up to produce, acquire and co-pro doc content (long and short form) that will 'change minds and drive people to action.'

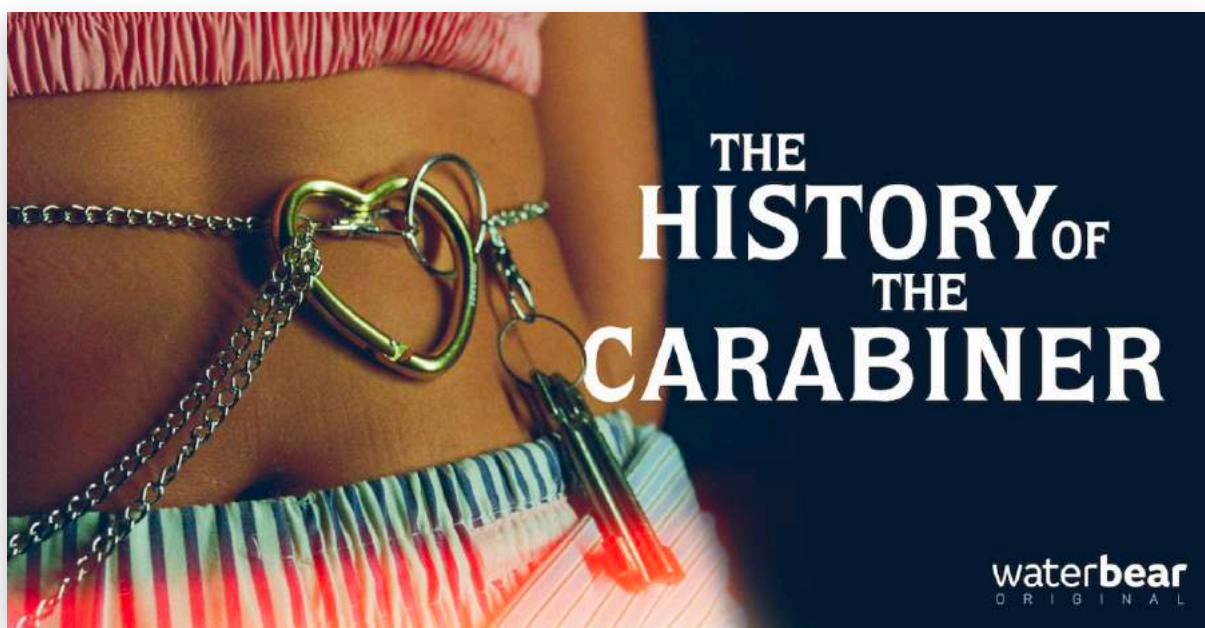
In their decentralised production model, 80% of the content is acquired and might be familiar from elsewhere (both long form and shorter form that usually 'goes to YouTube after the festival circuit'); and 20% is original productions, funded by brands (including Nikon and Jack Wolfskin), along

with NGOs, charitable foundations or WaterBear themselves. And as a result of the content being largely funded by those partners, the platform itself is free, with no requirement to subscribe.

With a three million-strong audience across platform, FAST channels and social (mostly in the UK, US and South Africa); they measure success by impact more than reach; driving people to take specific actions on the site, like signing up to Greenpeace or donating to a charity.

They offer sponsorship packages to partners who are on a proven mission to do good, and who then get a creds page on the site to talk about that; *“This is not branded content about a brand’s mission not to use single use plastics or whatever, it’s about partners who will fund content that creates tangible calls to action,”* says Mason-Watts.

At the outset they ‘sold the dream’ to two or three founding partner brands who took a punt on the concept, including outdoor apparel brand Jack Wolfskin, who partnered with a new young film-maker to make a film about re-wilding.



THE HISTORY OF THE CARABINER WATERBEAR NETWORK, 2023

Nikon started off by funding a traditional, highly photographic nature film but have now progressed to starting a film fund for young creators, and backing a film about **The History of the Carabiner** (a well-known LGBTQ+ symbol) *“which has given them a lot of credibility and authenticity within that community”*. They also now run an NGO programme, supply camera kit to other projects and film-makers, and partner with WaterBear on the Environmental Photographer of the Year contest.

“Some brands ‘just get it’; other more traditional CMOs want a more traditional return on their investment. We try to explain that if they divest some of their marketing budget on this

kind of content it pays dividends in terms of their perceived authenticity. It's hard to say 'don't look at reach, look at impact'; but our metrics include not only how long the audience watched, but also what action they took on the platform afterwards."

And WaterBear can offer those detailed metrics on the acquired content they feature as well as original commissioned pieces.

WaterBear put out RFP (Request for Proposal) brand briefs every quarter to the 150+ producers they work with, but also pitch their existing slate of ideas to brands and partners who are looking for specific types of idea. And as an organisation they are fairly unique in being able to produce, distribute and market a brand's content – *"a much simpler and cheaper option than trying to set up a studio do it themselves as so many [AMEX, Unilever, Nike, Corona] are doing right now,"* explains Mason-Watts.

"We try to reach out to brands we think will be receptive. We're very alert to greenwashing and have an exclusions list of companies we won't work with, and a 'moral compass' we refer to to decide. We've turned down brands and money several times – working with the wrong partners could ruin us."

At this early stage there's still much to work out in terms of the model – *"we're still figuring out whether the audience want this to be an action platform with content, or a content platform with calls to action"* – but there's plenty of ambition in the plans for growth.

"Our next initiative is WaterBear Academy, which will take employees at brands on an education journey about climate action and circularity," says Mason-Watts.

