

Stephen Leahy
CEO, LUDUS Ltd, UK

Born 30.05.49, Stephen Leahy's television career has seen him rise to the unchallengeable position of mentor of the modern game show. As Joint Managing Director of Action Time, he oversaw the production of up to 20 formats in over forty countries, many his own creations. His achievements were recognised by the University of Huddersfield who awarded him an honorary professorship.

After joining Granada Television in 1972 as a Researcher, he quickly rose to Promotions Editor then a Producer of Regional and entertainment shows. In 1982 he became Senior Producer of Network Children's Programmes and was appointed to the ITV Network Children's Committee. As Granada's Head of Entertainment Stephen turned his hand to quiz shows from all sides of the spectrum from the Krypton Factor to Busman's Holiday, University Challenge, Hold Tight, Starstrider, Connections.

Stephen was poached from Granada in 1988 to turn format importer, Action Time, into a producer and creator of entertainment shows both in the UK and internationally. The company soon became the first British independent to supply all major broadcasters (both terrestrial and satellite) shows included : Raise the Roof, Sabotage, Men for Sale, Lose a Million, Spellbound, Joker in the Pack & Body Heat. He formed an International Division which enjoyed an equally meteoric rise with Action Time formats on-air in over 40 countries.

Stephen is one of the few successful creators of game shows with a worldwide reputation. He has broken down conventional game show subject matters, bringing to the screen shows based on books, board games and biblical knowledge. He brought the murder classic boardgame Cluedo to life for the ITV network, which also screened the world's first multi-faith religious quiz show, Heaven Knows (also Leahy co-devised). Action Time also actively sought out formats from abroad to produce in the UK : You've Been Framed (from Japan) Stars InTheir Eyes (The Dutch "Soundmix" show), Wheel of Fortune, Jeopardy, Catchphrase and Wipeout (from the USA) The Mole (Belgium) You Decide (Brazil).

His horticultural creation Surprise Gardeners became Action Time's first format deal in the US, and 'Million Dollar Chance of a Lifetime' (Launched on Channel 7 in Australia) ran as 5 specials on the Fox Network in 2000. It was sold in 15 countries and ran for 5 years as a daily live programme " Die Quiz Show"on Sat 1 in Germany. "Love at First Sight"(SKY 1) topped the ratings in Russia and was produced in 17 countries.

In 1993, he joined with fellow Joint Managing Director of Action Time, Trish Kinane, in effecting a management buyout of 70% of Action Time from its owners Carlton Communications and Paramount Pictures. They then sold that back to Carlton in 1996, agreeing to a 5 year personal contract which ended in October 2001. Stephen and Trish then set up LUDUS, a company dedicated to creating and creative management of game show and entertainment worldwide.



Ludus Ltd

Stephen Leahy and Trish Kinane were, until October 2001 Joint Managing Directors of Action Time, producers and distributors of quiz and game shows. Having completed the sale of Action Time to Carlton Communications, they left the company to set up LUDUS which launched on October 1st 2002.

Stephen continues to consult as a “Quiz Doctor” for productions both in the UK and abroad.

Ludus specialises in Quiz & Game shows and Reality tv. Productions have included Soap Challenge, Watching the Detectives, Dial a Mum (ITV) the sale of the Secrets of Magic format to France, interactive participation shows The Mint (ITV, Far East, Australia) Glitterball (ITV).

Current projects include GlitterWall (Italy) Frenemies and The Wall (with Sony worldwide) and the launch in autumn 2010 of a completely new mass interactive game show in the UK.

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