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Microdrama studio facilities scale up

Dedicated vertical production sets follow viewing boom

Studio facilities across Asia have started allocating dedicated space for vertical video production and new sets are going up as the microdrama race intensifies.

Encouraged by outsize growth and soaring financial projections, production facilities are clearly eager to accommodate tight budgets and tighter schedules with custom-created sets that bump right up to each other.

In this every-minute-counts environment, insiders talk about one-stop shops that allow them to film, for example, scenes in a hospital, a supermarket and a baseball management office located mere steps away from each other.

The full story is on page 5



Countdown to **TIFFCOM**

Tokyo show highlights global collaboration, animation, IP growth

The three-day Tokyo International Film Festival Content Market (TIFFCOM) opens in Tokyo on 29 November with a wide-ranging series of conversations covering everything from animation to global content development. Filosophia founder/CEO Tetsu Fujimura, who also founded Gaga Corporation, will deliver the keynote - "The Future of Japanese Intellectual Property in Global Adaptations".

The full story is on page 2





Int'l collaboration focus @TIFFCOM

Tokyo show highlights animation, IP growth

The three-day Tokyo International Film Festival Content Market (TIFFCOM) opens in Tokyo on 29 November with a wide-ranging series of conversations covering everything from animation to global content development.

Filosophia founder/CEO Tetsu Fujimura, who also founded Gaga Corporation, will deliver the keynote - "The Future of Japanese Intellectual Property in Global Adaptations".

The 20 sessions that are part of this year's 22nd edition include a special focus on Japanese animation, Tetsu Fujimura organised by the Association of Japanese Animations. The session follows last year's recognition of the sector as one of the country's core industries, and the release of data that shows steady sector growth since 2010. This has driven a target of ¥20 trillion/US\$135 billion by 2033 from

Asian storytelling sensibilities; Polly Yeung, who will talk about growing international interest in Asian narratives; and Samuel Choy (McDull and The Excreman), among others.

International co-production trends will be presented by the Broadcast

Program Export Association of Japan (BEAJ), which will also showcase initiatives designed to connect Japanese broadcast content with partners in the rest of the world. Japan's commercial broadcasters also take

part in the conference pro-CEO, Filosophia Inc. gramme, presenting strategies that have transformed once-inwardlooking businesses into global sys-

> growth. Ahead of the market, Nippon TV says it will also include the develop-

tems able to drive overseas revenue



Hong Kong conversation in Tokyo will be led by Raman Hui, Polly Yeung and Samuel Choy

overseas markets, up from 2024's ¥4.7 trillion/US\$31.6 billion.

In addition to looking at key factors driving industry growth, the animation focus will feature the first public release of the Anime Industry Report 2025, based on statistical data from the 2024 industry survey, organisers said in the run-up to the market.

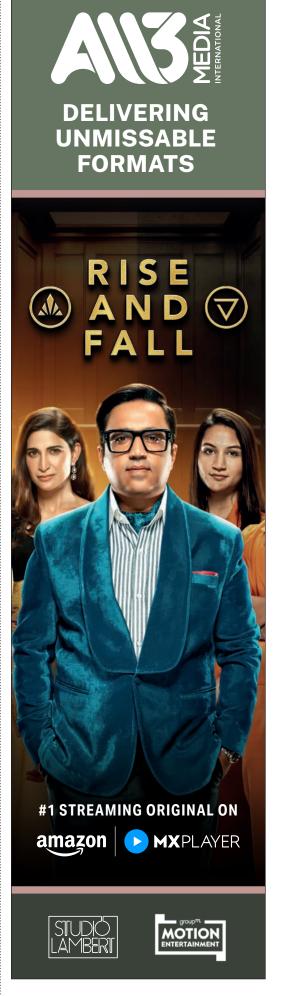
Hong Kong steps into the animation conversation in Tokyo with a session that looks at creative alliances and cross-cultural ventures. Speakers include Raman Hui, who will share his perspective on bridging Western and

ment of AI tech in its presentation.

TBS will showcase upcoming plans, including its new alliance with Viet Nam's national broadcaster, VTV, and the future of its global studio, The Seven, which produced Netflix's Alice in Borderland.

Other sessions include co-production and collaboration between Korea and Japan, the rise of Thai BL/GL, mainland Chinese originals, Japanese remakes in Turkey, and the future of Japanese IP in global production.

The Film Festival line-up will be announced on 1 October.