7. Everyone Worried About Measurement

Running through all of the conversations we had about BFP for this report, one theme came up again and again, and has become THE preoccupation of 2023: how to measure the effectiveness of this type of content.

Whether it's the efforts of new start-ups like WaterBear to find a way of measuring impact and behaviour change, rather than views, or debate about whether streaming platforms like Amazon supply the viewing data that brands and producers need, the lack of consistency across the industry is still hindering efforts to convince (some) brands that BFP is worth doing.

Says Carlotta Rossi Spencer at Baniijay, *"We have to collectively find a way to measure the impact, to have clear definitions of BFP and to be able to prove the return on investment to brand CMOs."*

And Mel Leach at South Shore agrees; *"What is increasingly important is how we all, as an industry, work out how to measure and report back on the ROI on these projects. It's getting better, but that hard data is still hard to come by. And they can't just be judged on sentiment if they're going to justify the level of investment required."*

However, she's in the lucky position of having some pretty clear success metrics on their big BFP series. *"ITV and M&S have done well on the data they've gathered and shared on **Cooking With the Stars**. One metric they seem very pleased with is that they estimate that for every £1 spent on the production, £5 has come back to the business."*

And, of course, that data is of real value not just to the brand, but also to South Shore and ITV Studios as they work on selling the format elsewhere. What's smart is that South Shore have created a shared IP model that also incentivises the brand to share their data and help push the format internationally.



COOKING WITH THE STARS ITV, 2021

"The holy grail is definitely a BFP format that can travel. We're now in talks to take Cooking With the Stars to other territories, with different brands attached. We've got a good case for it with the data that M&S can supply; and it's in their interests as we always negotiate a split of the IP with the brand. That way they are as incentivised as we are to supply that data, and make introductions to other brand-adjacent potential partners in other territories."

Although very interested in what Amazon are doing with BFP, and in making funded content for them, she remains a little sceptical about the data they will supply. *"It would be great to know their metrics, the completion rate on their shows and so on. But for a global brand it makes absolute sense to be on a global platform like theirs."*

Danny Imperiale is, of course, very robust in his defence of the measurement they offer: *"Using Amazon Ads range of measurement solutions, brands can access a range of metrics, including viewership data like unique streams and minutes viewed. Additionally, Amazon Ads provides valuable Audience Insights as well as standard performance metrics advertisers typically use in the space."*

*"What's unique to us is that Amazon Ads can also provide insights into the impact of BFP on retail performance. For instance, during the promotional campaign for Birra Moretti's **Live Italian** show, we observed a year-on-year increase of 63% in branded search uplift during the campaign period. We're offering all of the metrics that a partner would want to observe from this type of collaboration. And then the added benefit of that through the line 'content to commerce' measurability."*



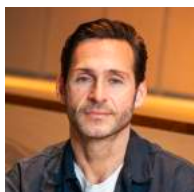
LIVE ITALIAN PRIME VIDEO, 2023

So perhaps it's unfair to put Amazon in the general category of 'streamers who guard their data', as it is true that their model can and should eventually make actual 'impact on purchase' data more readily available than at almost any other broadcaster or platform.

For Roberta Zamboni at Fremantle, data wasn't quite so readily available for the *Got Talent* brand partner from Disney+ in Italy. *"The one issue still is that they don't provide data back to the brand – that is the downside of a partnership on a streamer – but the brands are still so keen to be in front of those Netflix / Disney audiences that they will accept it for now. And the streamers are willing to accept the brands, to get those high value TV formats on their platforms. In future we could explore a research partner to provide insights on the data and ROI."*

And this is where it seems that the data is being mined by a mixture of research agencies, creative agencies, broadcasters and even the producers themselves.

Electric Robin and The One Partnership are certainly gearing up to do more of it themselves, as Brandon explains: *“After Beer Masters, we had lots of agencies coming to us to do something similar for their brands but what was frustrating was that, because it was our first venture, we didn't have those KPI reports on how well it did because we never tracked it from the beginning. Now, alongside One, we are doing far more of that evaluating and reporting aspect in-house, as well as making the content.”*



DAVID AMODIO
DEPUTY HEAD OF
COMMERCIAL
INNOVATION &
4STUDIO AT C4

Channel 4's commercial team have always done pretty good work on the metrics side, regularly publishing case studies of their brand funded shows online, but David Amodio also cites the work on metrics done by Thinkbox, the marketing body for commercial TV in the UK, as particularly helpful in measuring ROI: *“And then some brands, like Vinted, are just becoming very good at measurement themselves.”*

For even more in-depth analysis, insight companies like New York and London-based One Minute to Midnight will do really deep dives into audience attention and behavioural impact; and of course the rise of AI is likely to produce ever more sophisticated ways to target audiences via machine learning on successful case studies.

While the measurement landscape might seem a bit messy and non-standardised at this point, that's possibly just inevitable in a world in which data is everywhere and everyone wants to own (and sell) their own way of analysing it. Either way, there's no shortage of methods by which the impact of brand funded content can be measured and, as the need for different funding models only increases, no lack of incentive for the various industries involved to find ways to come together to make it work.

About K7 Media



Founded in 1998, K7 Media is a global independent organisation providing media intelligence to broadcasters, streaming platforms, distributors and production companies across the world.

Drawing on the team's extensive knowledge of the international TV and digital sector to produce personalised research, showreels and reports, K7 Media is retained as a trusted source of industry insight for clients across the world.

