

TV Production and Trends in Australia

April 2014

Based on the contribution of the Trade Commissioner of AWEX in Australia

In Australia, we have **5 major networks** that broadcast free digital television: **ABC, SBS, Seven Network, Nine Network and Network Ten.**

These networks broadcast to **major metropolitan areas**, while **various regional affiliates** cover rural areas. www.freeview.com.au/channels/default.aspx?regionId=1

1. Networks & Channels:

1.1. ABC: (Australian Broadcasting Corporation) www.abc.net.au/tv/programs/

ABC1: Australia's only national, commercial free public TV broadcaster with a diverse mix of programs (the best of Australian and international documentaries, cutting edge comedy, drama, entertainment, sport, news and current affairs and programs for kids of all ages).

ABC News 24: Offers 24 hour, commercial-free coverage of national and breaking news.

ABC2/4Kids ABC: ABC for Kids on 2 entertains pre-schoolers during the day time. In the evening, ABC2 provides adult contemporary programming including comedy, drama and documentaries.

ABC3: A commercial-free dedicated kids channel created for 6-12 year olds.

1.2. SBS: www.sbs.com.au/programs/

SBS One: Unique mix of Australian-produced and internal programs drawn from over 400 national and international sources. More than half of the content is in languages other than English, but can be enjoyed by all the viewers through SBS-Produced English language subtitles.

SBS2: Features more stories from here and around the world.

1.3. Seven Network: www.au.tv.yahoo.com/

7: Heartland Australia quality news, sport and entertainment (top US comedies and dramas, history of developing original Australian programs and major sporting events, like *The Olympics*, *AFL* and *Melbourne Cup*).

7Mate: Offers first-run comedies, reality and movies for the guys. It's man's best friend.

7Two: Brings you the very best of British television, comedies and movies.

1.4. Nine Network: www.channelnine.ninemsn.com.au/

9: News and current affairs programming, home-grown drama and family favourites from here and overseas, major sporting events (2012 London Summer Olympic Games).

Gem: A general entertainment and movie channel.

Go! An entertainment channel for the young and young at heart.

1.5. Network Ten: www.tenplay.com.au/

Ten: Leading Australian free-to-air TV network, with a focus on viewers 18-49 years. Australia's "big event" TV moments and features local and international hit dramas, light entertainment, comedy and factual series, as well as news, sport and current affairs.

One: Offers premium sport, HD factual programs and movies, and action and adventure.

11: A premium entertainment channel for the distinctly youthful.

1.6. Other Channels.

Additionally, there are also shopping channels like:

TVS, 4me, TVSN, Extra, Extra2, Fresh Ideas TV, Spree TV,...

And one indigenous channel called **NITV:** www.nitv.org.au/

There is also **paid TV:** www.foxtel.com.au/

Corporate websites of those TV networks:

<http://www.nineentertainment.com.au/>

<http://www.sevenwestmedia.com.au/home>

<http://tencorporate.com.au/home.htm>

<http://www.sbs.com.au/aboutus/>

<http://about.abc.net.au/>

1.7. Independent TV producers.

- <http://endemol.com.au/> : Formerly known as Southern Star Entertainment, Endemol Australia is the largest independent television production group producing some of the country's best known drama, entertainment and children's programs.
- <http://www.fremantlemedia.com.au/> : FremantleMedia Australia is the country's market leader in the creation and production of entertainment brands. With a proud and prestigious history, FremantleMedia Australia was formed in 2006 by the merger of two great names in the Australian television industry - Crackerjack and Grundy, who had both been acquired by global powerhouse FremantleMedia. The impact of FMA productions on the Australian cultural psyche is undeniably impressive, with programming such as *Neighbours*, *The X Factor*, *Australia's Got Talent*, *Celebrity Apprentice*, *Grand Designs Australia* and *The Farmer Wants A Wife* and original dramas such as *Wonderland*, *Wentworth*, *Mr & Mrs Murder* and *Better Man*.

2. Rating / audience:

Please find hereunder the link to the **Australian Government Website** that **rated TV programs** between 2008 and 2012: <http://www.screenaustralia.gov.au/research/statistics/tvratings.aspx>

Please find hereunder the link to the **Australia's Audio-visual heritage online** website: <http://aso.gov.au/titles/tv/>

OzTAM is the official source of television audience measurement (TAM) covering Australia's five mainland metropolitan markets and nationally for the subscription television. (www.oztam.com.au/Default.aspx)

Ex. Top 20 programs – 5 city ranking report – free to air tv – week 15 2014 – total individuals:

<http://www.oztam.com.au//documents/2014/OzTAM-20140406-EMetFTARankSumCons.pdf>

3. News.

✓ ***TV's new crop unveiled: what's hot in the battle of comic books, crime and comedy?***

"19 May 2014: A total of 54 new series, including dramas, single-camera comedies and multi-camera comedies, have been showcased in New York by the American networks to potential advertisers at an event known as the "Upfronts". On the week of the 19th May, those programs were screened to buyers from around the world, including Australia.