New Adventure Format MIPCOM Stand P4.C14 sevenonestudiosinternational.com





National Library Board's Ng Cher Pong tapped to lead Singapore's IMDA

Lifelong learning champion and veteran public servant Ng Cher Pong is replacing Lew Chuen Hong as CEO of Singapore's Infocomm Media Development Authority (IMDA) from 1 November. The lead-in kicks off with a CEO Designate title from 15 October.

Ng was most recently CEO of Singapore's National Library Board (NLB) from December 2019. He is credited with transforming the library system to include omni-channel service delivery, expanded reach and data-driven personalised recommendations.

Prior to the NLB, Ng was the founding CEO of Singapore's SkillsFuture lifelong learning initiative. In his three decades in public service, he has also held posts at the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Defence.

Japanese trio unite on mega period piece

TBS, U-Next, The Seven make giant promises for new show

Japanese commercial broadcaster Tokyo Broadcasting System (TBS), streaming platform U-Next and Alice in Borderland producer The Seven have teamed up for the first time on a large-scale period action series written by Masaaki Sakai (Cold Case 2 & 3, Small, Slow but Steady).

The as-yet-unnamed global project will be directed by Kazutaka Watanabe (Naotora: The Lady Warlord) and involves The Seven's chief producer Akira Morii, along with producers Mamoru Inoue and Kazuya Shimomura.

Action director Kensuke Sonomura (Baby Assassins), known for his fight choreography, is attached to the project.

VFX will be handled by Tomofumi Akahane (Yu Yu Hakusho) and character design by Yuya Maeda (The Legend & Butterfly).

Early info that accompanied the release of a 15-second teaser and a visual promised a "mega-scale" drama project, which creates an "ambitious new world" steeped in samurai culture, and promises to deliver "Japanese Sword Action Entertainment" unlike anything seen before in Japanese television.

The new title will, the partners say, "shake up the landscape of Japanese television".

The companies said the new show tapped into "the timeless allure of jidaigeki (period dramas) and samurai culture – genres already beloved worldwide" and that the partnership combined their strengths.





Microdrama studio facilities scale up

Dedicated vertical production sets follow viewing boom



COL Group's new Hengqin studio focuses on international locations such as New York

Studio facilities in Asia have started allocating dedicated space for vertical video production and new sets that recreate everything from New York streets to hospital lobbies are going up as the vertical video arms race intensifies.

Encouraged by outsize growth and soaring financial projections, production facilities are clearly eager to accommodate tight budgets and tighter shooting schedules of five or six days with sets that bump right up to each other.

In this every-minute-counts environment, insiders talk about the emergence of one-stop production shops that allow them to film on sets located steps away from each other.

The latest major build is at Hengqin in China's Greater Bay Area (Hong Kong, Macao, Guangdong). Backed by the COL Group, the 10,000 square meter studio is billed as a one-of-a-kind facility designed for international productions. The studio will be used for microdrama app FlareFlow's pipeline.

The Hengqin studio, scheduled to be operational by end-2025, will have 30 specialised sets and sound stages, with a focus on international locations such as New York, L.A. and other major cities

around the world.

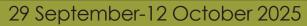
News of COL's plans come a few months after Hengdian World Studios took to the floor at the 2025 Busan Contents Market talking about its sprawling facilities, including dedicated space for vertical drama production. Hengdian World Studios has 600,000 square metres of studio space, 50 live-action sets, endto-end service, financial incentives and dedicated facilities for vertical formats.

Along with production company SpringReel (Chasing My Rejected Wife) and others, Hengdian is part of The Hengdian International Short Drama Alliance, formed at the end of 2024 to establish a "short drama production factory".

In Thailand, the Kantana Group has set up dedicated vertical drama space as part of its embrace of the format. This also includes its involvement in K-Shorts, a venture with Amarin TV and the MI Group announced at end-August 2025.

In Malaysia, Iskandar Malaysia Studios is also investing in an inventory of ready locations to attract microdrama projects. The studio, which has just opened its hospital/police station sets, has prisons, airplane cockpit/cabin, courtrooms and cafes in its sets pipeline.







Stop the bleeding: How to beat viewer churn

BoltOS - solving media's \$48 billion churn crisis

Media's dirty secret? Nearly half of all viewers are already planning their exit. With 47% churning annually whilst linear TV bleeds viewers at an eye-watering 13.2% per year, the industry is haemorrhaging \$48 billion annually. Publishers are burning millions to acquire customers who vanish faster than a Netflix bingewatch, whilst traditional monetisation models collapse under fragmented attention spans.

c ntentoso

This isn't turbulence – it's a full-blown crisis of connection. Consider this: 62% of subscribers are serial ghosters, signing up for that one must-watch show then vanishing without a trace. The brutal maths? Every dollar spent wooing customers sees nearly half walk straight out the back door.