For more information visit - k7.media

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Appendix: List of Titles

List of Titles (ordered by country)

TITLE	TX. INFO	SYNOPSIS	NOTES / BRAND
UK			
<i>John & Lisa's Food Trip Down Under</i>	UK Produced by MGM Alternative In production for ITV and ITVX Duration: 5-part series	Australian chef John Torode travels with his wife, actress and home cook, Lisa Faulkner along a 500 mile route of gourmet discovery as he returns to the place where his passion for food and cooking began.	The series is produced in conjunction with Trailfinders , and on-the-ground support from Tourism Western Australia.
<i>Our Home My Way</i>	UK Produced by Greenred Media, Nest Productions In production for Channel 4	Home makeover series in which couples who have just moved into their new home (or are due to) are wanted to take part.	Funded by a currently unconfirmed home furniture brand.
<i>Jamie's Five Ingredient Meals</i>	UK Produced by Jamie Oliver Productions First Tx. 16 October 2023 on Channel 4 Duration: 4 x 60'	Jamie Oliver showcases simple, clever recipes inspired by the mediterranean that make use of only five key ingredients. He shares tips, tricks, and cost-effective swaps, making use of supermarket-sourced ingredients without going over budget.	The show is an ad-funded partnership with Tesco .
<i>Bangers: Mad About Cars</i>	UK Produced by Plum Pictures Distributed by Hat Trick International First Tx. October 2023 on Channel 4 Duration: 4 x 60'	Tinie Tempah and F1 analyst and stunt driver Naomi Schiff look at the cars from the 70's, 80's and 90's making a comeback. Motors like the Ford Sierra Cosworth, Peugeot 205 GTI, and the Citroen Saxo were all part of the landscape decades ago, but are now enjoying a renaissance. Your mum's school run motor is now a hipster's dream, fetching tens of thousands of pounds at auction. Car enthusiasts know them as 'modern classics.' Tinie and Naomi have christened them 'Bangers'.	eBay

TITLE	TX. INFO	SYNOPSIS	NOTES / BRAND
<i>Big in America</i>	UK Produced by Tern Television (Zinc Media) in partnership with Wavemaker UK First Tx. 12 September 2023 on LinkedIn's Live Service Duration: 5 x 15'	Presented by businesswoman Alex Polizzi, the show follows five small businesses that are determined to crack the US market by exporting their goods and services there. Polizzi mentors the would-be entrepreneurs as they prepare to pitch to a major US business in New York.	The UK's Department for Business and Trade commissioned the documentary series for the employment-focused social network's LinkedIn Live service.
<i>Proud Sauce: The Search for Wizdem</i>	UK Produced by Acclaimed Content Distributed by 4Sales First Tx. 7 September 2023 on Channel 4.0 Duration: 1 x 15'	YouTuber Harry Pinero challenges fellow social media stars Mariam Musa and BillyTheGoat to compete in a <i>Harry Potter</i> -themed gameshow.	The show is a branded partnership with the Harry Potter Warner Bros Studio Tour and is the second social-only branded campaign from Channel 4.0, following the July release of <i>Ready or Not?! with e.l.f</i> cosmetics.
<i>Remarkable Places to Eat (series four)</i>	UK Produced by Outline Productions Distributed by All3Media International First Tx. 07 August 2023 on More4 and Channel 4 Duration: 6 x 47' (series four)	Host Fred Sirieix (<i>First Dates</i>) embarks on a culinary tour of the UK and international cities. He is led by some of Britain's famous foodies and together they visit a variety of food establishments from Michelin-starred restaurants to lower budget eateries. Along the way they also speak to suppliers and craftspeople to understand the story behind the local produce.	An ad-funded revival of culinary format <i>Remarkable Places to Eat</i> . The series previously ran on BBC2 for three series until 2021. It is now being funded by Italian beer brand Birrificio Angelo Poretti .
<i>Ready or Not?!</i>	UK Produced by Wall of Productions Distributed by 4Sales First Tx. 27 July 2023 on Channel 4.0 Duration: 3 x 15'	<i>Ready Or Not</i> sees host Adeola Patronne and her creator friends get dressed in their best 'drip' – aka a person's most fashionable outfit – and take part in some crazy challenges. In the first episode, Adeola is joined by Victor Kunda as the pair try their hand at animal care at a vegan centre.	Channel 4.0's first ever ecommerce campaign, in partnership with e.l.f . Features product placement from the cosmetics brand.

TITLE	TX. INFO	SYNOPSIS	NOTES / BRAND
<i>Mad Women</i>	UK Produced by South Shore First Tx. 09 May 2023 on Channel 4 Duration: 1x60'	Marking 100 years of the Women in Advertising and Communications, Leadership (WACL), the one-off spotlights the trailblazing women responsible for some of the UK's most iconic adverts. It examines the history of women in the industry and looks at how they broke down stereotypes and battled to get their work on screens in the Mad Men-esque world of 1970s London. Senior women of the industry also offer their reflections on the journey so far and discuss the taboos that need to be broken.	Produced with funding support from Tesco , Google , Diageo and Whalar .
<i>Second Hand Style-Up</i>	UK Produced by 4Studio First Tx. 23 April 2023 on Channel 4's YouTube Duration: 4 episodes	Hosted by Jorgie Porter and stylist Emma Winder, the series sees the duo surprising guests with a makeover. Using the money they would have earned from selling their clothes on Vinted, the guests receive a stylish sustainable wardrobe made up of specially curated second-hand pieces.	Created in partnership between Channel 4 and Vinted's media agency Mindshare.
<i>The Pink Courtroom</i>	UK Partner: PrettyLittleThing First Tx. 07 May 2023 on PLT YouTube Duration: 2 seasons	Lighthearted court-themed series. The show features participants bringing their cases to court in order to get a ruling, and is hosted by British influencer Nella Rose (who also fronts PrettyLittleThing's YouTube dating show <i>Love Lessons</i>) and brand ambassador Indiyah Pollock, who hear each case.	Online fast fashion brand PrettyLittleThing
<i>Live Italian</i>	UK Produced by Electric Robin First Tx. 10 March 2023 on Prime Video Duration: 3 x 45'	Three celebrities – Jack Whitehall, Maya Jama and Lawrence Dallaglio – step away from their busy lives to explore the joys of slowing down, by living like Italians. In each episode, one of the celebs is paired up with an Italian host who takes them on the journey to rediscover their love for Italian food, music, and sports.	The first BFP from Birra Moretti Over 5.6 million minutes watched and 250,000 unique streams on Prime Video.
<i>Mind Games - The Experiment</i>	UK Produced by Beyond Productions First Tx. 19 January 2023 on Prime Video Duration: 1 x 73'	A group of inactive gamers are studied as they exercise to see if it also improves their mental cognition as well as their physical health. Stephen Fry narrates the film, which was commissioned by sportswear brand ASICS.	Ad-funded documentary which was commissioned by sportswear brand ASICS . Performance: Currently has a rating of 4.2 on Prime Video, based on 12 reviews.

