

MIPCOM: THE MOTHER OF ALL ENTERTAINMENT TRADE SHOWS

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PASSIONE LIFESTYLE WAS IN CANNES TO
HEAR THE KEY VOICES FROM THE FILM
INDUSTRY AND THEIR INSIGHTS INTO AI,
WOMEN IN GLOBAL ENTERTAINMENT AND
THE TRANSITION OF THE MEDIA.

MIPCOM (or the Marché International des Programmes de Communication) is an annual international gathering of TV and entertainment executives. The trade show has taken place in Cannes each October – except when the event was moved online in 2020 – since its first edition in 1985. The ‘mother of all entertainment content markets’, MIPCOM sets the tone for global discussion and business opportunities within the industry.

Set within the refined yet productive atmosphere of Cannes’ Boulevard de la Croisette, studios and distributors showcase content. At the same time, producers and development heads brush shoulders, and world-première screenings celebrate the industry in style. In 2023, the city was once again brought to life by lively receptions and fringe events: none of the hotels, cafés or beach clubs could escape the buzz of MIPCOM’s networking sessions.

This year, China was named as MIPCOM’s 39th Country of Honour. The announcement was celebrated with diverse events highlighting the Asian nation’s contribution to film and television. Highlights included a discussion on *Wisdom in China: Original Chinese TV Formats Bring New Opportunities for Future International Cooperation* and the presentation of *The Three-Body*, a Chinese science-fiction drama by Tencent.

MIPCOM is about creativity, innovation, and passion. Industry professionals share experiences and showcase ideas in an annual feast of global collaboration. This year, Mediapro Studio CEO Laura Fernández Espeso hosted a fireside chat to share insights into her role and development as part of the celebrated Media Mastermind series. Her focus on creativity, innovation and passion has driven significant expansion across her company, including launching several international offices – and Mediapro Studio has developed a diverse portfolio of scripted and non-scripted films.

