

## **Euro deal for Romanian reality format**

**Miss Country Girl**, thought to be the first television format to emanate from Romania, has been picked up for local production by one of Europe's biggest broadcast groups.

Viasat Broadcasting has bagged local production rights covering 11 territories - Sweden, Denmark, Norway, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Bulgaria, Hungary, Slovenia, Czech Republic and Ghana.

The deal is understood to have been sealed by Viasat's VP of formats and entertainment Beata Hegedus, who was hired in January as to oversee original productions and format acquisitions across the broadcaster's European bases.

Modern Times Group-owned Viasat operates channels across Scandinavia, the Baltics and Eastern Europe. Its channel brands include TV3, TV6, TV8, TV1000, Nova TV, Viasat 3 and Viasat 4.

The Miss Country Girl format is being distributed by LA-based **Small World IFT**. The company's boss Tim Crescenti told C21: "We are also very close to announcing a US studio deal for the format and France already has an option."

Furthermore, a Ukrainian version of Miss Country Girl is in production for broadcaster 1+1.

The format has celebrities taking girls from rural villages and turning them into beauty queens ready for the catwalk. Romanian prodco Media Factory devised it and makes it for Prima TV. The show began its third season on Prima two weeks ago.

Boosted by the Viasat deal, Crescenti is heading to Mipcom this week to bag further sales of the format, as well as one he dug up in Singapore called **The Kitchen Musical**.

The format was recently acquired by Electus chief Ben Silverman for a US adaptation and is being made for the Asian market by AXN Asia across 18 countries, MetroTV in Indonesia, NTV7 in Malaysia and Studio 23 in the Philippines.

"We all strive to find properties that everyone around the world can relate to," said Crescenti, who previously unearthed other gems for the international markets, such as Thai hit The Fan, and Japan's Silent Library and global smash Dragons' Den.

Ed Waller

1 Oct 2011

© C21 Media 201