TITLE	TX. INFO	SYNOPSIS	NOTES / BRAND
<i>The World Cook</i>	UK Produced by Electric Robin First Tx. 07 December 2022 on Prime Video Duration: 7 x 55'	Hosted by Fred Sirieix and Emma Willis, 16 chefs from around the world compete in an international culinary competition taking place across six different locations, including Majorca, Amsterdam, Croatia, Austria, Italy, and Mexico. The contestants are challenged to showcase their skills in country-specific dishes. As the competition progresses, one chef is eliminated each episode, until only two remain for the thrilling final showdown in Mexico.	UK travel company TUI Hosted at TUI BLUE hotels. The winner earns a restaurant in Mexico's TUI BLUE El Dorado Seaside Suites, featured on the à la carte menu.
<i>Niall Horan's Homecoming: The Road to Mullingar with Lewis Capaldi</i>	UK Produced by Electric Robin First Tx. 21 October 2022 on Prime Video Duration: 1 x 60'	Two music giants, Horan and Capaldi, embark on an Irish road trip. Horan revisits his roots, exploring Ireland's contemporary reality with Capaldi.	Alcohol brand Guinness
<i>Cooking With the Stars</i>	UK Produced by South Shore Distributed by ITV Studios First Tx. 13 July 2021 on ITV Duration: 3 series, 18 x 60'	Eight celebrities are paired with an accomplished chef, who mentors them as they move from amateur to restaurant level. They prepare dishes which are judged by the mentor chefs. The bottom two chefs each week fight for their place in a blind test-tasted elimination round.	The series is co-funded by retailer Marks & Spencer . Series 4 currently in production.
<i>Supermarket Sweep (revival)</i>	UK Produced by Thames Distributed by Fremantle First Tx. 09 September 2019 on ITV2 Duration: 2 series, 45 x 60'	In this game, three teams of two start with a 60-second clock. Teams answer questions to add time for the 'Big Sweep,' where they collect supermarket items. The team with the highest-value cart enters the 'Super Sweep' for the final prize. The game consists of multiple rounds. Rylan Clark hosts the revival.	Tesco , a large UK supermarket chain, was celebrating its 100th anniversary with the nostalgic campaign "Prices that take you back". It was the perfect timing for them to be a part of bringing the vintage global hit format back to UK screens. Tesco funded 50% of the budget with the broadcaster. Won the 2020 Marketing Week Masters award for sponsorship and partner marketing. ITV2's biggest launch in 4 years and their highest rated 8pm launch ever. #2 show of the year for the channel, behind only Love Island. Almost doubled slot average across the series.

TITLE	TX. INFO	SYNOPSIS	NOTES / BRAND
USA & CANADA			
<i>Evolving Eats</i>	<p>Canada</p> <p>Produced by Bell Media's Branded Entertainment Studio</p> <p>Distributed by Bell Media</p> <p>In production for CTV.com (dedicated hub within)</p> <p>Duration: 3 x 5'</p>	<p>Hosted by Mena Massoud (<i>Aladdin</i>), Massoud challenges 'traditional eaters' to embark on a one-week, plant-based-eating challenge using a wide range of Silk Danone products. The episodes feature a busy mom of three, a health-conscious couple and a bride to be.</p>	<p>Silk (Danone)</p> <p>Spin-off of the CTV series <i>Evolving Vegan</i>, itself based on the cookbook by Massoud.</p> <p>Sixty-second promos for <i>Evolving Eats</i> will distributed in Bell Media shows, along with 30-second supporting ads running across connected social channels to drive audiences to the full series.</p>
<i>The Santa Stories</i>	<p>USA</p> <p>Produced by WPP Open X led by VML, Imagine Entertainment and Prettybird</p> <p>First Tx. 08 December 2023 on Prime Video & Freevee</p> <p>Duration: 1 x 10', 1 x 15'</p>	<p>Short film anthology series reimagining the representation of Santa. <i>The Note</i> (directed by Bryce Dallas Howard) stars Irish actor Colm Meaney as The No Man, whose festive goodwill is restored by a mystery message in a bottle. Meanwhile, <i>Ho Ho Heist</i> (directed by Steven Caple Jr.), starring Octavia Spencer is a heist-thriller in which Santa finds himself in jail.</p>	<p>Part of Coca Cola's wider Christmas marketing campaign, The World Needs More Santas.</p> <p>The films are also available on Coco Cola's YouTube channel.</p>
<i>Merry & Bright</i>	<p>USA</p> <p>Produced by Vizio and Turn Card Content</p> <p>First Tx. 01 November 2023 on Vizio & Vizio YouTube</p> <p>Duration: 3 x 10'</p>	<p>Grammy-nominated singer Jordin Sparks shows viewers how to transform their homes into winter wonderlands for the holiday season.</p>	<p>Featured on the smart TV-maker's home-screen hero.</p> <p>The Home Depot will offer access to the products available at the retailer featured throughout the series through on-screen in-episode QR codes.</p>
<i>Rebuilding Black Wall Street</i>	<p>USA</p> <p>Produced by Sunwise Media in association with MC8 Productions and Greenwood Creative Studios</p> <p>First Tx. 29 September 2023 on OWN</p> <p>Duration: 6-part series</p>	<p>Actor Morris Chestnut (<i>Boyz n the Hood</i>) and his build team trace the century-long rebuilding efforts of the community in Tulsa's Greenwood District (aka Black Wall Street), following the 1921 Tulsa Massacre. Visiting local businesses and projects, the team meet with descendants of Tulsa Massacre survivors to tell their stories of resilience and help upgrade and restore the buildings needed to help Greenwood thrive.</p>	<p>Fast food company Domino's</p> <p>This series is a joint effort between Warner Bros. Discovery, GroupM Motion Entertainment and Domino's, a participant in GroupM's Diverse Voices Accelerator, a positive impact initiative that supports creators, writers, producers and directors from traditionally underrepresented groups in entertainment.</p>

