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on trading in film and television without being aware of the technological developments.

Major trends

The contraction in the number of industry players is of major significance. The small operator is finding it harder to compete against entities which can deliver programming in bulk, can afford to merge with the opposition, can produce the programming required to meet market demand and can attract finance from banks and the stock market to underwrite company operations and expansion. The reduction in the number of options also leads to less risk taking, to sticking with the formulaic because the high costs of operation need to be met. Just look at who the major players are now: Time Warner, News Corporation with Fox Broadcasting, BSkyB and Star TV together with the print media holdings, Philips with its state of the art hardware companies and program producer Polygram's offshoots such as Propaganda, Jodie Foster's production company, Interscope etc., and the French giants CLT and Chargeurs, Sony's Columbia Tri-Star in addition to its extensive hardware operations, and Turner Broadcasting with its CNN and TB systems and its recent acquisition of New Line etc. And then when you recognise that the brokers of some of these mergers are talent agents such as Michael Ovitz of CAA and Jeff Berg of ICM, it is clear how powerful a model the Hollywood studio and its modern day equivalent, the software/production nexus has become.

These mergers and consolidations are also resulting in an internationalisation of the industry, the globalisation of production and distribution. Pan European and Pan Asian satellite services are breaking down national boundaries, providing different cultural and political perspectives in previously protected television environments. The American production sectors have recognised that the international market is becoming increasingly important not just as a source of creative talent but as a source of revenue and investment, and the collaborations occurring in Europe, where national subsidy systems cannot cover the total cost of production, are forcing the same conclusions. The rising costs of production, the new delivery systems and changing audience tastes are forcing programme makers to look outside of their country for co-production partners and revenue. What impact will this have on domestic production which is so popular with audiences in a large number of countries?

There are many more questions for contemplation which I unfortunately do not now have the time to explore. Just a few issues of discussion could include:

- the type of programmes that are made for a domestic audience including the need to satisfy differing domestic subsidy and the Australian content on television criteria;
- the place for those programmes internationally;
- the extent to which the market should and does drive creative decisions;
- the development of an industry infrastructure in Australia which can contribute to domestic production and compete in the international market, e.g. companies such as Film Australia, Beyond Distribution;
- the role of the domestic broadcaster in production and distribution; and
- the role of export and promotional strategies to address the commercial and cultural needs of the production sectors.

Thank you for the opportunity to share my views with you and I hope that they assist you, as regulators, to understand the international market that is such an important part of the equation for Australian film and television makers.

Planning Meetings

The ABA is canvassing views on television services for parts of New England and the Upper Hunter regions of New South Wales and radio and television services in Western Australia.

Written submissions are invited from people in Kununurra, Derby, Broome, Port Hedland, Newman, Karratha, Esperance, Kalgoorlie, Leonora, Carnarvon, Exmouth and Meekatharra.

Written submissions were also invited from people who live in the following NSW shires: Copmanhurst, Dumaresq, Gloucester, Greater Taree, Gunnedah, Guyra, Hastings, Inverell, Kyogle, Merriwa, Mudgee, Murrurundi, Muswellbrook, Narromine, Nundle, Quirindi, Rylstone, Scone, Severn, Singleton, Tenterfield, Walcha and Yallaroi.

'The planning of radio and television services for these areas of Western Australia and television services for these New England and Upper Hunter areas is considered a top priority for the ABA. We encourage public submissions to ensure the plans we draw up reflect what people actually want,' said ABA Member, Mr Tim O'Keefe. 'These submissions are an opportunity for the people of the region to have their say about the diversity of services currently available to them and to influence the mix of services that may be available in the future.'

Closing date for submissions:
Remote Western Australia:
31 March 1994.

New England and Upper Hunter, NSW:
28 February 1994.
They should be addressed to:
Planning Officer for Remote Western Australia, or to: Planning Officer for Remote New South Wales,
Australian Broadcasting Authority,
PO Box 34,
Belconnen, ACT 2616.

An information booklet is available to help to prepare written submissions and can be obtained by writing to the above addresses or by telephoning 008 810241.