



## Building Continuing Drama Shows

A UK Exchange for Drama Professionals running Soaps, Telenovelas and Long Running Series

Soaps are Continuing Dramas and a massive powerhouse for any TV channel in terms of the high viewing figures and engaging returning audience. A specialised programme, which MediaXchange has been running since 2016, addresses the creative process through meetings with your counterparts in the UK.

Send the key creative team from your 'Soap' to spend time with writers, producers and TV channel executives of leading British Soaps and Continuing Dramas to analyse and explore the writing, long term planning and production process so key to long running success. Add the option for a continuing drama specialist to visit your full writing team at your home base to workshop on story planning and strategies for improving collaboration.

### Rationale

We appreciate the challenges, faced by the studio and channel executives, the producers and writers, in maintaining the number of episodes and high rating storylines when working with year round series which run weekly or 3-5 days per week. We hope you will see what we have termed the Soaprunner Exchange as a useful tool in supporting the creative team behind your show.

The UK is a particularly strong producer of 'continuing dramas' and 'drama serials' with each of the principal broadcasters airing more than long running show, whether one-hour or half hour, in primetime and daytime slots. It is a natural utilisation of the resources at our disposal to propose an exchange of processes between a successful show from Europe and shows from the same genre in the UK.

### The Soaprunner Exchange

The Exchange is designed to bring together between 6 and 8 representatives of a show's creative team, including the Head Writer/s, the Creative Producer and Producer with the Producer/s and Executive/s from the show's producing studio, TV channel and social media and digital interests to visit their opposite numbers in the UK.

Together the team will travel to the UK to meet with their colleagues at daily and weekly shows. Past Exchanges have spent time with the teams at *Coronation Street (ITV)*, *EastEnders (BBC)*, *Hollyoaks (Channel 4)*, *River City (BBC Scotland)*, *Ackley Bridge (Channel 4)* and *Holby City (BBC)* amongst others. Through a range of meetings taking place over a 3-day schedule, the visiting creative team is able to analyse and explore the writing and producing elements of these long running shows to compare and contrast with their own.

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Building on this joint experience, the second leg of the Exchange would follow up by arranging a further 2 days of sessions led by a specialist writing consultant or an experienced Executive Producer from the UK genre. Sessions would be held at your production offices. The writing, creative and production teams from past Exchanges have workshopped alternative options to evolve their current process and strengthen their story development and workflow strategies to improve the pace of production. Each Exchange is, however, designed around the interests and needs of the particular show and aims to build stronger links within the team.

### Programme Benefits

The challenges faced by you and your team no doubt include scheduling the production of a long running, serial drama, planning story development for the long, medium and short term future of the show. You may also be seeking ways to refresh and sustain your show. The Exchange, and the combined experience and insights from your fellow specialists, will offer up current practices and potential alternatives for you and your team to consider. Individual meetings with executive producers, line producers and story editors on the sets as well as members of the writing team and the channel commissioning executives, will provide views on the future for continuing drama.

### About MEDIAXCHANGE

The [link to our website](#) will fill in the more detailed background of our company which is now in its 27<sup>th</sup> year. We run a number of programmes and initiatives focussed on the exchange of creative, development, business and writing practices and our express mission is to inform and connect drama content creators and providers. 2018 saw us complete the inaugural year of *The Advanced Writing for Television Drama Programme, UK* funded by the High-end TV Levy and supported by Creative Skillset and the 3<sup>rd</sup> year of the annual Los Angeles based *Drama Summit West*, in association with C21 Media. The coming months will also include the 3<sup>rd</sup> year of the international forum *The Business of Scripted*, which is held in a different European media capital city each year; the 7<sup>th</sup> year of the *European TV Drama Series Lab* in Berlin (in association with the Erich Pommer Institut and Creative Europe); and the 20<sup>th</sup> year of our longest running programme, the *Showrunner Exchange*, held twice a year in Los Angeles.

**Drama crosses so many borders and engages audiences worldwide. We would welcome the chance to provide the Soaprunner Exchange for you and your creative team.**

### CONTACT

If this type of Exchange would be of interest to you and your Soap team, please do get in touch with our UK office, either by directing your email to [Alison Simmonds](mailto:alison@mediaxchange.com) or calling the London office on +44 (0) 207 734 2310.

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