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online+

2020

**The Challenges of producing
content for TV, and Streaming
Platforms during the pandemic
and next year's objectives
on a business level**

Introduction

MIP Cancun has become the most efficient way for forging production partnerships, distribution deals and for purchasing content for the rapidly expanding television market in Latin America and US Hispanic territories. MIP Cancun had the participation of 660 leader distributors, buyers, producers and commissioners from Latin America and the world, who represented 550 companies in 44 countries.

The 2020 edition was held entirely online, in light of the current Covid-19 situation, under the name MIP Cancun Online+ offering pre-scheduled meetings between international distributors and buyers of Latin American content, as well as between Latin American producers, commissioners and Development Executives worldwide looking for co-production opportunities.

Faced with this global health crisis the Conference Program saw TV experts discussing their personal experiences working under the pressure of the pandemic, at a time when consumers are watching more content and now demanding, more than ever, premium content.

The conferences were classified under four different tracks:

- 1 • View from the Top: Keynotes and Super Panels.** Industry leaders shared their vision for the future and the steps they have taken in order to maintain a competitive advantage.
- 2 • Production Accelerators:** New production standards after a period of standstill and guidelines to take action and get advantages in the anticipated explosion of premium, on demand, content.
- 3 • In conversation with...** Conversations with top executives and creatives about their success stories and next year's goals.
- 4 • Market Intelligence:** Discussing new trends and data analysis on platforms proliferation, as well as consumption and production flows.

Regional branded & non-branded content objectives, with Disney+



Cecilia Mendonca, Leonardo Aranguibel, Fernando Semenzato and Hopewell got together to talk about Disney's+ launch.

Disney+ launches in Latin America in the context of the pandemic and during a time when content is a relevant matter. Nevertheless, there is also a challenge: What types of regional/original productions can it produce in Latin America to complement its already strong franchises?

This launch is very important as the company has been in the market for more than 100 years and has used many different business models. Now, it is currently adapting to a new business model that involves dealing directly with the consumers. Disney+ is more than just a launch; it is the transformation of the entire company by distributing the production area into three categories:

“ **DISNEY+ IS MORE THAN JUST A LAUNCH; IT IS THE TRANSFORMATION OF THE ENTIRE COMPANY** ”

- 1 • **General entertainment**
- 2 • **Kids and family**
- 3 • **Factual entertainment**

However, Disney's+ launch also points out another question: having so much content, is it necessary to keep generating more?

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VIEW FROM THE TOP-KEYNOTES/SUPERPANELS

John Hopewell

Fernando Semenzato

Leonardo Aranguibel

Cecilia Mendonca

According to Cecilia Mendonca, “the answer is definitely YES!” Because the customers are natural consumers of original and local content in less production time (especially in Brazil, Mexico and Argentina). This content travels and become more relevant as they are known all over the world. Another important feature is that content must be short in order to create more seasons and remaining optimistic because Disney’s brand will never lose its essence.

National Geographic also has a brand strategy which will be developed with Disney’s+ launch. It’s all about the classic documentary format, which will be replaced by a more entertaining narrative told in a more enthusiastic way. Nat Geo is one of Disney’s+ pillars, therefore it will



be looking forward to producing more than before and finding new opportunities in Latin America.

Disney’s+ productions are no longer in competition amongst countries; in general, they are a collaboration that is all about sharing. This is a huge accomplishment, possible thanks to an enormous amount of work behind the scenes. The brand is now open to collaboration both in and outside the house, meaning it is willing to work with external companies and collaborators.

Keynote with Marcos Santana from Telemundo Global Studios



Telemundo Global Studios also has a strategy to keep positioning its productions, according to Marcos Santana.

Marcos Santana is NBC’s Universal Telemundo Global Studios’ CEO. It’s an NBCUniversal

Telemundo Enterprises division, the leading media company in the production and distribution industry specializing in distributing high quality content for Hispanics in the U.S.

“ NOWADAYS, HISPANICS REPRESENT 18% OF THE COUNTRY’S POPULATION, WHICH MAKES IT THE LARGEST HISPANIC POPULATION IN THE WORLD, AFTER MÉXICO’S

They currently have 13 studios, 48 postproduction rooms and 7 control rooms, all of which are fully equipped with the highest technology. Located in Miami, Florida, the facility has 500,000 square feet, which makes the company the largest production center in the United States.

Marco Santana commented, “Nowadays, Hispanics represent 18% of the country’s population, which makes it the largest Hispanic population in the world, after Mexico’s.”

The data shows that Hispanics are the youngest group in the U.S, being 29 years old in average. It is estimated that by 2050, it will reach 100 million Latinos in the U.S. According to the data, Hispanics are on the way to being responsible for consuming more than 40% of the country’s video content.

The numbers show the importance of the community, and the need to create exclusive content for it. This is why, the strategy

has been redesigned and an exclusive brand new format has been created: Super series with between 60 and 80 episodes. This format contrasts soap operas, and it is worth saying that this type of content has helped maintain Telemundo’s reputation while allowing its distribution throughout the world.

