

# BROADCAST

## There's logic in local approach

By [Chris Curtis](#) | 3 October 2018

Amazon is tapping into the demand for more distinctive content



Where you're from matters – as even the most global of companies seem to understand.

[Amazon's](#) overarching ambition may be to sell just about everything to just about everybody worldwide, but it couldn't be clearer that it wants the Prime Video service to cater to local audiences.

That was one of the key messages from Amazon Studios boss Jennifer Salke and her European lieutenant Georgia Brown, as the SVoD giant made its biggest programming strategy statement since Roy Price left a year ago.

Having Georgia Brown and her boss Jay Marine based in London makes a difference in terms of Amazon's ability to develop more engaged relationships with producers, and to develop genuine autonomy to order those projects with a distinctive feel.

Among Amazon's global franchises, such as Jack Ryan and the forthcoming Lord Of The Rings, the sneak preview of Good Omens afforded to journalists this week proved just that.

US actress Frances McDormand is an inspired booking as the voice of God in Good Omens, but her opening salvo is more reminiscent of The Hitchhiker's Guide To The Galaxy than anything else, while two of the demons in episode one have more than a hint of Withnail And I about them.

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*“The power of the FAANGs has got traditional broadcasters ruffled”*

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The effect is to imbue the show with the kind of quirky British sensibility you would expect from a project created by Neil Gaiman and [BBC Studios](#), rather than something toned down to have broad appeal around the world.

The power of the FAANGs has got traditional broadcasters ruffled, but Brown was able to sit on stage at the RTS London Conference alongside [Channel 4's](#) Ian Katz and [Sky's](#) Zai Bennett and talk about a slate of around 10 active co-pros with British partners.

The fear is that this strategy changes, leaving British broadcasters fighting for scraps. But in the current circumstances, a speedy second window for Good Omens, a British-feeling drama with a tariff it could not afford alone, is a decent outcome for the BBC.

Distinctive local perspectives are also front and centre of Nick Curwin's vision for a new network of nations and regions producers.

Having already created and sold two major factual indies, he has an eye for a commercial opportunity, and his emerging plan for Matisse is the most obvious reaction yet from the production community to what is a huge opportunity.

Many millions will be pumped into programming outside of London in the next few years, which should have a dual effect: to change the tone and type of content thanks to different regional perspectives, and to create robust and sustainable creative hubs dotted around the UK.

That means there will be some industry winners – the race to become one of those is starting in earnest.



**Chris Curtis is the editor of Broadcast**