The first striking thing about the wave of new programs is the prevalence of comic book franchises. Equally fascinating is the ethnic diversity in what is on offer, though culture clash comedies in the American tradition tend to play with stereotypes. There are, as always, very few original ideas. Many shows are based on existing material, either Latin-American telenovels, books, comic books, TV programs, films or international programming, including several British comedies, a drama from Israel and another (*Secrets & Lies*) from Australia.

The fate of some programs in the Australian market is sealed: Nine has an output deal with Warner Bros, Ten with CBS Studios and Seven with ABC Studios. Ten's deal with CBS has recently been scaled back, which means many programs are on the open market."

Read the entire article and find the list of all the new series here:

<http://www.smh.com.au/entertainment/tv-and-radio/tvs-new-crop-unveiled-whats-hot-in-the-battle-of-comic-books-crime-and-comedy-20140520-zrh0e.html>

✓ ***ABC revives arts coverage with new show***

"12 June 2014: Despite the arts being part of the ABC's charter, the television broadcaster has been without a dedicated arts magazine show for three years. Covering the arts is part of the ABC's charter, and Aunty has justified these cuts by setting up an online arts portal and by claiming to broadcast "600 hours of weekly arts content to 3.9 million Australians". The closest you come to any arts programming on commercial TV is Channel Nine's *The Voice* or Seven's *The X Factor*, so beyond pop singing competitions the task has clearly been left to the public broadcasters. SBS provides terrific Eurovision coverage each year. But could you call it art?

ABC dropped the last incarnation of a dedicated arts show, Art Nation, along with two arts-related ABC-produced shows The New Inventors and The Collectors in August 2011. Why? Mainly because of the budget and the management decision to cut down on the internal production, and move to an outsourced production.

Now three years on, the ABC is back in the arts game and is launching a weekly TV show, The Mix, on Saturday. Hosted by the familiar and genial musician and journalist James Valentine, The Mix is part of ABC News 24's schedule, not ABC1. "The Mix has elements of the traditional and will be quite familiar to those who've watched Review or Arts Nation," Valentine told Guardian Australia.

The Mix won't have a 10-strong full time production team, a highly-paid presenter and an overseas travel budget. It will be produced by someone who already has a full-time gig elsewhere in the ABC and Valentine who will just add it to his list of duties. The Mix will make use of existing content from other news and current affairs shows - including arts reporter Siobhan Heanue - as well as create its own content."

Read more at <http://www.theguardian.com/culture/australia-culture-blog/2014/jun/12/abc-revives-arts-coverage-with-new-show>

✓ ***MasterChef souffle rises again***

"6 June 2014 : While Nine and Seven's news and current affairs hours at 6pm were the most-watched programs, MasterChef Australia rose to its best Thursday audience of the year and fourth best for the series with 931,000 viewers."

Read more at <http://www.theaustralian.com.au/media/masterchef-souffle-rises-again/story-e6frg996-1226945484982>

✓ ***Why Wentworth Is The Best Australian Show On TV***

"19 May 2014: *Wentworth*, a contemporary remake of cult '80s Australian soap opera *Prisoner*, itself based on British drama *Within These Walls*, was first aired in May 2013 and knew a large success (244,000 televisions across Australia). *Wentworth* was reigning supreme, breaking records as the most-watched drama in Foxtel's history, and it will continue so as the third season was recently confirmed. The article describes a few reasons why *Wentworth* is one of the best TV shows."

Read more at <http://junkee.com/wentworth-returns-tomorrow-night-and-you-really-should-watch-it/34406#3yAEhQDa4O2F442H.99>

✓ ***Home and Away, Neighbours, Hot Seat: The surprising TV shows that punch above their ratings weight***

"30 May 2014: We know the shows that rate. The blockbuster reality programs like My Kitchen Rules and The Voice that grab the big audiences (2 million viewers every night) and the big budget dramas we can't switch off. But what about the little shows that could? Those programs can punch above their weight in their timeslot and against their much bigger rivals. You might be surprised to learn that those shows also only deliver around 300,000-400,000 viewers for their respective networks. This article describes those TV show."

Read more at <http://www.news.com.au/entertainment/tv/home-and-away-neighbours-hot-seat-the-surprising-tv-shows-that-punch-above-their-ratings-weight/story-fnk8579h-1226937519486>

✓ ***Australia's network Ten to lose 150 staff, as News and Breakfast programs are cut***

"21 May 2014 : Australia's third ranked commercial TV network, Ten, announced Wednesday, 21st May, its axing three key News bulletins and its struggling breakfast TV show, *Wake up*, with job cuts from the program losses said to be in order of 150. A review has been conducted to "establish a new structure for Ten and to better allocate our resources, with the aim of improving our performance". *Wake Up* had a shaky start and has been unable to average more than 30,000 to 40,000 viewers a day – a tenth of the audience on rival Seven and Nine network's breakfast shows. However, *Ten Eyewitness News* at 5pm will continue to be produced locally in each market. It will continue to have local news, sport and weather, local presenters, local reporters and local production staff, and will continue to bring the best of local, national and international news to viewers."

Read more at <http://www.hollywoodreporter.com/news/australias-network-ten-lose-150-706170>