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Discop '06 opens in Budapest

Record numbers of buyers, sellers at TV mart

 By [JOHN NADLER](#)

BUDAPEST -- With the NATPE-owned programming market Discop 2006 scheduled to open its doors today to a record number of buyers and sellers for two days of intense dealmaking, Budapest briefly becomes the media capital of central Europe.

On Wednesday, 70 broadcasters and TV industry pros from across Europe and as far away as Brazil descended on Budapest for the third [European Television Dialogue](#).

Organized by the film fund Go to Bavaria and Germany's A Company, speakers at ETD discussed the impact of Europe's recent decision to embrace the digital format; attendees were warned the result of this could be further corporate centralization and the extinction of small, privately owned broadcasters.

"After going digital, everyone expects there will be more channels but fewer owners," said conference organizer Alexander van Dulmen, A Company's CEO. "A company like Hungary's RTL Klub might have 20 channels, but there is a big concern that small channels won't have the financial resources to survive."

While van Dulmen pointed to "Lost" and the "CSI" skeins as he noted, "There seems to be a renaissance of American TV series," [confab-goers](#) noted programming overall must reflect regional tastes. "There never will be global programming," said van Dulmen. "If a country buys a format, it must adapt it."

Van Dulmen said a central question of the ETD was finding the definition of TV product in this new era. "Nobody understands TV as simply a television set anymore. When we speak about TV, it may be a computer."

About 750 buyers and sellers are registered to attend Discop, which runs through Saturday at Budapest's Sofitel Hotel.