

## TBI Show of the Week

Each week, we select one show that has really caught our eye. From the latest in entertainment, to a new reality TV format, we pick the shows we think will get you talking. Take a look at our latest choice below, or browse our previous selections in our archive at the bottom of the page



### Show of the week: *Space Racers*

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There is no shortage of vehicle series for preschoolers and several set beyond the realms of this planet, but *Space Racers* combines both elements in a show that has seen the producers get the ultimate space-exploration credit by counting US space agency NASA as a production partner.

The action comedy is set in Stardust Bay, home of the Stardust Space Academy where Eagle, Hawk, Robyn and their fellow cadets make up a super elite space-bound task force known as the Space Racers.

New-York-based entrepreneur Richard Schweiger is behind the series, the idea for which came about after a trip to the Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum in Washington DC. "I thought that I'd never seen a show about spaceships before for a young audience and wouldn't it be cool if kids could learn about space and science at the same time," he says.

Schweiger and a writing partner then developed the *Space Racers* idea as a feature before deciding TV was a better route. He then brought in kids TV veteran Brenda Wooding as executive producer and managed to get NASA on board as a partner.

The US space agency has an educational outreach division and, having never been involved in a show for preschoolers before, wanted to help make space cool and exciting, but also scientifically accurate. "They helped shape the show on an educational level and actually says, in that respect, space should be secondary and science should come first," Schweiger explains. Nasa scientists and engineers duly saw, and gave notes on, each of the 52x11mins scripts.

Cake Entertainment is selling the series internationally outside of North America.

"We saw that no-one was doing any preschool shows about space exploration and we thought that was a very exciting element for kids," says Cake's CCO and managing director Ed Galton. "We liked the concept, with it being an educational vehicular show *and* an entertaining vehicular show."

Galton says the sweet-spot for the show is four and five-year-olds although younger kids have warmed to the bright colours, music and fun tone of *Space Racers* and older kids to the characters and story.

Maryland Public Television was the first broadcaster to take the show, which is now syndicated into a range of PBS affiliates in the US and reaches about 65% of US homes. The US version of the show goes out as a half-hour (two eleven-minute episodes) and there are live-action interstitials with footage from the Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum and astronaut interviews.

Having raised the finance for the show Schweiger created Space Racers LLC, which produced the series and owns all of the intellectual property. Ultimately, he says, the investors will recoup their cash from a licensing programme that, with US and international deals in hand, is likely to move ahead later this year.

Internationally, Cake has shopped the series into several territories already including to Hop! TV in Israel, SVT in Sweden, NRK in Norway, Tiji in Russia, TV New Zealand, France 5 and RTE in Ireland.

**The show:** *Space Racers*

**The distributor:** Cake Entertainment

**The producer:** Space Race LLC

**The concept:** Preschool vehicle series, set in space and endorsed by NASA

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**Company:** Brenda Wooding, Cake Entertainment, Ed Galton, France 5, Hop! TV in Israel, NASA, NRK in Norway, PBS, Richard Schweiger, RTE in Ireland., Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum, Space Race LLC, Space Racers, SVT in Sweden, Tiji in Russia, TV New Zealand

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