TITLE	TX. INFO	SYNOPSIS	NOTES / BRAND
<i>Heart of Invictus</i>	<p>USA</p> <p>Produced by Archewell Productions, in partnership with The Invictus Games Foundation</p> <p>First Tx. 30 August 2023 on Netflix</p> <p>Duration: 5 x 60'</p>	Cameras follow a group of remarkable competitors from all over the world and their journey to the Invictus Games. The competitors are all service members who have endured life-altering injuries and illnesses and, along the way, they share inspiring tales of optimism and resilience.	The Invictus Games Foundation
<i>Backstage</i>	<p>USA</p> <p>Produced by Westbrook Media</p> <p>Distributed by Westbrook Media</p> <p>First Tx. 10 August 2023 on Genius' YouTube Channel</p> <p>Duration: 2 x 4'</p>	Hosted by Grammy-award winner DJ Jazzy Jeff, the series features renowned lyricists and rappers, Big Boi and MC Lyte, discusses their hip-hop journeys, and Cadillac's impact and connection to culture.	<p>Automotive company Cadillac</p> <p>Two-episode series celebrating the reveal of Cadillac's all-electric Escalade IQ SUV in commemoration of the 50th anniversary of hip-hop.</p>
<i>We Are Ayenda</i>	<p>USA</p> <p>Partners: Anonymous Content and Whatsapp</p> <p>First Tx. 02 August 2023 on Prime Video</p> <p>Duration: 1 x 26'</p>	As the Taliban claimed power in 2021 and banned women and girls from participating in sports, the members of the Afghanistan Youth Women's National Football Team needed to escape their own country or risk being captured. What happened next is an extraordinary story of survival, sisterhood and the human right to privacy.	Messaging service Whatsapp
<i>Barbie Dreamhouse Challenge</i>	<p>USA</p> <p>Produced by Mission Control & Mattel Television</p> <p>First Tx. 16 July 2023 on HGTV</p> <p>Duration: 4 episodes</p>	Hosted by supermodel Ashley Graham, the Barbie-inspired series sees eight teams of HGTV stars turning a Southern California home into a life-sized Barbie Dreamhouse play set. Each team is assigned an area of the home which they must renovate in the style of a specific era e.g. an 80's glam bedroom or a 70's disco vibe den for Ken. At the end, one lucky Barbie enthusiast is given the opportunity to win a stay at the house.	<p>Toy company Mattel</p> <p>The show also intends to "execute Barbie-themed cross-network content and promotions" and is also inspired by "the excitement surrounding the release of the Warner Bros. Pictures film, <i>Barbie</i>".</p>
<i>Rig Raiders</i>	<p>USA</p> <p>Partners: FaZe Clan, Nuke Squad</p> <p>First Tx. 15 July 2023 on Faze Clan YouTube channel</p> <p>Duration: 3 x 10'</p>	Digital series akin to MTV's popular <i>Pimp My Ride</i> , but instead of kitting out cars it's focused on building computers. The show is hosted by FaZe Swagg, who is joined by FaZe Santana, FaZe Booya, and FaZe JSmooth, as they help put together high tech PC builds and deliver them to celebrity guests, including American rapper Don Toliver and NBA Player Anfernee Simons.	Gaming group Nuke Squad

