

## De Mol buys Reveille formats

MIP NEWS: Los Angeles producer-distributor Reveille, here in Cannes for the first time as an independent, has sold two of its new NBC formats to John de Mol's Talpa Media.

Talpa, which is launching a Dutch free-to-air channel in August, is closing a deal for finished tape and local production rights to Reveille's weight loss challenge *The Biggest Loser* and upcoming reality format *Meet Mr Mum*.

Reality looks set to be the Talpa channel's main counterpoint to Dutch football, since de Mol has also recently signed up Strix TV to produce a local version of *Survivor* as part of an overall reality output deal.



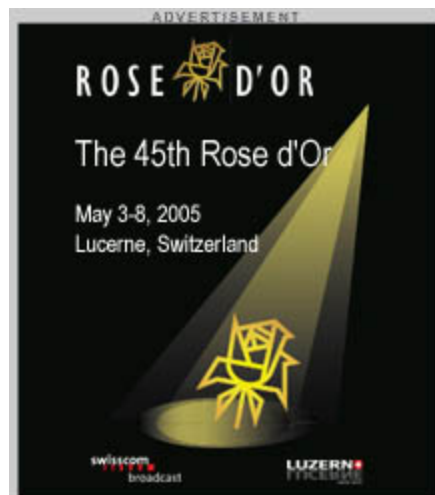
Stateside, *Meet Mr Mum* will run over six NBC primetime hours this summer, looking at how husbands cope when their wives take a break and leave them to cope alone. "It'll be a little like *Kids Say the Darndest Things*, reality mixed with comedy," said Reveille's vp of international distribution and creative affairs, Chris Grant (left).

Grant and Reveille chief Ben Silverman are here in Cannes shopping not only *Loser* and *Meet Mr Mum* but a pair of other comedy-reality properties, this time acquired from third parties.

From US-based Renegade Productions comes *Mobile Home Disasters* (1x60'), a backdoor pilot for the WB Network that Grant described as "Extreme Makeover: Home Edition meets the Beverly Hill Billies." The pilot airs on April 28.

Next comes *The Office Temps* from Canada's Lone Eagle Entertainment. Reveille is distributing Global TV's 10 commissioned hours plus local production rights. Fox TV Studios previously held US rights but these are now handled by Reveille.

While Grant has high hopes for these acquired comedy-reality formats, he said Reveille's best-seller right now is *Loser*. "It's gone into 15 territories,



we've just wrapped the Brazilian show for SBT and LivingTV in the UK is going ahead with a series."

Biggest Loser is also due for local production on MTV3 in Finland, Solar TV in the Philippines, Middle Eastern channel MBC, as well as a pan-Scandinavian version for SBS Broadcasting's channels in Norway, Sweden and Demark. The finished tape of NBC's show has also gone to a French-Canadian station, as well as Network Ten in Australia.

Grant said that finished reality shows from the US were increasingly finding homes internationally, "where local production can't really compete with the US budgets." However, he added, "there is nonetheless real value in local production as the best way for networks to connect with their viewers."

Reveille recently severed its parental connection with NBC Universal, a relationship that the US giant inherited after the NBC merger with Universal, and Reveille secured all international rights to its NBC reality shows in the process. The company is here in Cannes exhibiting outside the NBCU stand for the first time.

Ed Waller

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