

May the Gods of
Health, Happiness &
Prosperity smile on
you always.

Happy Year
of the
Dragon



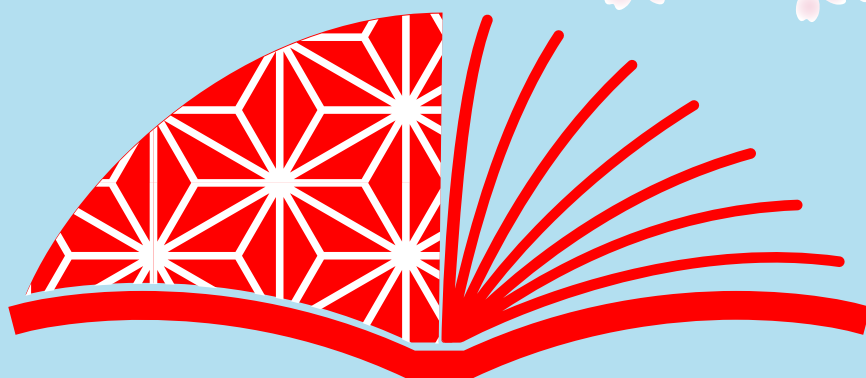
The One Enterprise content spend soars

Thai media house ramps
up across brands

Thai free-TV channel, GMM25, counts down to the premiere of Wattpad Webtoon-based *Beauty Newbie* as parent company The One Enterprise kicks off a 2024 slate that doubles down on premium originals and underscores the company's commitment to audience segmentation.

The full story is on page 5

The premier showcase
for fresh content
from **Japan**



Japan Program Catalog

Free registration
provides you to
direct access to
60+ sellers.

Countdown to FILMART 2024

Hong Kong prepares to welcome 700+ exhibitors and groups of worldwide industry players



The countdown to FILMART 2024 has kicked into high gear, with organisers saying more than 700 regional Asia and international exhibitors are expected to gather in Hong Kong for the four-day event, which runs from 11-14 March.

The 28th edition of the entertainment content marketplace will continue to showcase a wide range of international content with a substantial Asian presence, organiser, the Hong Kong Trade Development Council (HKTDC), says.

Confirmed country pavilions this year include FILMART regulars as well as new entrants and those that have decided to return after a break of a few years.

Exhibiting for the first time this year are Indonesia, Macau and Saudi Arabia. The three are joined by regular FILMART attendees – Mainland China, the European Union, Italy, Japan, Korea, Taiwan, Thailand and the United States – as well as countries resuming their presence at the show after a break.

Mainland China's regional industries are strong supporters, with pavilions from Beijing, Chongqing, Guangdong, Hangzhou, Hunan, Jiangsu, Ningbo, Shandong, Shaanxi, and Zhejiang. Joining them for the first time this year is Hubei.

FILMART organiser listed three countries – India, the Philippines and the U.K. – on their win-backs list, further cement-

ing the event's position on the global content calendar and strengthening Hong Kong's role as a regional IP trading hub.

Hong Kong companies, making the most of being on home turf, will have a major presence at the Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre.

Participants from Hong Kong this year include Media Asia, Emperor Motion Picture, Edko, Golden Scene, Mandarin Motion Picture, One Cool, PCCW and Universe Film. Returning to the market floor in March are TVBI, RTHK and Phoenix Satellite Television Co Ltd.

Major exhibitors from Mainland China and overseas include Alibaba Culture and Entertainment and Bilibili, both of which are new at the show, along with Contents Panda, Huace, iQIYI, Kadokawa, K-Movie, Shanghai Youhug Media, TBS, Tencent and TV Asahi.

The Digital Entertainment Pavilion continues to house more than 30 homegrown companies showcasing animation, game contents and production services.

A virtual production studio will be set up for the first time at the fairground, where live content will be generated to showcase the latest technology.

EntertainmentPulse, the conference series, will run alongside the exhibition with a wide-ranging multi-track confer-

ence agenda on Hong Kong/ European/ Asia co-production, market outlook of Mainland China and Asia, prospects of AI generative in entertainment content creations, thriving in the era of video streaming, global perspectives on animation and more.

Renowned speakers, including Christiano Bortone, Managing Director of Bridging the Dragon, Binxing Fu, President of Huace Group, Jonathan Kim, Founder of Hanmac Culture Corporation, Shimizu Shinji, Chief Advisor of Toei Animation and a lot more, will share their unique insights and navigate forward-looking issues and the future of global entertainment industry.