The Immersive Panel®: New Ad Revenue with Zero Workflow Disruption The BoltOS Immersive Panel® doesn't

just patch the leak - it transforms the entire vessel. Instead of chasing attention that's already gone, we create experiences viewers actually stick around for.

Interactive ad formats don't interrupt - they captivate, boosting CPMs by 30-70% whilst keeping viewers engaged.

Linear TV bleeds viewers at an eyewatering 13.2% per year."

Jamal Hassim - CEO & Co-Founder

Our **Shop feature** strikes when desire peaks, turning "I want that" moments into instant purchases with 2x+ conversion. The Read panel weaves together scattered multimedia assets, recapturing revenue

that's been slipping to social media.

Our Reward feature turns fair-weather fans into ride-or-die loyalists generating 2.5x+ revenue through genuine connection. Meanwhile, our Al Viewing Companion doesn't just watch behaviour - it anticipates desire, multiplying conversion moments and unlocking ad revenue through insights you never knew existed.

revenue through five simple moves – no upheaval, no drama, just results. We're not bandaging the churn problem - we're rewriting the rules of engagement.

The bottom line? Publishers unlock 2x+

Description Next issue: Media's value perception crisis - why 47% of consumers think they're being fleeced and how we help you beat the competition.



Zee5 adds Jio's Bhagwat to slate

No date yet for exclusive streaming premiere

Zee5 Global has added exclusive global rights to Jio Studios' crime thriller Bhagwat in a deal. The release date for the new film, which follows Jio/Baweja's Mrs. in February this year, has not been confirmed.

Produced by Jio Studios in association with Baweja Studios & Dog 'n' Bone Pictures, Bhagwat stars Arshad Warsi in the story of Inspector Vishwas Bhagwat, whose investigation into a routine missing person case spirals into a web of deceit, secrets and suspected traffickina.

Bhagwat is directed by Akshay Shere. Mrs., also produced by Jio Studios and Baweja Studios, was a remake of Malayalam film The Great Indian Kitchen about a newlywed woman navigating patriarchal traditions after she gives up her dancing career to be a housewife.

Coupang picks up JTBC premium dramas

Streaming platform offers ad-supported libary titles



Sky Castle

Korean streamer Coupang Play has added a slate of flagship JTBC library titles to its platform for the first time.

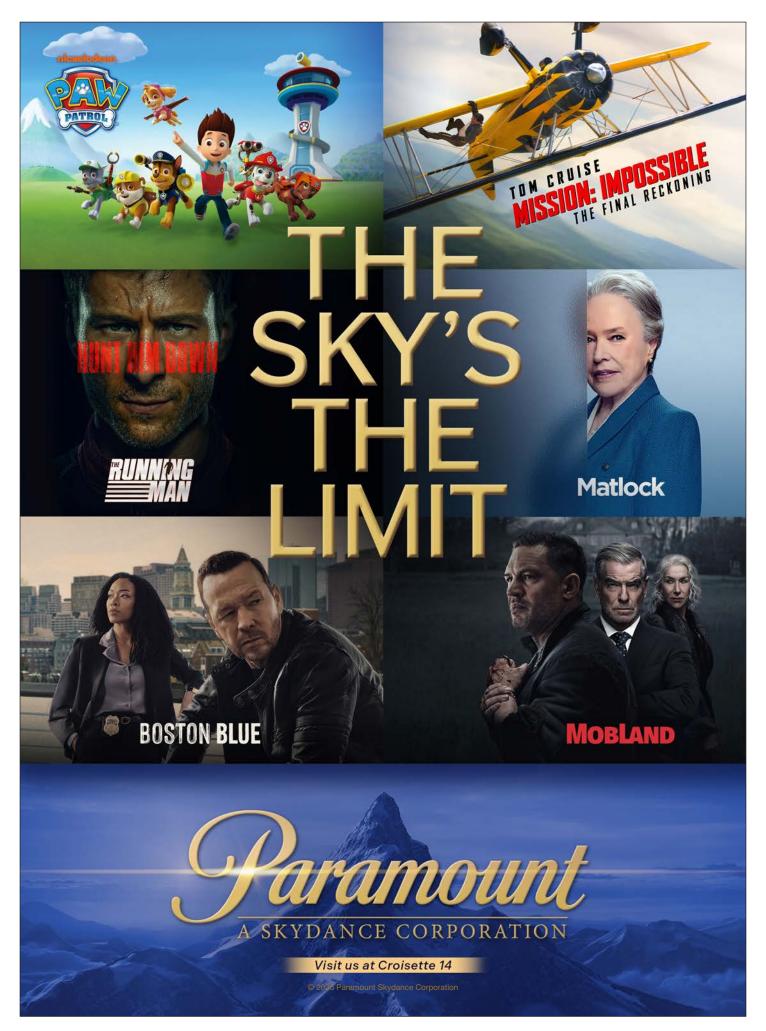
The titles - including award winners and blockbusters-in-their-time such as Sky Castle and The World of the Married - are ad-supported and available to both WoW and regular members.

