

realscreen™ The **best** in non-fiction ▶▶

realscreen's Radar Screen

Who are the brains behind the broadcasters?

by: Lindsay Gibb

Oct 1, 2007

Oliver Proebst

Director of programming

Planet TV (Germany)

Slots he programs: Proebst is responsible for seven primetime slots that cover science, history, biography, current affairs, wildlife, social issues and lifestyle. He's looking for programs of any length that are relevant to a German audience and that present new views and uncommon material. "The length doesn't matter, it's what you do with it that counts," he says.

How much he buys: Each year he buys approximately 500 programming hours of content, mostly through straight acquisitions. Planet TV occasionally partners with producers on a consultancy basis.

Advice for producers approaching his territory for the first time: "Let me put it like this," says Proebst, "the German TV market is so complicated and so conflict-prone that you have to be either a consultant or a lawyer if you want to come off." He's a little more encouraging when it comes to his advice on approaching him directly. He suggests that producers should know what they want and should heed the three 'P's: be patient, persistent and positive.

Favorite recent acquisition: First screened at this year's MIPDOC and awarded the Platinum Remi Award at the 40th Worldfest in Houston, *The Timebank - An Economy for Everyone* is Proebst's latest favorite to go out on his channel. "It is not very often that documentaries deal with economy, and it is even better that in this remarkable debut this is done in an instructive, clever and entertaining way," he says.

The last movie he saw that didn't have to do with work: *2 Days in Paris* by Julie Delpy. His review: "Great humor, a story told fast and funny, avoidance of clichés, eternal human questions - what more do you want?"

Final word: "I tend to believe that in the factual programming business - where everyday we look with our eyes wide open at reality, analyze society and look for trends - there might be very little that doesn't have to do with work. Which is not too bad, after all."