Marcos Santana confirms that working during the pandemic has been a challenge - there’s been a need to readapt and create new ways of working and keep all collaborators safe without affecting the amount of content generated. “This is not an isolated event, it’s the work of a highly professional and committed team. Without them we wouldn’t be able to continue working.”

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A VIEW FROM THE TOP



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Amazon Originals: From small local story to global hit, “El Presidente”

**“ IT IS ESSENTIAL FOR THE COMPANY
TO TELL LOCAL STORIES THAT CONNECT
WITH LATIN AMERICAN AUDIENCES**

Without a doubt, “El Presidente” is an example of Amazon’s content strategy in the region. As Javiera Balmaceda says: “Amazon has been looking for stories that reflect the Latin American reality with a little fiction.”

The company was looking for a change in the way of telling stories, and in the type of format being used. Characters are stronger with a greater personality.

This project wasn’t trying to polarize the characters. According to Armando Bo “Neither the bad guys were that bad, nor the good guys were that good, but they were more real.” This is how they sought to make the story grow while increasing its reach. The tone is focused on laughing a little at the tragedy to change what was already being told about the story.

Creating strong female characters in a world

completely dominated by men, as football is, was part of the strategy to make a local story become a global story.

Amazon has the certainty that creating content for streaming is completely different from making a single product such as a movie, since the series are consumed faster and on a larger scale. Therefore, pre and postproduction have to be faster too. Amazon is trying to industrialize content without affecting quality so that it connects with the audience. Javiera Balmaceda tells us “it is essential for the company to tell local stories that connect with Latin American audiences.”

Amazon has a content strategy for Latin America and another for the U.S.A, because they are different audiences. “We want the world to see the talent we have in our continent.”
– Javiera Balmaceda.



Production accelerator: Slates and Trends. Global IP Packaging

During this talk, Erick Barmack explains that nowadays, there is a great number of pitches being made on a daily basis, so one must keep one thing in mind: “Creating IP pieces that are easily identifiable to make them go

global, because the value of local productions increase over time as stories become universal”. It is important to say that most of our panelists agree with him.



The Future of Content with ViacomCBS

VIACOM and CBS merged in 2019 to create a premium content powerhouse with global scale to distribute in every possible platform. This made their portfolio wider, as it integrated brands and licenses to reach more targets and gain more subscribers. This came with its challenges – what strategy will they stick with for streaming?



**“ IT IS DEFINITELY
A ROUND BUSINESS
STRATEGY**

When focusing on streaming, there are two options: The Payment Option (SVOD) “Paramount+” to launch early 2021 and “Pluto TV” the leading free streaming TV service.

“Pluto TV” had a strong start in Latin America, since the continent consumes a lot of content. This was proved at the beginning of the pandemic, when people started staying at home. Everything went great, so great that to this day, VIACOMCBS has 7.5 million of monthly active users in Latam and Europe, and a great channel and content offering. This number has encouraged the company to think about expanding towards Brazil to increase its reach.

New, and never thought of, alliances have been made. For example, alliances with Mercado Libre and Rappi, two platforms to commercialize not only content, but experiences, such as awards. JC Acosta says “The idea is to create buying and selling opportunities”.

“Pluto TV” currently has 7.5 million users in Europe and 18 Latin American countries, 70 channels, more than 100 content partners, more than 18,000 hours of content and the launch of Pluto Brazil that came up with 27 channels. Besides the launch of Telefe News in “Pluto TV”, which partnered up with CBS News to cover the U.S.A elections. Such alliances are what ViacomCBS is looking for.

On the other hand, the payment option, Paramount+’s launch is coming up. It will have

over 9,000 hours of movies and series, 7,000 hours of original content through a friendly and accessible app. Over the next 2 years Paramount+ will be producing its own content to continue feeding the platforms without losing alliances with other studios, which are vital.

The acquisition of Telefe Argentina has been, without a doubt, an incredible experience for the company, since it achieved a great growth in the region. This reflects the power to leverage everything it does for streaming and broadcast TV.

As a result of that Regarding content, ViacomCBS International Studios was created 2 years ago, developing and producing their own content and content for Hispanics and now has a bigger scale creating content at global scale. With Studios, the ecosystem can be fed in its own way, and so do the productions of the licenses. The launch of ViacomCBS International Studios Distribution was also recently announced with the aim of monetizing the content produced by the company. “It is definitely a round business strategy” assures its global president JC Acosta.



“Selena, The Series” and the Power of Representation with Netflix

Just a few days from the big launch, both the creative and production Netflix’s team have said it has been a life changing experience. It’s about a worldwide known Latin icon, that has influenced the lifestyle of non-Latin people, this is why it became a challenge. Selena represents female and Latin empowerment in the U.S., but it also represents achieving dreams, a dream that has almost been generalized.

For Netflix, it is super important that the team behind the camera feels empowered and identified with the production they are working on. However, the main goal is to represent a story that may have happened in any other part of the world and that could still affect, and interest, millions of people.

“Selena” is a series that has a diverse team led by a female executive, this is important because a woman is being represented by

another woman, which is a significant issue for the brand. Francisco Ramos confirms: “No one better would have done it the same”, referring to the development team. It is here where “Selena” comes to life telling a story that transcends and continues women empowerment.