TITLE	TX. INFO	SYNOPSIS	NOTES / BRAND
Quarterback	USA Produced by NFL Films, Omaha Productions and 2PM Productions First Tx. 12 July 2023 on Netflix Duration: 8-part series	The series offers exclusive, unprecedented access to NFL quarterbacks both on and off the field and offers a behind-the-scenes look at some of the 2022 season's most iconic moments. Featured quarterbacks are Kirk Cousins, Marcus Mariota and eventual Super Bowl champion Patrick Mahomes.	Netflix partnered with NFL on the series.
The Next Black Millionaire	USA Produced by Macro Television Studios First Tx. 07 July 2023 on The Roku Channel Duration: 6 episodes	The docuseries captures the journey of three ambitious entrepreneurs as they grind daily to grow their passions into million-dollar businesses using a \$100,000 grant from SheaMoisture's Next Black Millionaires program, coaching from New Voices Foundation and access to Target distribution.	In 2021, Shea Moisture launched <i>The Next Black Millionaires</i> program in partnership with New Voices Foundation. Target and Roku are also partners on the series.
RapCaviar Presents	USA Produced by The Intellectual Property Corporation and Spotify First Tx. 30 March 2023 on Hulu Duration: 6 x 40'	Based on the curated playlist that launched on Spotify in 2015, the show profiles some of hip-hop's visionaries and emerging stars whilst taking a deep dive into some of the most provocative issues of today. Artists featured include Tyler The Creator, Jack Harlow, and City Girls.	Spotify Spotify's RapCaviar has been an established name in hip hop for years, curating its selection to feature both established names and new talent. In the quest for more IP to build shows on it's perhaps an inevitable development, but here it feels like the brand's passion and deep knowledge of the rap genre is being genuinely harnessed to explore the industry's artists and issues: it's far more than just a brand funded plug for Spotify.
Hey Yahoo!	USA Produced by Big Potato Limited, Game Show Enterprises Studios and Sweet Lemons First Tx. 12 June 2023 on GSN Duration: 70 x 30'	Tom Cavanagh (<i>The Flash</i>) hosts. Two teams of three players compete to guess what people are searching for on Yahoo!. They are presented with the first half of a search and must correctly fill in the blank to add money to the prize pot. After three rounds, the team with the most money goes onto the bonus round for the chance to add \$10,000 to their winnings.	American web services provider Yahoo!
Tour de France: Unchained	USA Produced by Quadbox, a joint venture between Quad and Box to Box Films First Tx. 08 June 2023 on Netflix Duration: 8 x 45'	Several teams of cyclists are followed on their Tour de France 2022 journey. Cameras reveal just how gruelling (and thrilling) the month-long race is, and the sheer dedication that is required of the competitors.	In a bid to beef up its sports programming, Netflix teamed up with Tour de France organizers A.S.O. to create the documentary series on the 2022 cycling competition, with the participation of public broadcaster France Télévisions.

TITLE	TX. INFO	SYNOPSIS	NOTES / BRAND
<i>Follow Me</i>	<p>USA</p> <p>Partners: Venture 10 Studio Group, FilmRise Television and Mars</p> <p>First Tx. 03 May 2023 on FilmRise's OTT and YouTube channel</p> <p>Duration: 8 x 30'</p>	<p>Reality competition hosted by Bethany Mota. The format sees eight contestants work with a different Mars sweet brands – such as Skittles, Twix and Extra – each episode as they create videos that are ranked by a guest judge. The contestant with the lowest score is eliminated until there is one social star left standing to claim the cash prize.</p>	<p>Confectionary brand Mars</p> <p><i>Creator-fronted reality shows on YouTube are still proving popular, and while Follow Me might not be totally unique to the genre it does focus more on the marketing side of social media than its predecessors.</i></p> <p>The series performed terrifically for the channel, with all eight episodes ranking high among its most-watched videos of all time.</p>
<i>3 Pointers</i>	<p>USA</p> <p>Produced by VIZIO Branded Content Studio (VBCS) with BetMGM</p> <p>First Tx. 17 March 2023 on Vizio and WatchFree+</p> <p>Duration: 4 x 10'</p>	<p>Hosted by Casey Webb (<i>Man vs. Food</i>), the series celebrates college basketball, sharing game day recipes, beverages, and entertainment hacks designed to improve the game day experience.</p>	<p>The program, which debuts on Friday, is timed to debut around the start of the NCAA March Madness college basketball tournament, one of the most-watch sporting events in the United States.</p> <p>Available on the home screen of Vizio's streaming platform and from Vizio's free, ad-supported streaming service (FAST) WatchFree+.</p>
<i>Ball on a Budget</i>	<p>USA</p> <p>Partners: Chime</p> <p>First Tx. March 2023 on Chime's YouTube Channel</p> <p>Duration: 4 x 3'</p>	<p>The show sees NBA players like Russell Westbrook and James Harden challenged to recreate their signature looks without excessive spending. Episode one sees Tim Hardaway Jr. head to a thrift shop to put together a cheap but trendy outfit.</p>	<p>Financial technology company Chime offers online banking but is "not a bank".</p>
<i>Christmas Always Finds Its Way</i>	<p>USA</p> <p>Produced by Imagine Entertainment, which teamed with Prettybird Productions</p> <p>First Tx. 07 December 2022 on Prime Video</p> <p>Duration: 3 x 12'</p>	<p>Part of Coca-Cola's anthology of short films as part of its holiday marketing. Three tales about Christmas, togetherness, and discovering the magic that's all around us.</p>	<p>Drinks brand Coca-Cola</p> <p>The series comes from a new "Real Magic Presents" extension of the "Real Magic" brand platform the soft drink marketer introduced in 2021.</p>
<i>Captains: The Chosen Few</i>	<p>USA</p> <p>Produced by Fulwell 73, FIFA+</p> <p>First Tx. 26 October 2022 on Netflix</p> <p>Duration: 8 episodes</p>	<p>Behind-the-scenes series following six international football team captains on and off the pitch through the highs and lows of qualification for Qatar 2022 - Pierre Emerick Aubameyang (Gabon), Luka Modric (Croatia), Thiago Silva (Brazil), Hassan Maatouk (Lebanon), Brian Kaltack (Vanuatu) and Andre Blake (Jamaica) are followed.</p>	<p>The doc is a partnership between Netflix and FIFA+.</p> <p>Season 2 will follow new captains as they take to the sport's pinnacle, the FIFA World Cup 2022.</p>

