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8 February 2019

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New buyers light up Realscreen

Disney+ and Jeffrey Katzenberg's short-form service create buzz as they start to commission

BY JESSICA GOODFELLOW

Disney+ and Jeffrey Katzenberg's \$1bn (£760m) short-form mobile service were hot topics at the Realscreen Summit as fresh opportunities for producers emerge.

The buzz at the New Orleans market was about the 'aggressive' commissioning and acquisitions push by the US studio's forthcoming SVoD service and Katzenberg's Quibi (formerly NewTV), both of which are due to launch later this year.

During the market, it emerged that Disney+ has greenlit multiple series from ITV America and acquired one series from New York-based Talos Films, among a number of deals. "They seem to be really serious and open to business," one unscripted producer said.

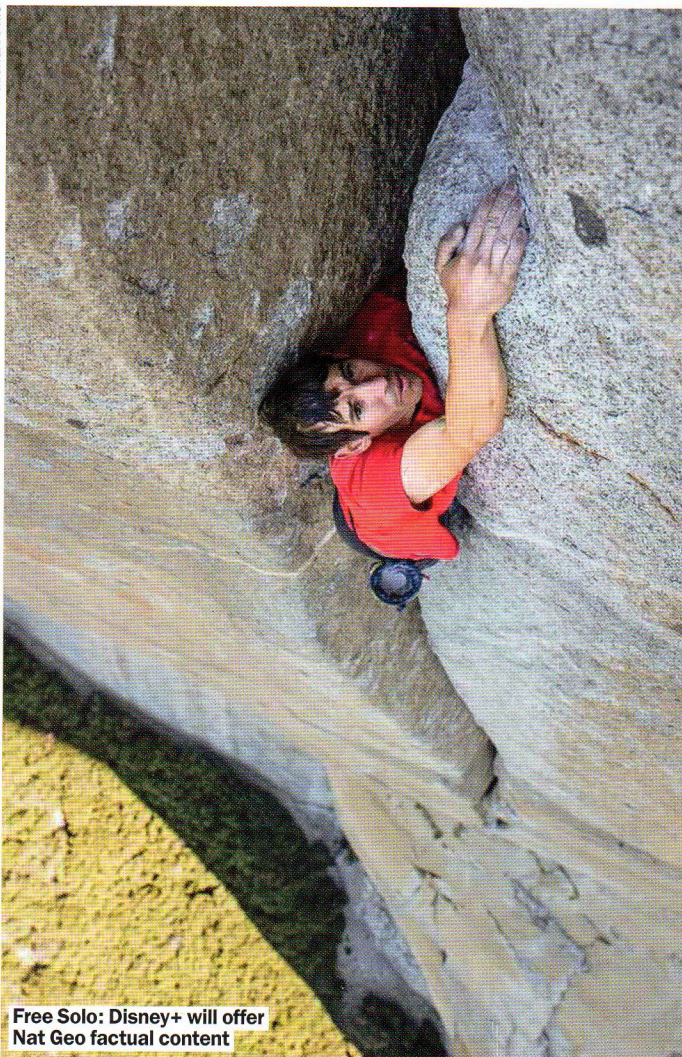
Unscripted tariffs

The factual deals are being overseen by Dan Silver, who was hired last year from Marvel as vice-president of unscripted at Disney+. Described by one producer as "very difficult to meet", Silver is taking pitches via agents as he appoints a team to meet demand. He is working alongside vice-president of scripted Sarah Shepard and senior vice-president Agnes Chu.

None of the trio was on the ground at Realscreen.

Disney's rival to Netflix is

NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC



Free Solo: Disney+ will offer Nat Geo factual content

We are transitioning our business to be able to produce for these [digital] platforms

DAVID GEORGE
ITV AMERICA

launching their own streaming services, it is the new race. They are all going to have to think about how they acquire market share – which means buying content."

ITV is among the businesses to have invested in Katzenberg's Quibi, alongside NBC Universal, Viacom, Disney and Fox.

At Realscreen, the start-up was represented by content exec Kate Presutti, while Katzenberg embarked on a week-long trip to London. He met with a range of UK producers, including ITV Studios and its labels, to discuss scripted and unscripted short-form ideas.

In the US, former Viacom Music and Entertainment Group president Doug Herzog and former co-president of *The Hollywood Reporter* Janice Min are acting as consultants for Quibi and have held producer meetings.

They are prioritising talent-led projects and are prepared to spend big to attract the best-quality creative.

The AVoD/SVoD hybrid will feature shows of around 15 minutes in length, with reported budgets of