

A piece of Cake



Angry Birds: Summer Madness – photo credit: Rovio Entertainment Corporation.

Cat Seddon gives her insight on the company behind hit TV shows for children and families around the globe.

CAKE Entertainment serves up a significant slice of the best entertainment worldwide for younger viewers.

Its distribution business sells the work of renowned producers including Rovio Entertainment, Fresh TV, Wildseed Studios, La Cabane, Thuristar, Paper Owl Films and Ragdoll Productions on hit titles including Angry Birds, Total Drama Island, YouTube sensation Lucas the Spider, pre-school CBeebies hits Kiri and Lou and Tish Tash, and school-based animated comedy Dodo.

The production business produces and co-produces shows, with projects including Angry Birds: Summer Madness for Netflix, Mush Mush & the Mushables for Warner Bros Discovery and Pablo for CBeebies.

Based in London, where the majority of its 25 employees work, CAKE holds its own with bigger operators because of its reputation for giving broadcasters and streamers the quality content they want.

Cat Seddon, CAKE's chief financial officer and chief operating officer, says: "Quality is a given, but we also try to ensure the content has the 'CAKE factor'." She points to the example of Pablo, which features an autistic central character. Another show, Mama K's Team 4, co-produced with South African studio Triggerfish, tells the tale of four teenage girls from Lusaka who become superheroes.

Rise of streaming subscription channels

CAKE has flourished despite the rise of streaming subscription channels in recent years, which has brought opportunities and challenges. Cat explains: "The growth of Netflix and others has generally meant we've been able to sell and produce more content, but they've also recruited much of the talent. We've been able to counter that because, as a smaller business, we can give our people opportunities and experience to develop and learn very quickly."

Not surprisingly, Cat believes the ability to identify and create good content that will sell in major global markets underpins CAKE's continuing success, but a willingness to evolve has also played a part.

She says: "When the company started around 20 years ago, it was a distribution-only business, but we've since moved into producing and co-producing. With the expertise we already had around what content sells, plus the relationships we'd developed with broadcasters, it's a shift that makes sense. It's also much easier now for people to distribute their own content in the digital world and undervalue the expertise of a distributor."

Challenges and opportunities for growth

With significant exchange rate fluctuations, the loss of the Ukrainian and Russian markets and a recent restructuring within major broadcasters and streamers, Cat says CAKE is looking at a "more challenging market" in the immediate future.

However, she says: "We're always hungry for content – we've recently acquired new titles to be launched at MIPCOM, the industry trade event at Cannes – and we'll continue to develop the production and co-production side of the business, including more live action, where we see real opportunity for growth."

She adds: "We also think our involvement with Animation UK, which represents our sector, is important because we can be influential in shaping government support for the industry and keep abreast of trends and be ready to adapt and change."

Shipleys has been working with CAKE for the past 18 months and Cat says: "Shipleys has a good track record of working for the entertainment sector, so it really understands our business. For example, we're dealing with organisations from lots of different countries, each with different tax rules that we need to comply with. Shipleys is a firm that has the expertise to meet that challenge."

Cat herself joined CAKE in 2019. She jokes: "My role means almost anything and everything comes my way but, whatever it is, it's about finding solutions and it's a job I enjoy." After a career primarily in financial services, she says working in a creative industry is "very different". She adds: "It's a great business and we have a great team."

<https://cakeentertainment.com>



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