TITLE	TX. INFO	SYNOPSIS	NOTES / BRAND
AUSTRALIA			
<i>Passport</i>	<p>Australia</p> <p>Produced by Pinstripe Media and Executive Traveller</p> <p>In production for Seven</p> <p>Duration: 8 x 30'</p>	<p>Branded travel show which centres around the world of premium travel, highlighting top destinations and offering tips to viewers.</p>	<p>Premium travel and lifestyle company Executive Traveller</p> <p>Originally set to air in Q3 of 2023, a date has yet to be announced.</p> <p>It will be made available across Seven, 7TWO, 7Flix, and the broadcaster's streamer 7Plus.</p>
<i>Ultimate Classroom</i>	<p>Australia</p> <p>Produced by Paramount Australia</p> <p>First Tx. 11 September 2022 on 10 Shake</p> <p>Duration: 1 season, 4 episodes</p>	<p>The children's series tests 18 of Australia's best and brightest high-school STEM students in a series of challenges, such as flying drones, building bridges and deciphering codes. At the end of the season the Ultimate Classroom champion is crowned.</p> <p>Guiding the kids through the competition are maths teacher and WooTube creator Eddie Woo, TV presenter and avid gamer Stephanie Bendixsen, and STEM specialists from the ADF.</p>	<p>Season 2 currently in production.</p> <p>Created by Paramount ANZ's in-house team in collaboration with Mediabrands Content Studio and the Australian Defence Force (ADF).</p> <p>According to ADF, a survey of 400 Gen Z viewers showed an increase in STEM knowledge of almost 30% following the first season of the programme.</p>
EUROPE			
<i>Las Vueltas que da La Vida</i>	<p>Spain</p> <p>Partners: VidaCaixa in collaboration with TBS and Movistar Plus+</p> <p>First Tx. 16 October 2023 on Prime Video</p> <p>Duration: 4 x 22'</p>	<p>Sitcom following five female actresses from five generations as they board a ferris wheel to share their experiences and point of view from the different phases of their lives. It stars Agatha Ruiz de la Prada, Vicky Martín Berrocal, Macarena Gómez, Martita de Graná, Esperansa Grasia and Xuso Jones.</p>	<p>Tr. <i>The Twists and Turns of Life</i></p> <p>Caixa Bank</p>
<i>The Craic Show. La Irlanda Legendaria</i>	<p>Spain</p> <p>Produced by TBS (Telefónica) and OMD</p> <p>First Tx. 22 December 2023 on Movistar+</p> <p>Duration: 30' episodes</p>	<p>Comedians Joaquín Reyes and Patricia Conde travel around Ireland, visiting castles, learning local lore and sampling Guinness in authentic Irish pubs.</p>	<p>Tr. <i>The Craic Show. The Legendary Ireland</i></p> <p>Tourism of Ireland</p>
<i>Amispäiväkirjat</i>	<p>Finland</p> <p>Produced by Nohou Productions</p> <p>First Tx. 07 May 2023 on Liv</p> <p>Duration: 10 x 22'</p>	<p>The series follows seven young adults as they study for different professions, and learn to live independently as adults. The youngsters must learn to juggle living independently, studying, hobbies, and maintaining relationships.</p>	<p>Tr. <i>Vocational School Diaries</i></p> <p>The series is co-funded by several vocational schools around Finland.</p> <p>Episodes also air on Nelonen after their launch on Liv.</p>

TITLE	TX. INFO	SYNOPSIS	NOTES / BRAND
<i>Call of Beauty</i>	Italy Produced by Fremantle Italy First Tx. 11 March 2023 on Real Time Duration: 1 season, 7 episodes	Eight TikTok makeup artists competed against one another to become the first Smashbox beauty ambassador. Each episode saw two contestants go head-to-head in a technical and creative challenge, judged by a famous makeup artist.	Samsung provided the technical equipment for the show, and Mabina Jewels and Shein provided the clothing. TikTok was the media partner for the format. They helped during the casting phase and agreed to organically push all TikTokers content whilst the show was on-air. Second series confirmed. The launch episode exceeded the slot average share for the commercial target 15-64s (+7%) and younger viewers aged 4-34 (+93%).
<i>Me & You: Together at All Costs</i>	Italy Produced by Fremantle Italy First Tx. 2023 on Rai2 Duration: 1 season, 4 episodes	Each episode viewers see eclectic couples from the Italian entertainment world, each with their own quirks of living, and are forced to live altogether for a weekend to get to know one another. During each episode, every couple is given a budget and have to pay with the new digital Bancomat payment features.	Banking company Bancomat Averaged 340K viewers / 2.4% share overnight, exceeding the slot average audience by +14% and performing in line with the share. Performed well for the commercial target 15-64s, exceeding the slot average audience by +39% and share by +24%.
<i>I Hate Christmas</i>	Italy Produced by Fremantle, Lux Vide First Tx. 07 December 2022 on Netflix Duration: 2 seasons, 12 episodes	A drama series about a young woman who lied to her family about having a boyfriend. She must find a boyfriend before Christmas, which is less than a month away. The series sees Gianna desperately search for a potential suitor.	Drinks brand Asolo Prosecco As part of a co-promotional campaign, a short film was created to market the new show. It featured a new character called Carlo - a Prosecco vineyard owner, meets Gianna and takes her to discover his vineyards and castle. These locations were owned by the brand. This character was created in association with the brand, Asolo Prosecco. The show was watched by 4.8m viewers on Netflix, ranked in the Top 10 in 25 territories, reaching #2 in Italy in its first week.
<i>Letters to the Muses</i>	Italy Produced by Fremantle Italy First Tx. 16 November 2022 on YouTube Duration: 1 x 18'	Fremantle Italy won the pitch to produce the Pirelli Calendar 2023 documentary. The short-form film followed the creative journey of the calendar from its conception to the printing, and behind-the-scenes of the shooting in New York and London, with world famous photographer Emma Summerton, as she photographed 14 world famous models.	Tyre company Pirelli . Short-form film.

