

BROADCAST

Fremantle closes Label1

By Chris Curtis and Marian McHugh | 28 August 2024

Hospital indie becomes latest casualty of 'challenging economic backdrop'



Fremantle UK has called time on Label1, the factual indie best known for long-running BBC ob-doc series Hospital.

Broadcast has learned that the super-indie took the “difficult decision” recently as a result of tough market conditions. Fremantle UK chief Amelia Brown attributed it to the company’s strategy of adopting a “streamlined” approach.

She said: “We are continuously reviewing measures necessary for creating a more effective, coordinated and streamlined approach to ensure we are in the best position for future success and

growth.

“As our industry pivots into a new world we must evolve to meet these changes. While the industry navigates a challenging economic backdrop that is being felt by many, we remain committed to adapting for continued success.

“With this in mind, we have made the difficult decision to close Label1. I want to thank Lorraine [Charker-Phillips, chief executive], Jo [Taylor, chief operating officer] and the team, who are all exceptional creatives and who, over the years, have brought incredible storytelling to our screens. We wish them all the very best for the future.”

Label1 has five full-time employees and it is understood that any returning series or projects in the works will be supported by Fremantle UK’s existing portfolio of companies.

Charker-Phillips paid tribute to the indie’s partners and employees over the years.

“Thank you to all the brilliant creatives and production teams that have been part of Label1 over the last seven years, the contributors who shared their stories and let us into their worlds, and those that trusted us with exceptional access,” she said.

“We believed in making programmes with authentic and creative storytelling at their heart, delivering stories that went beyond the headlines, entertaining our audiences, and growing new talent who we hope will continue to have creative opportunities despite this challenging TV landscape.”

Label1 was launched by Charker-Phillips and former co-chief exec Simon Dickson in 2015 as a sub-label within ITV Studios. Its relationship with ITVS ended the following year and Fremantle took a 25% stake in the business in 2017.

Charker-Phillips took over as sole executive producer and head of programmes when Dickson exited the indie in December 2022, working closely with chief operating officer Jo Taylor.

The indie’s high profile shows include Saving Lives in Leeds/Cardiff, the most recent series of which launched on BBC2 last week.

As well as Soldier (BBC1) and Hospital (BBC2), it produced fact ent format Five Guys a Week and its follow-up series Five Dates A Week (both for Channel 4) and The Job Interview (Channel 4).

Other titles included Nurses on the Ward (UKTV) and the Broadcast Award-winning Worlds Collide: The Manchester Bombing (ITV1), among others.

Label1 is the latest indie to close its doors in the past 18 months; Broadcast revealed earlier in August that prominent Welsh unscripted producer Wildflame is ceasing trading. Other super-indie casualties have included RDF (Banijay) and Great Scott Media (All3Media).