• **Get a badge for FILMART 2024 now to be inspired by the latest content and explore potential business partnership:**



Indonesia's Vidio counts down to *Ratu Adil* 2024 flagship original premieres on 29 Feb



Dian Sasrowardoyo in *Ratu Adil*

Indonesian streaming platform Vidio has started the countdown clock for 2024 flagship drama, Frontier Pictures' *Ratu Adil*, starring local A-lister Dian Sasrowardoyo (*Cigarette Girl/Gadis Kretek/Netflix*).

The eight-episode action crime series, directed by Tommy Dewo and Ginanti Rona, releases on 29 February.

Sasrowardoyo plays Lasja Seoryo, a tough housewife protecting her family from Jakarta's '9 Dragons' underworld bosses.

The cast also includes Hana Malasan (*Tunnel*), Donny Damara (*The Storylines*), Nino Fernandez (*2045 Apa Ada Cinta*) and Abdurrahman Arif (*Pertaruhan: The Series*).

Ratu Adil is produced by Wicky Olindo and Timo Tjahjanto.

The series opens a triumphant year for Vidio, which closed 2023 at the top of Indonesia's streaming charts as the only service to hit four million subscribers, according to Media Partners Asia (MPA).

While earlier of original production ambitions have been scaled back, Vidio CEO, Sutanto Hartono, has underscored the platform's ongoing commitment to local content "as the backbone of Vidio's future growth".

TV5, Nine Media strengthen ties, stronger GMA rival in the making

New partnership boosts news, entertainment platform in wake of CNN Philippines' exit

Philippines' broadcast network TV5 has ramped up its play to rival market leader GMA Network, stepping into the gap left by the death of CNN Philippines at the end of January this year and expanding a previous agreement with Nine Media Corporation's Channel 9.

In early February, TV5, owned by Manny Pangilinan's MediaQuest Holdings, said it was tying up with former CNN partner, Nine Media Corporation, to launch family-oriented free-TV channel, RPTV.

The new channel, which went live on 1 February – a day after the nine-year-old CNN Philippines went dark – offers a mix of news, sports and entertainment and is available across analogue and digital network, cable/satellite, and on the Signal Play streaming app.

The previous deal with Nine Media gave Channel 9 rights to TV5's PBA and *Eat Bulaga!*, which aired on weekends.

MediaQuest president and CEO, Jane Basas, says the upsized alliance is the result of both parties recognising "a good opportunity for a more robust collaboration".

She describes the new channel as "unique" in that it combined "some of the most sought-after sports and entertainment content that the MediaQuest group has to offer".

The partnership with Nine Media is being watched closely for the impact it may have on the fortunes of TV5, which moved up after the exit of ABS-CBN from the national broadcast channel landscape.



From left: TV5 president and CEO, Guido Zaballero; Nine Media Corporation president, Benjamin Ramos; MediaQuest Holdings president and CEO, Jane Basas (picture: TV5)

But TV5 still trails market leader GMA Network.

One-time broadcast leader, ABS-CBN, meanwhile, launched its digital-only TV *Patrol Express* on YouTube and Facebook on 7 February.

The new daily (Mon-Fri) show, an extension of one of the country's best-known news brands, offers a rundown of the day's biggest stories presented by ABS-CBN's Jeff Canoy and anchor Denice Dinsay.

The nine-year-old CNN Philippines signed off following years of "significant financial losses," according to Nine Media Corporation.

The Manila-based media company licensed the CNN brand from CNN Worldwide/Turner Broadcasting Corporation. CNN's international feed continues to air in the Philippines.

contentasia

The Big List 2024 directory

Reserve Now

www.contentasia.tv

f i y x in contentasia

The logo for ContentAsia Awards 2024 features three overlapping circles in red, blue, and yellow. The text 'CONTENTASIA AWARDS 2024' is centered within the red circle.

**CONTENTASIA
AWARDS
2024**

A large blue circle containing the text 'Entries Now Open!' in white.

**Entries
Now
Open!**

**Deadline
4 March 2024**



The One Enterprise content investment, ambitions soar

Multi-platform Thai media/production house ramps up across TV, streaming brands

Thai free-TV channel, GMM25, extends its Valentine's Day vibe with new prime-time romantic drama, *Beauty Newbie*, which premieres on 19 February at 8.30pm with a simultaneous debut on regional streaming platform, Viu.

