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"SOURCING & DEVELOPING CREATIVE CONCEPTS & IDEAS
FOR TV ENTERTAINMENT PROGRAMMES"

I. GMA NETWORK INC.'S MISSION STATEMENT

"We are committed to continuously satisfy all customers by
providing high quality, responsible, relevant and responsive
entertainment, information and communications, programs, products
and services at competitive costs."

II. In line with its mission to produce high quality programs
which will satisfy its televiewers, thereby generating good
ratings, GMA, specifically the Programming and Production
Divisions, have a 3-pronged approach:

- innovation
- improving the creative and technical quality of its
  productions
- being less dependent on outside producers

INNOVATION

Because of the continuing change in the lifestyle of
the Filipino brought about by modernization, the viewing patterns
and habits of the Filipino audience is becoming less predictable.
Thus, innovation is now a "master key" to a network's success.

STEPS TO INNOVATION

- GMA always keeps attuned to the tastes and
  preferences of the Filipino TV audience.
  - GMA Research Department
    - regularly keeps track of the TV ratings, 
      interprets and analyzes them for the 
      consumption of the Network, most 
      especially the Programming and Production 
      Divisions and News and Public Affairs (GMA 
      Research also services GMA Radio)
    - also conducts its own surveys such as 
      telephone coincidental surveys whenever 
      new programs break on air, FGD's (focus 
      group discussions) to determine specific 
      tastes and preferences of a select group 
      of audience, and so on
    - designs and conducts special 
      studies/surveys catering to the specific 
      needs of the requesting group

- GMA always keeps abreast of the latest developments
  in the television broadcast industry, both locally
  and internationally.
  - Program Research and Analysis Group
    - analyzes and studies the merits of various 
      studies and trends
regularly submits reports on the latest TV broadcasting trends both in the Philippines and worldwide, which could be useful to the Network

• regularly submits concepts/formats/storylines/topics for different programs as actual application of the latest trends

GMA has adopted a more aggressive attitude towards its programming. As an example, GMA retired old, tired formats in favor of new, faster-paced and glossier shows that offered something different. GMA Supershow, which held the title as the longest-running weekly noontime variety show gave way to the much younger and sleeker B.O.P. The Network also ventured into the production of two innovative half-hour programs that made their mark in local television. Si Tsang, Si Tsang, a "silent" comedy program, proved that the production of a thirty-minute comedy show is feasible in terms of production costs and is also commercially viable. Bilibaba successfully wrapped an educational show in a highly entertaining package. Another example is the dubbing of foreign cartoons into Filipino to cater to the needs and requirements of a widely mass-based audience.

IMPROVING THE CREATIVE AND TECHNICAL QUALITY OF PRODUCTIONS

• Network Operations took a more direct hand in controlling the technical quality of its shows by forming the TV Technical Operations Division which works closely with the Production Division. This Division has handled most of the technical requirements of station-produced programs including all requirements for lighting, audio and visual effects.

• On improving the creative quality of its shows, GMA employs the help of the following groups:

  • Program Research and Analysis Group
    • as earlier mentioned, regularly submits concepts/formats/storylines/topics for different programs as actual application of the latest trends gathered
    • regularly submits feedback regarding GMA programs for the constant improvement of these
Creative Pool - composed of a mixture of seasoned scriptwriters as well as new writers
Like the Program Research and Analysis Group, the Creative Pool is involved in program development. They also give critiques on GMA programs.

In the face of increasing stiff competition, the Network has recently urged the Programming and Production Divisions to close ranks. Now, everyone gives their share in program development, from the senior officers to the Programming and Production staff.

BRING LESS DEPENDENT ON OUTSIDE PRODUCERS

In order to have greater control over shows that go on-the-air, and to reduce its dependence on outside producers, GMA is continuously developing its own production capabilities so that more and more programs are produced in-house.

III. SETBACKS IN ENSURING GOOD ENTERTAINMENT PROGRAMS

- financial - The plunge of the Philippine economy had the effect of increasing the cost of production and eroding GMA's hard-earned income.
- continued existence of outside producers
- continued existence of prior restraint (Movie and Television Review and Classification Board)

GMA would like to consider the problems enumerated above as minor setbacks in the production of good entertainment programs. It would also rather treat these as opportunities to further squeeze out the creativity of its people. The Filipino has always been known to be strong and patient in the midst of pressure and has always emerged victorious in the end.
Session II

Copying, Adopting Or Rejecting
Western TV Programmes

Zsa Zsa Yusharyahya
Mark Hukill