The new licensing deal kicked in on

Friday (26 September).

The package includes The Youngest Son, which recorded a peak viewership rating of 30.1% and won numerous awards, as well as the 16-episode 2018 romance, The Beauty Inside; and Melo Is My Nature (2019).

Coupang said additional titles would be added.





2026 release for Fuji TV's Sheep in the Box

Writer/director Kore-eda Hirokazu explores tech advancement vs human values in new film



Daigo, Ayase Haruka star in Fuji TV's Sheep in the Box

Japanese broadcaster Fuji Television Network has started production on writer/director Kore-eda Hirokazu's latest film, Sheep in the Box. The film is expected to be released in Japan in 2026.

Set in the near future, the film is about a couple that takes in a stateof-the-art humanoid as their son.

Kore-eda (Shoplifters, Monster) says the project began with the idea of bringing the dead back to life using the latest technology.

"A few years ago, similar concepts had already been featured on Japanese television programmes and attracted considerable attention. I was interested in exploring the conflicting perspectives regarding how technological advancement clashes with human inner values," he adds.

An article he read in spring last year about the popularity of the 'resurrection businesses' in China was followed by a meeting with someone engaged in the field.

"It made me realise that such developments could occur in Japan as well, and with technology evolving at a pace far beyond what I had imagined, I felt that this reality might arrive sooner than expected," he says.

The title – Sheep in the Box – draws inspiration from French children's novel. The Little Prince.

The film stars Ayase Haruka (Our Little Sister, also by Kore-eda) and Japanese comedian Daigo in his first leading role in a feature film.

The film is produced by Fuji Television Network, GAGA, TOHO and AOI Pro.





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Astro returns MLS

11 Oct kick off for comedy-music show



Malaysia's Astro returns comedy/music competition show Muzikal Lawak Superstar (MLS) for a fifth season on 11 October. The new series' theme is "Clash of Empire", with performances by the 10 groups shaped by heroes of legendary world powers, such as Rome and China.

MLS will be broadcast live on Saturdays at 9pm for eight weeks on the Astro Prima channel, on demand on Astro Go and on streaming platform sooka.

Astro Prima channel head, Norzeha Mohd Salleh, described MLS as "a medium for searching for 'unexpected' comedy talent from among actors, singers, influencers and many others from outside the comedy world, but who have extraordinary comedy potential".

"Through Muzikal Lawak Superstar, we want to prove that comedy is not just a joke or a laugh, but an art that requires skill, creativity, imagination and sincerity in performance."

True-DTAC challenge fails

Thai court rejects consumer vs NBTC case

Thailand's long-running consumer challenge involving the merger of telco giants True Corp and DTAC may be on its last legs after the Central Administrative Court ruled in favour of the National Broadcasting and Telecommunications Commission (NBTC). The case was filed in October 2022.

The court said on Friday (26 Sept) that the NBTC had every right to pass a resolution acknowledging the business amalgamation.

The suit was filed in 2023 by the Thai Consumer Foundation and four others, who asked the court to revoke the NBTC's resolution. An appeal to the Supreme Administrative Court is possible within 30 days.

True has consistently maintained that the merger complied with all legal requirements and the challenge against the NBTC had no power to halt the deal.