Starring Thai A-listers Baifern Pimchanok and Win Metawin, *Beauty Newbie*'s release comes two weeks after the launch of sister entity, one31/oneD's first originals slate of five premium dramas.

Both one31 and its oneD app and the GMM25 channel are part of Thai-listed The One Enterprise, which is also involved in concerts, events and idol marketing as part of a cross-platform media business.

The one31 channel is a consistent top five channel in Thailand, behind BEC World's 3 and Channel 7, which took the top two spots in October, November and December 2023. One31 ranked third in October, giving way to Mono29 in November and December, according to Thailand's Adteb. GMM25 ranked 13th in October, November and December 2023.

The oneD Originals banner, unveiled in Bangkok this month, underscores The One Enterprise's expanded focus on audience segmentation.

The strategy includes channeling resources into a broader range of premium drama productions along with a significant increase in production spend.

From July to December last year, the company spent THB63 million/US\$1.8 million of its IPO proceeds on programming/production development, The One Enterprise said in a stock exchange filing.

This represents its highest six-month content spend since its IPO in November 2021, bringing the 2023 total to THB118 million/US\$3.3 million – more than double 2022's total of THB58 million/US\$1.6 million.

oneD's five new original dramas for 2024 include *Bangkok Blossom*, about a woman fighting for her dreams and humanity; *The Empress of Ayodhya*, starring Mai Davika and Film Patarapat in the story of an empress



directed by Sant Sri-kaewlor with the screenplay by Siriluck Srisukon; and *Thicha*, starring Baifern Pimchanok, Lookgade Metinee and Patchra Chiratiwat in a tale of revenge directed by Koo Eakasit.

2024 release dates for the five have not been confirmed.

The new oneD strategy follows a concerted effort in the second half of 2023 to develop teen-focused content for free-TV channel one31, including titles such as *Laws of Attraction*, *Love in Translation* and *Across The Sky*, directed by Boy Takonkiet (*My Lovely Bodyguard*).

Coming up next week, GMM25's 14-episode *Beauty Newbie* is based on Maenggi Ki's webcomic, *My ID is Gangnam Beauty*, from Wattpad Webtoon Studios.

This is GMM25's first Wattpad Webtoon adaptation and the platform's first beauty-themed series.

The show also raises the bar in terms of narrative depth and character development, the company's production bosses say.

Beauty Newbie, which pairs Metawin (*F4 Thailand: Boys Over*

Flowers) and Pimchanok (*A Tale of Ylang Ylang*) for the first time, is about college freshman Liu, played by Pimchanok, who dreams of becoming a perfumier and decides to undergo plastic surgery after being bullied her whole life for how she looks. Things don't, however, go according to plan.

Metawin plays campus heartthrob Guy, and Great Sapol stars as graduate student and the guy-next door, Saint, who judges people by their hearts and not by their looks. Jane Ramida plays Liu's first-ever friend, Faye.

The series is directed by Mui Aticha Tanthanawigrai (*F4 Thailand: Boys Over Flowers*).



Baifern Pimchanok in *Beauty Newbie*, GMM25

JKN/Miss Universe drama continues

Singapore given hero's role in new cross-border story

Thai-listed JKN Global Media has submitted a tangle of reasons for confusion surrounding its US\$16-million sale of a 50% stake in the Miss Universe Organisation.

In a new list of clarifications demanded by Thailand's Stock Exchange, the company also continues its attempts to untangle a deal/disclosure timeline that criss-crosses its November 2023 business rehabilitation/bankruptcy filing in Thailand.

The timeline being offered clearly attempts to put distance between the sale and the rehabilitation filing, and to sidestep questions about disposal of assets while under bankruptcy protection.

At the same time, JKN Global stopped short of committing to exactly how the proceeds of the sale would be used, saying financial advisors were working on a utilisation plan that would be disclosed by Thursday (15 February).

No mention was made of debt repayments.

The new clarifications, submitted to Thai financial authorities last week (6 February), gave Singapore the hero's role in a multinational high-drama playing out on multiple stages around the world.

The Miss Universe sale to a Mexican conglomerate is being run through JKN's wholly owned Singapore-registered subsidiary, JKN Global Content Pte Ltd, which is envisioned as the "main entity in expanding business to various countries".

Some of the latest confusion has roots in November last year, when JKN Global filed for business rehabilitation after missing bond repayment deadlines.

A Bankruptcy Court hearing was set for 29 January – and delayed until first week March because JKN's rep was ill.