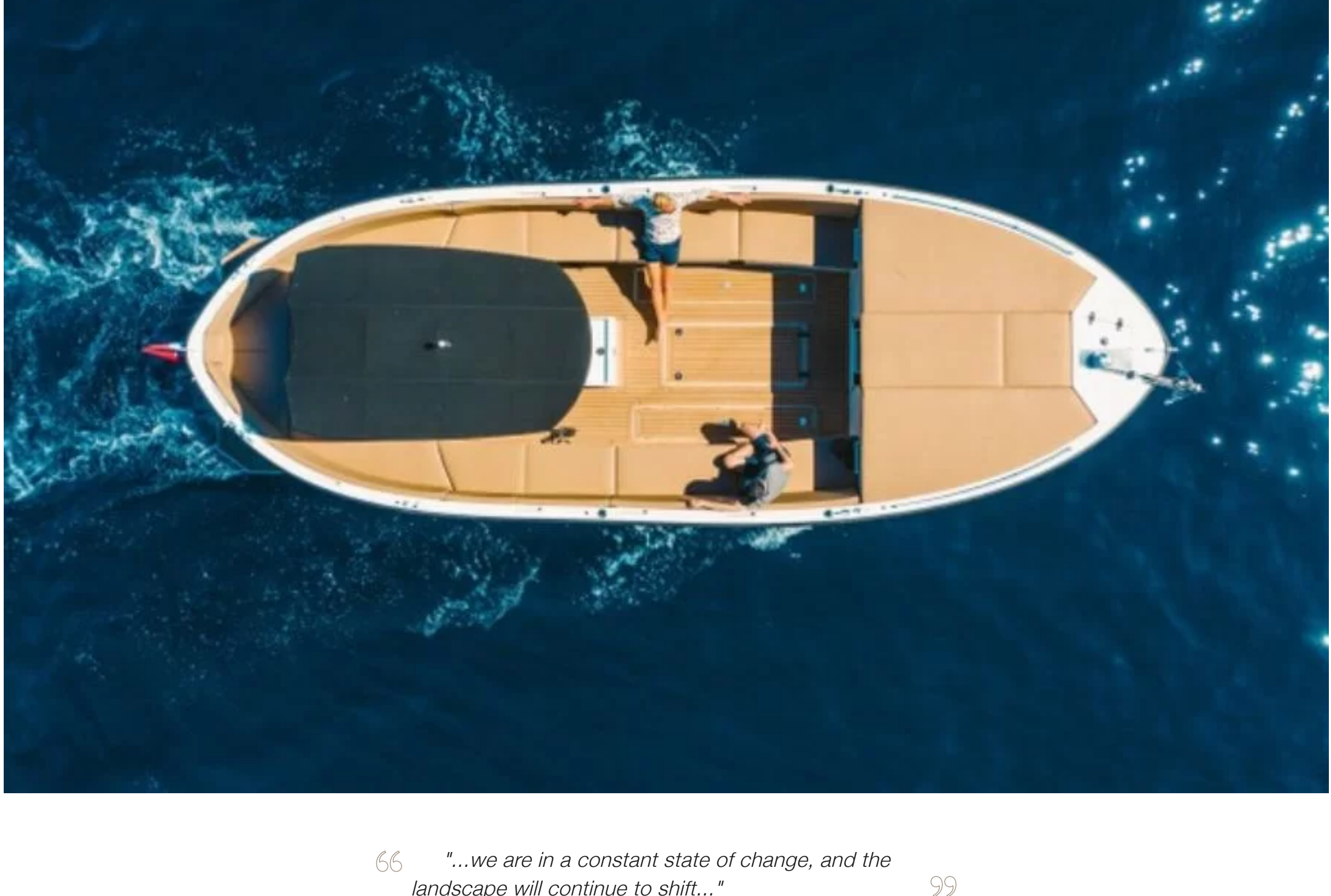


President of International for Warner Bros. Discovery, Gerhard Zeiler, presented the opening Media Mastermind keynote. For an increasingly streamer-led studio like Warner Bros., Zeiler notes that the last few years have been challenging. The company has had to create a solid strategic plan that will allow it to pivot from a traditional TV business to a model that focuses on consuming content on demand. Zeiler suggests that ‘media is in a once-in-a-lifetime transition’. Warner Bros. Discovery doesn’t necessarily need a monopoly on its content to reach as many consumers as possible; Zeiler discusses the idea behind selling some of their content to third parties. The brand is still very much geared towards distribution to offer viewers more autonomy over where and how they choose to watch Warner Bros. Discovery content.

Bob Bakish, CEO of Paramount Global and MIPCOM’s Personality of the Year, launched an equally invigorating discussion about the ever-evolving nature of the film industry. He suggests that while the two cornerstones of the industry – making engaging content and profiting from it – remain key, ‘we are in a constant state of change, and the landscape will continue to shift’. Bakish predicts a rise in production outside Hollywood and the United States, spurred on by both consumer demand and a need for fresh ideas. This is where companies that apply a more global approach to their business will flourish.

Having a global outlook and embracing new ways of doing things is crucial, especially in entertainment. Companies across all industries are experimenting with modern technology and strategies; artificial intelligence is making its mark on film. Among countless capabilities, AI can be used to create new content, generate scripts and images, assist with pre- and post-production, and produce videos of virtual people. In the future, we can also expect a greater focus on AI for casting, advertising and even music composition.

However, this poses the question: where does this leave the role of humans in the creative process? While artificial intelligence is undoubtedly a valuable tool for the entertainment industry, Matteo di Michele – bestselling author of *Artificial Intelligence* – suggests that it can’t replace the understanding, emotion, and critical thinking of its human counterparts. Simply put, generative AI lacks common sense; as Di Michele says, ‘AI is all syntax and no semantics’. We will watch carefully as the film industry strikes a balance between the delegation of the creative process to artificial intelligence and the preservation of human input.



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Bob Bakish, CEO of Paramount Global

Another focus at this year’s MIPCOM was children’s television. As children gain a greater understanding of artificial intelligence, the customisation of content is becoming a key trend; bespoke television, created by both producers and young viewers, is predicted to become significantly more popular. Candice Alessandra, research manager at Glance, discussed other universal trends across children’s TV, with a focus on creativity and community. Content with musical elements is more popular than ever, and educational shows are continuing to perform well. As Warner Bros. Discovery is also finding out, children’s shows presented on both streaming platforms and linear TV are experiencing increased engagement.