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Celebrity Sabotage (6x60 mins) Genre: Non-Scripted Format, Entertainment **ITV Studios**

Contact: Augustus Dulgaro augustus.dulgaro@itv.com



Sins & Roses (45 mins) Genre: Drama

Kanal D

Contact: Eda Çamlı eda.camli@kanald.com.tr



Eshref Ruya (TBAx45 mins) Genre: Drama Inter Medya Contact: Pelin Koray pelin.koray@intermedya.tv



Boston Blue (60 mins)

Genre: Drama

Paramount Global Content Distribution

Contact: GDGSales@viacomcbs.com



Incognito (approx. 60x45 mins)

Genre: Drama

ABS-CBN Corporation

Contact: Wincess Lee-Gonzalez

Wincess_Lee@abs-cbn.com



Shahrarazad: Tears of Istanbul

Genre: Drama

OGM Universe

Contact: Ekin Koyuncu Karaman ekinkoyuncu@ogmuniverse.com



The American Revolution: A Film By Ken Burns, Sarah Botstein And David Schmidt (6x120 mins)

PBS Distribution



The Ghost Writer's Wife (125x15 mins) Genre: Drama – NHK Morning Series **NHK Enterprises Inc** Contact: AIZAWA Ayasa aizawa-ay@nhk-ep.co.jp



The Race (S1: 10x60 mins, S2: 16x60 mins, S3: Commissioned) Genre: Format/adventure reality Seven.One Studios International Contact: sales@sevenonestudios.com

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for full listings & details

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Korea 911: Flatline or Fight Back?

PLUS Formats Outlook, Box Office: A Summer Rebound

& a whole lot more...

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What's on where...

October 2025	9	AVIA: Archipelago Video Summit 2025	Jakarta, Indonesia
	11-12	MipJunior 2025	Cannes, France
	13-16	Mipcom 2025	Cannes, France
	28	AVIA: Northeast Asia Video Summit 2025	Tokyo, Japan
	29-31	TIFFCOM 2025	Tokyo, Japan
November 2025	4-7	Taiwan Creative Content Fest 2025 (TCCF)	Taipei, Taiwan
	4-5	Dubai International Content Market 2025 (DICM)	Madinat Jumeirah, Dubai
	26-28	World Content Market 2025	Moscow
	30 Nov-7 Dec	Jogja-NETPAC Asian Film Festival 2025	Yogyakarta, Indonesia
	29 Nov-1 Dec	JAFF Market 2025	Yogyakarta, Indonesia
December 2025	2	Asia TV Forum & Market 2025 (ATF) – ATF Leaders Dialogue	Singapore
	3-5	Asia TV Forum & Market 2025 (ATF) – Market & Conference	Singapore
	3-4	AVIA: Asia Video & OTT Summit 2025	Singapore
February 2026	22-24	Mip London 2026	London, U.K.
		The London TV Screenings 2026	London, U.K.
March 2026	17-20	Hong Kong FILMART 2026	Hong Kong
	24-26	Series Mania Forum 2026	Lille, Hauts-de-France
April 2026	23-28	Canneseries 2026	Cannes, France
June 2026	8-11	Nem Dubrovnik 2026	Croatia
	10-12	20th Busan Content Market 2026	Busan, Korea
	17-19	19th Content Tokyo 2026	Tokyo, Japan
	22-25	Sunny Side of the Doc 2026	La Rochelle, France
	24-26	Telefilm Vietnam 2026	Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam



Netflix sweeps Korean demand

tvN's Bon Appetit, Your Majesty tops charts



Bon Appetit, Your Maiesty

Top 10 overall TV originals: South Korea

Rank	Title	Difference from Market Average (x times)
1	Bon Appetit, Your Majesty	41.0
2	You And Everything Else	37.3
3	Saturday Night Live	25.8
4	Alien: Earth	25.8
5	Running Man	25.2
6	불타는 장미단	24.5
7	My Hero Academia	23.9
8	Hangout With Yoo	21.4
9	Culinary Class Wars	20.9
10	When Life Gives You Tangerines	19.6

Top 10 digital originals: South Korea

Rank	Title	Platform	Difference from Market Average (x times)
1	You And Everything Else	Netflix	37.3
2	Culinary Class Wars	Netflix	20.9
3	When Life Gives You Tangerines	Netflix	19.6
4	Mercy For None	Netflix	19.6
5	Low Life	Disney+	19.0
6	Squid Game	Netflix	18.4
7	Confidence Queen	Amazon Prime Video	18.2
8	Nine Puzzles	Disney+	18.0
9	Aema	Netflix	17.6
10	A Shop For Killers	Disney+	17.5

Date range: 15-21 September 2025

The total audience demand being expessed 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 10 times more in demand than the average TV show in this market





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