About a week before the hearing was scheduled to take place, JKN and its new Mexican partner announced the Miss Universe sale, which, they said, had been agreed in October last year, prior to the rehabilitation filing.

Now the Thai stock exchange wants

to know all about the timelines, including an ownership restructure that appeared to have happened on the eve of the bankruptcy filing.

The exchange is also asking questions about who gets the money from the Miss Universe sale and who will be responsible for compliance.

Just before the Lunar New Year holidays, in its 6 February clarification on the rationale and necessity for restructuring JKN Legacy (which falls under the Singapore-registered JKN Global Content) from direct to indirect ownership, JKN said this was a "preparatory restructuring to accommodate the expansion of the MUO business into the global market".

Singapore, the company said, was envisioned "as a catalyst to enhance business opportunities".

JKN extolled Singapore's "favorable business position and potential", listing the country's status as the "international hub of Asia", its rich source of skilled personnel, currency advantages and flexible financial management, and the most powerful law enforcement in Asia, with the highest global standards.

JKN told the Stock Exchange that it had been looking for investors in JKN Legacy before it realised that the parent company would need Central Bankruptcy Court protection.

JKN said conversations with Mexico's Legacy Holdings Group boss, Raul Rocha Cantu, dated back to August last year.

The company said it realised during negotiations for the investment term in JKN Legacy that a shareholding restructure was necessary to "suit international investors better".

The shareholding restructure that shifted JKN Legacy from direct to indirect ownership was done before the petition for rehabilitation was filed, and that the move was "not intended to evade the legal implications under the provisions of the Bankruptcy Act".



contentasia

“Unbelievable, to say the least,” arson accused families say International film community continues to rally around filmmaker Jade Castro

The global indie film community continues to rally around Filipino filmmaker Jade Castro, who was arrested on 1 Feb with three friends for allegedly hijacking a jeep at gunpoint and setting the vehicle on fire.

A preliminary hearing is being held and “we’re all praying for a miracle,” the Free Jade Castro NOW Facebook page said yesterday.

As international organisations take up the call for Castro’s release, at home questions are being asked about the warrantless arrest and the police’s claim that the detention was lawful.

Free Legal Assistance Group (FLAG) chairperson, lawyer Chel Diokno, took to social media saying that “the warrantless arrest of film director Jade Castro and four others is unfounded” and that “based on [the info] we gathered, they have become victims of crooked law enforcement”.

Meanwhile, the Philippines’ justice secretary, Jesus Crispin Remulla, has gone on record asking Quezon provincial prosecutors to resolve to ensure that “justice is dispensed with appropriately and expeditiously,” according to a Department of Justice statement.

Asking “why is film director Jade Castro still in prison?”, local news site, Rappler, said details were emerging that cast doubt on police claims of a lawful apprehension.

The four men, who were still in detention on Monday, have denied the charge and say they were nowhere in the area at the time.

Families, friends and supporters have taken to social media, saying the four had no motive and that the police have found no evidence.

According to widely quoted witnesses, the men were at the Cocolunay festival in Mulanay/Quezon at the time of the 31 January jeep attack more than 20 kilometres away.

The 45-year-old Castro, along with friends Noel Mariano, Ernesto Orcine and Dominic Ramos, were taken into custody the following day. Local police



Jade Castro

then issued a public statement identifying the four as the arsonists.

“This is unbelievable, to say the least,” a statement from the families of the four men said on 7 Feb as the detention continued into a second week.

“That they were arrested without due process, their mugshots released to and run by media outlets, together with a press statement by the police declaring the case solved prior to any thorough and complete investigation is unjust, unlawful, and inhumane,” the families added, demanding a “transparent and fair investigation,” the families said.

Multiple film bodies have weighed in, including the Directors Guild of the Philippines and the Philippine Center of International PEN.

Local calls for Castro’s release, along with the fund-raising campaign, have spread globally.

On Thursday (8 Feb), as much of Asia prepared to shut down for the Lunar New Year holidays, the Netherlands-based International Coalition for Filmmakers at Risk (ICFR) issued an urgent

call for Castro’s release.

Members of the Asia-Pacific Film Institute called for support for the fund-raising campaign launched to cover legal costs.

The ICFR said it was “deeply worried” about Castro’s wellbeing, and called upon the Philippine authorities “to immediately and unconditionally release Jade Castro and his companions”.