TITLE	TX. INFO	SYNOPSIS	NOTES / BRAND
<i>Taxi Stories</i>	Finland Produced by Mosquito, FM First Tx. 2021 on MTV Sub Duration: 1 season, 6 episodes	This format follows around taxi drivers working for Menevä - Finland's largest online taxi company. Told from both the perspective of the driver and the customer.	Whilst Menevä funded the greatest part of the series, Finnish energy company ST1 sponsored the remaining 20%. A hybrid partnership. Up +124% on MTV Sub's primetime average share for total viewers. Up +51% for 15-44s and +57% for 10-54s vs MTV Sub's primetime average share.
LATAM			
<i>Breretour</i>	Chile Produced by WBITVP First Tx. 02 November 2023 on HBO Max Duration: 4 x 25'	Chilean-English footballer Ben Brereton travels across Chile with journalist Manuel de Tezanos to learn about the different cultures and foods on offer around the country. Despite choosing to play for Chile on a national level, Ben doesn't know the national anthem and more importantly, speaks absolutely no Spanish.	Trainer brand Adidas Terrex The first Chilean original series to debut on HBO Max.
ASIA			
풍선껌 크게 불기 챔피언십 (<i>The Biggest Bubble Gum Blowing Championship</i>)	South Korea Produced by JTBC with Lotte Wellfood First Tx. 20 December 2023 on JTBC	Chewing gum competition. Divided into individual and team competitions, participants undergo various games involving blowing bubbles with gum, in the hope of winning a prize of 20 million KRW in total.	South Korean international confectionery company Lotte Wellfood
<i>Gods of Gourmet</i>	India Produced by Advaita Innovation Labs (AIL-India) First Tx. 28 October 2023 on Disney+ Hotstar Duration: 1 season, 9 episodes	Docuseries exploring India's ascent in the world of global fine-dining through the lens of nine visionary chefs who are setting new culinary standards. The series focuses on some of India's most-acclaimed restaurants, such as Koishii at The St. Regis Mumbai and Riwarz at The Ritz-Carlton.	India's most-watched food docu-series of 2023. Internal data reveals a staggering 14 million impressions on the Disney+ Hotstar app and connected TV, further highlighting the series' monumental success. The audience demand is high, with over 55% indulging in binge-watching multiple episodes in a single sitting. Created with Marriott International, Hyatt Hotels India, Hyatt Dining Club and Hilton Hotels India.

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<i>Heri the Hero</i>	Indonesia Produced by Fremantle Indonesia First Tx. 13 April 2022 on YouTube (Daniel Mananta Network) Duration: 1 season, 10 x (approx.)15'	Ramadhan webseries about the story of a courier named Heri, whose family clothing business collapses. Heri has to step in to help support the family, so becomes a Paxel delivery driver.	Courier company Paxel Paxel wanted to remind audiences of the benefits of becoming a Paxel delivery driver and also strengthen employees pride. Fremantle contacted the brand directly, who was eager to co-develop new material. The brand's logo can be seen on screen throughout the entire of each episode. Product placement is also included.
PAN-REGIONAL			
<i>Untitled La Liga Docuseries</i>	USA / Spain In production Set to air in 2024 on Netflix	Docuseries akin to <i>Formula 1: Drive to Survive</i> , following Spanish football league LaLiga during the 2023-2024 season. The series follows the ups and downs of the top football league, which features internationally renowned teams such as Real Madrid and Barcelona.	Made with LaLiga . The news came the same week LaLiga joined forces with Banijay Iberia (Feb 2023) to launch LaLiga Studios. The operation will produce content for LaLiga, clubs, sponsors, and broadcasters and noted it would “ <i>work with international platforms and brands in the development, production, and distribution</i> ” of genres such as documentary and fiction. The studio isn't believed to be part of this project. Marks Netflix's first sports docuseries produced in Spain.
<i>HairStyle: The Talent Show</i>	Spain / USA Produced by Shine Iberia (A Banijay Company) with AlfaParf Milano Professional First Tx. 17 November 2023 on Discovery+ (USA) and Kiss (Spain) Duration: 6 x 50'	The show pits ten professional hairdressers from Italy, Mexico, Brazil, the US and Spain against each other in a competition of cutting, colouring and styling challenges, in a bid to become the next big name in the world of hair. The winner will win the keys to their own fully equipped salon under the guidance of Rossano Ferretti, a prize worth 150,000 euros. Ferretti judges alongside renowned local hairdressers and celebrity guests throughout the season.	Haircare brand AlfaParf Milano Professional Launched autumn 2023 as part of Rakuten TV's exclusive catalogue. Both the Spanish and US versions launched on the same day.

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<i>The Wanderer</i>	US / UK Produced by Wanderlab at Tripadvisor First Tx. 14 December 2022 on Prime Video Duration: 6 x 30'	In this series, Tripadvisor challenges travellers to curate a travel guide uniquely inspired by locals and reviews. With little to no knowledge of what to expect, wanderers will immerse themselves into a transformative journey of exploration, self-discovery, and reflection, ultimately showing the beauty of travelling as one of the most ancient means of discovery.	Go Türkiye Wanderlab is Tripadvisor's in-house creative and content studio. The series offers commercial sponsorship opportunities for destination management organisations (DMOs) and other advertising partners across multiple platforms. The first episode was born out of a wider media partnership with the Türkiye Tourism Promotion and Development Agency.