

EXCLUSIVE: New structure in place for WarnerMedia's EMEA region

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Priya Dogra, president, WarnerMedia Entertainment Networks, EMEA and APAC. Image credit: WarnerMedia.

Turner, a WarnerMedia company, has been present in Africa for more than 20 years, operating seven channels across the continent in 56 English, French and Portuguese speaking countries which include the internationally renowned news source CNN International, Africa's favourite kids' channels, Cartoon Network, Boomerang, Toonami and Boing, Africa's tailored blockbusters destination, TNT, as well as Adult Swim, WarnerMedia's brand dedicated to millennials.

WarnerMedia has distribution agreements with leading African TV platforms in all regions, including pan-African players such as DStv, as well as region-specific distribution players like MultiChoice's digital terrestrial television (DTT) platform, GOtv; the international digital TV operator, StarTimes; Canal+ Group's Les Bouquets Canal+ and others.

WarnerMedia has put new structures in place for the EMEA region, covering all WarnerMedia businesses. The new structures are as follows:

Priya Dogra, who leads the WarnerMedia International (WMI) networks businesses in EMEA and Asia (except for China) is taking on responsibility for the Warner Bros. businesses in each of those territories as well. She is also making some leadership changes within EMEA off the back of that.

The new organisational structure sees the WarnerMedia International EMEA operations, with the exception of HBO Max, governed by a structure of country managers, while at the same time supported by functional expertise with the elevation of the programming, production, kids & young adults and affiliate & ad sales functions.

These are the people who will be on her executive team. What these changes do is bring HBO, Turner and Warner Bros. together as one team and fully integrated:

- **Pierre Branco**, currently overseeing Northern Europe, MENAT and French & Africa regions for the networks business, will take on the role of country manager for Central and Eastern Europe, Nordics, Middle East and Africa. He also takes on an additional remit of head of affiliate & ad sales EMEA, defining and executing the strategy across EMEA in close coordination with the country managers and HBO Max, as well as WMI's wholesale distribution strategy with MVPDs and Telcos for new launches of HBO Max
- **Iris Knobloch**, currently a Warner Bros. Country manager, will continue in her role as country manager for France and Benelux and will add Germany, Austria and Switzerland (GAS) to her remit.
- **Willi Geike**, who has led the Warner Bros. business in GAS and Poland with tremendous success for 38 years will retire as planned from his country manager responsibilities. He will focus on leading the company's local German theatrical productions, reporting to Iris
- **Josh Berger** and **Barbara Salabe**, currently Warner Bros. country managers, will each continue in their roles – Berger as country manager for UK, Ireland and Iberia and Salabe for Italy. Berger will also report directly to Ann Sarnoff, head of WarnerMedia Studios and Networks Group, for the management of the Wizarding World Franchise. Each of the country managers will coordinate and optimise all commercial and group marketing activities in their respective regions, ensuring implementation of strategy and overseeing legacy Warner Bros. commercial functions (theatrical distribution, TV licensing, home entertainment, and consumer products) as well as local theatrical production, where relevant. They add the commercial activities for the WMI networks to their remit and in each instance will work closely with functional leaders in the US and international
- **Hannes Heyelmann**, currently senior vice president and managing director, Central and Eastern Europe and International Original Programming Strategy for the networks businesses, assumes the role of head of programming EMEA, leading content, windowing and acquisition strategies and execution, managing programming across the linear networks and HBO Max and has oversight over channel marketing and long-form creative services. Heyelmann will also work closely with Lesley Bailey and Cecilia Persson, who continue their leadership of the central EMEA kids and young adults team, encompassing regional content production, programming, digital, brand marketing and creative services, reporting directly to Dogra and to Tom Ascheim, President Kids, Young Adults and Classics for WarnerMedia
- **Antony Root** who currently oversees all original production for HBO Europe adds to his remit taking on the role of head of original production EMEA, building and leading the team responsible for producing GE original content offerings for the linear networks and for HBO Max across the region
- **Pedro Cosa** continues to oversee research for the WMI Europe networks

The team will also be working very closely with HBO Max colleagues as plans for HBO Max in the region take more concrete shape.