The ICFR statement was signed by the International Film Festival Rotterdam, the International Documentary Film Festival Amsterdam, and the European Film Academy

Castro made his directorial debut with 2007 romantic drama, *Endo*, and going on to direct romcom *My Big Love*, gay-themed zombie comedy *Remington and the Curse of the Zombadings*, and comedies *My Kontrabida Girl* and *My Lady Boss*. He also directed drama series, *Beki Boxer*, in 2014.

Philippines police and legal authorities have told local media outlets that the four men will have their day in court and an opportunity to present their case.

Digital + Print + Online + Market Dailies + Summit + Awards

Connecting your brand and products with 12,400 + verified executives in the Asia-Pacific content space, across all platforms in 22 APAC markets. ContentAsia's clear editorial focus on Asia delivers all the latest trends, market developments, influences, information & analysis that make a difference.

Be included!

Contact

Leah@contentasia.tv (Americas/Europe)
Malena@contentasia.tv (Asia Pacific/Middle East)
CJ@contentasia.tv (China/Taiwan)



“I’m in awe of TV writers,” says *Coolie* director Arvin Chen

Taiwanese-American filmmaker highlights shift from romance to multicultural stories



Picture by Richard Foreman

Taiwanese-American director, Arvin Chen, isn't thinking of his recent shift from film to TV as anything like a giant leap.

Known as one of contemporary Asian cinema's strongest voices, Chen says his TV projects – *Pachinko* and *Coolie* – are more of a seamless journey from film into a much bigger cinematic world.

About six weeks into the *Coolie* shoot, Chen says he doesn't think of *Coolie* (or *Pachinko*) as traditional TV.

“I just think, ‘wow, I get to work on like a project of this scale’,” he says.

Like *Pachinko*, *Coolie* is a sweeping period piece, with a multi-cultural international cast.

The first project from film-industry veteran Meileen Choo's three-year-old Singapore-based Cathay Film Company, *Coolie* is about an illiterate young Chinese village girl who sets off from southern China to marry a rebel son working

on a sugarcane plantation in Cuba.

The US\$20-million eight-episode limited drama, set in the 1860s, started shooting in the Dominican Republic and Panama in December 2023. Chen is directing five of the eight episodes.

Hong Kong actress/model Louise Wong (*Anita*) stars alongside Taiwan's Joseph Chang (*Eternal Summer*), Colombia's Mauricio Henao (*Fake Profile*), and Cuba's Camila Arteché (*Sergio & Serguei*).

Coolie continues Chen's growing fascination with the intertwining of cultures.

“When I was more a writer-director, I was very interested in romance and romantic comedies and that world... In the last few years, I've become more interested in telling multi-cultural stories.

“As I work more as a director and less as a writer-director, I kind of want to tell multi-cultural stories... it seems organic to who I am, organic to how I've been

working. It's more than just the subject itself. That type of story just seems to be more interesting to me.”

If he's happy to swing between film and TV as a director, Chen has no plans to follow his movie screenplays like *Au Revoir Taipei* and *Will You Still Love Me Tomorrow* with writing TV scripts.

He says a 90-page film script takes him about a year to write. “I think of, oh my god, eight episodes or 10 episodes... I can do it as a director, but as a writer, that's just too much story for me to deal with.”

“It's really hard to write a feature film. I'm in awe of TV writers, people who are able to write that much and think at that scale,” he adds.

“That's definitely, I think, beyond my capabilities as a writer to write that much content,” he says, adding: “I just don't think I could do it”.

What's on where...

February 2024	22-23	SPORTEL Rendez-vous Bali	Bali, Indonesia
March 2024	3-6	Australian International Documentary Conference (AIDC)	Melbourne, Australia
	11-14	Hong Kong International Film & TV Market 2024	Hong Kong
	13-14	AVIA: Asia Video Summit 2024	Hong Kong
	19-21	Series Mania Forum 2024	Lille, France
April 2024	5-10	Canneseries 2024	Cannes, France
	6-7	Mip Formats/Mip Doc 2024	Cannes, France
	7	Mip Drama 2024	Cannes, France
	8-10	Mip TV 2024	Cannes, France
	25	AVIA: Future of Video 2024	Mumbai, India
May 2024	28	AVIA: Satellite Industry Forum 2024	Singapore
June 2024	6-8	Telefilm Vietnam 2024	Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam
	17-18	DW Global Media Forum 2024	Bonn, Germany
	24-27	Sunny Side of the Doc 2024	France
July 2024	3-5	15th Content Tokyo	Tokyo, Japan
August 2024	20-21	ContentAsia Summit 2024	
	22	ContentAsia Awards 2024	
September 2024	3	AVIA: Korea in View 2024	Seoul, Korea
	5	Japan: Korea in View 2024	Tokyo, Japan
	24-26	APOS 2024	Bali, Indonesia
	26-29	Gwangju Ace Fair 2024	Gwangju, Korea
October 2024	10	AVIA: Vietnam in View 2024	Ho Chi Minh, Vietnam
	19-20	MipJunior 2024	Cannes, France
	21-24	Mipcom 2024	Cannes, France
December 2024	3	The ATF Leaders Dialogue 2024	Singapore
	3	AVIA: OTT Summit 2024	Singapore
	4-6	Asia TV Forum & Market /ATF 2024	Singapore