The crew behind Netflix is adamant that Latin America offers the most valuable talent available worldwide. This is something important to be seen worldwide, that’s why it will air simultaneously in 190 countries around the world on the very same day.

Netflix’s team believes that “Selena” will change the way we watch series. They have faith in the fact that people will keep looking for content to which they can relate and identify. “To this day we can confirm we have two finished seasons” says Francisco Ramos.



“ THE CREW BEHIND NETFLIX IS ADAMANT THAT LATIN AMERICA OFFERS THE MOST VALUABLE TALENT AVAILABLE WORLDWIDE

In Conversation with WarnerMedia: What's next for WarnerMedia Latin America?

Warner, Turner and HBO have the main objective of creating a fiction content platform for the region. This alliance makes it easier to increase the quality of the stories, whether it is for originality and/or production.

WarnerMedia is currently working on 50 developments for the months to come. They are conscious of the pandemic and the fact that it limits the creation of generated content. They are setting a goal to return to good dramaturgy, whilst respecting health protocols at all times, without affecting stories. There are projects that continue to be developed, others that will begin their development, and others that have already been completed. The themes are of all kinds to cover the majority of

the audiences" – Marcelo Tamburri.

WarnerMedia is also willing to receive projects from all filmmakers considering three large regions: Brazil, Mexico, and Argentina & Colombia, as long as the stories allow the connection with other regions without the need of having a territorial context as an antecedent. Marcelo Tamburri said: "A good story must be universal."

In this context, Mexico stands out, because it is a very important territory for the project as it allows many of the stories told to travel to other regions. That is why all eyes are set on that region, as well as the fact that (in a certain way) it is connected to the United States.

One of the biggest challenges has been to get investors and producers to reach the same understanding on how they are doing a project, different producers and industry leaders like Georgina Borbolla, Richard Gray, Billy Rovzar and Leonardo Zimbrón discussed this.

**“ A GOOD STORY
MUST BE UNIVERSAL**



A Producer's Journey through Uncertainty

How have the producers and executive teams dealt with the pandemic?

Technology has helped a lot, but not all production's needs are met due to the limitations caused by the pandemic. Even in some stages of development, the pandemic has reduced working hours due to the curfew and there have also been some limitations while working remotely. Relocation logistics has also been a very difficult challenge to overcome.

The development of series sequels has a lot to do with the period in which it is released to the public. "For example, with Netflix, if it takes more than a year for the next season to be available, consumers lose interest in the stories, therefore you have to continue working, and this is where health protocols while producing are absolutely vital to ensure the safety of the team and the people working on it. The mask is not only used for your own good, but also for the benefit of others, and everyone has to adapt, and learn, how to work using it. In a way, this affects the productivity, which decreases and makes costs increase".
– Billy Rovzar

**“ A SMALL MISTAKE
CAN SERIOUSLY AFFECT
THE PRODUCTION**

Something that helped greatly to understand how to work during the pandemic was learning about the sanitation protocols and how to handle this sanitary crisis during the production of the content without messing up the planning and development. As Leonardo Zimbrón tells us: "A small mistake can seriously affect the production".

Luckily, the pandemic has also taught us how to work with a smaller crew. Even though the space reduction has been questionable, it has been detected that productivity can increase. Billy Rovzar commented: "It must be understood that we have wasted a lot of time in ways of working that may not have been the right ones. COVID has made us more responsible of our own healthcare and has made us value our work".

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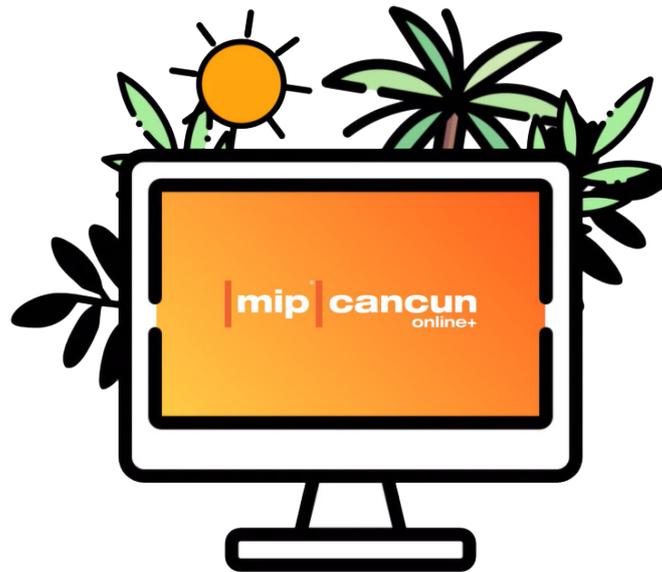
PRODUCTION ACCELERATOR

Conclusion

Without a doubt, MIP Cancun has been a learning experience for the industry as a whole. Being able to bring together TV leading executives in a 100% digital format, both in logistics and availability was a challenge; but the goal has been reached – allowing people to stay connected, conduct business and keep up with production and distribution trends.

MIP Cancun wants to thank everyone who made this edition possible and all those interested in participating, creating content, producing, distributing, financing or buying.

See you in 2021!



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