Turkish drama tops Pakistan demand

Ottoman Empire epic beats *Game of Thrones*, *Money Heist*

Turkish drama continues its reign in Pakistan, attracting more demand than any other title measured by data science platform Parrot Analytics in the market.

Long-running Ottoman Empire historical epic, *Kurulus: Osman* from Bozdağ Film, narrowly beat HBO's *Game of Thrones* and Netflix's *Money Heist* to the top spot for the week of 29 January to 4 February.

The only local title on the list for the week was Hum TV drama, *Rah E Junoon* (2023), directed by Syed Ahmed Kamran.

The series stars Danish Taimoor as an obsessive lover opposite Komal Meer as a woman who becomes entangled in his drama.

Demand in Pakistan remains heavily influenced by Indian entertainment, topped by *Bigg Boss*, the local version of *Big Brother*.

Other Indian titles on the list for the week include Indian sitcom, *Taarak Mehta Ka Ooltah Chashmah*, *Mirzapur* and *Farzi*.

Top 10 overall TV shows: Pakistan

Rank	Title	Difference from Market Average
1	<i>Kurulus: Osman</i>	19.73x
2	<i>Game of Thrones</i>	19.54x
3	<i>Money Heist (La Casa De Papel)</i>	16.61x
4	<i>Bigg Boss</i>	15.67x
5	<i>Cocomelon</i>	15.66x
6	<i>Rah E Junoon</i>	15.13x
7	<i>Taarak Mehta Ka Ooltah Chashmah</i>	14.79x
8	<i>Jujutsu Kaisen</i>	14.58x
9	<i>Bebefinn</i>	14.07x
10	<i>Big Brother (US)</i>	13.99x

Top 10 digital originals: Pakistan

Rank	Title	Platform	Difference from Market Average
1	<i>Money Heist (La Casa De Papel)</i>	Netflix	16.61x
2	<i>Rah E Junoon</i>	Hum TV	15.13x
3	<i>Bebefinn</i>	Netflix	14.07x
4	<i>Hazbin Hotel</i>	Amazon Prime Video	13.38x
5	<i>La Granja De Zénon</i>	Youtube	11.92x
6	<i>Nas Daily</i>	Facebook Watch	11.18x
7	<i>Mirzapur</i>	Amazon Prime Video	11.15x
8	<i>Loki</i>	Disney+	10.98x
9	<i>Farzi</i>	Amazon Prime Video	10.59x
10	<i>Hum - I'm Because Of Us</i>	ALTBalaji	10.44x

Date range: 29 January-4 February 2024

The total audience demand being expressed for a title, within a market. Audience demand reflects the desire, engagement and viewership, weighted by importance; so a stream/download is a higher expression of demand than a 'like'/comment. In this dataset we are comparing the demand that exists for each series in this market, against the average TV show. A difference of 1x represents the market average and 10x means a series is ten times more in demand than the average TV show in this market



Editorial Director

Janine Stein
janine@contentasia.tv

Events Manager

CJ Yong
cj@contentasia.tv

ContentAsia Marketing & Awards

Heather Berger
heather@contentasia.tv

Design

Rae Yong

Research

Rhealyn Rigodon
iyah@contentasia.tv

Associate Publisher

(Americas, Europe) and VP,
International Business Development
Leah Gordon
leah@contentasia.tv

Assistant Publisher

(Asia/Middle East)
Malena Amzah
malena@contentasia.tv

To receive your regular free copy of **ContentAsia**, please email contentasia@contentasia.tv

Published fortnightly by:
Pencil Media Pte Ltd
www.contentasia.tv

Copyright 2024 Pencil Media Pte Ltd.
All Rights Reserved.



Daily news with
ContentAsia Insider
email malena@contentasia.tv for
subscription details