

## **Spec Market Scorecard: 2009 to Date (October 16)**

**by Jason Scoggins**

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This isn't exactly the return to form I'd been hoping for. The end of the Fall selling season fast approaches, and as you can see from the below numbers the spec market is as flat as it's been since the end of April. Which in retrospect is not that surprising given the past month's remarkable executive turnover (huge changes at the top of Disney and Universal, plus adjustment at Fox) and conflicting messages coming out of the studios. On the one hand, the majors are saying they're out of money in the short term (Sony and Universal even made public statements regarding curtailed spending on new and existing development, respectively). On the other, a bunch of high profile pitches and other projects have sold since the end of the Summer, including at least a couple in the seven figures.

It's clear from the swings in the number of new scripts on the market week-to-week over the past month (from the last week of September: 4, 17 and 5, and just half a dozen so far this week) that the town is not quite sure what to make of the fact that specs continue not to sell. One would think more than 9% of new spec scripts would get set up coming out of the Summer break, but maybe this is the new normal.

A couple of things are certain, however:

- Producers are the new black when it comes to setting up a script. All but one or two of the specs that sold in 2009 were bought by or for a significant if not major producer (and just a handful of this year's sales had big actors or directors attached). This underscores the efficacy of the newly announced development funds secured by Bruckheimer and Parkes/MacDonald. Hopefully we'll see more of these deals in the next several months and the formal emergence of a new class of buyer.
- The only reason to take a naked spec out wide right now is to introduce a writer to the town on a wholesale basis (that is to say, there's no good reason to take out a naked spec right now). The dismal statistic continues unabated: Just 2 of the 140 scripts that have gone out wide since May 1 have sold. That's a ridiculously low percentage: 1.4%, not far off (statistically speaking) the percentage of scripts sold during the WGA strike.

### **Overall Spec Numbers:**

<b>All Specs</b>	<b>Jan</b>	<b>Feb</b>	<b>Mar</b>	<b>Apr</b>	<b>May</b>	<b>Jun</b>	<b>Jul</b>	<b>Aug</b>	<b>Sep</b>	<b>Oct*</b>	<b>Total</b>
Specs	28	60	78	46	40	48	16	8	40	24	388
<b>Sales</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>62</b>
<i>Percent</i>	<i>11</i>	<i>17</i>	<i>13</i>	<i>20</i>	<i>25</i>	<i>13</i>	<i>31</i>	<i>38</i>	<i>10</i>	<i>8</i>	<i>16</i>

\* - Through October 16.

<b>Wide Specs</b>	<b>Jan</b>	<b>Feb</b>	<b>Mar</b>	<b>Apr</b>	<b>May</b>	<b>Jun</b>	<b>Jul</b>	<b>Aug</b>	<b>Sep</b>	<b>Oct*</b>	<b>Total</b>
Specs	27	56	71	42	31	39	12	4	34	20	336
<b>Sales</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>17</b>
<i>Percent</i>	4	11	4	12	3	0	8	0	0	0	5

\* - Through October 16.

Note: The above grids show the sales of scripts in the month they originally went out, adjusted from month to month as necessary. The below grids are a straight tally of each month's sales.

### **Spec Sales By Genre:**

<b>Genre (sales)</b>	<b>Jan</b>	<b>Feb</b>	<b>Mar</b>	<b>Apr</b>	<b>May</b>	<b>Jun</b>	<b>Jul</b>	<b>Aug</b>	<b>Sep</b>	<b>Oct</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>% of Sales</b>
Action		3	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	<b>12</b>	19
Comedy	1	2	4	4		3	1	3		1	<b>19</b>	31
Drama			1		4	1			1		<b>7</b>	11
Sci-Fi/Fantasy			2	1	2				1		<b>6</b>	10
Thriller	1	2	1	4	3	2	2		2		<b>17</b>	27

### **Spec Sales By Buyer:**

<b>Buyers (Studios)</b>	<b>Jan</b>	<b>Feb</b>	<b>Mar</b>	<b>Apr</b>	<b>May</b>	<b>Jun</b>	<b>Jul</b>	<b>Aug</b>	<b>Sep</b>	<b>Oct</b>	<b>Total</b>
CBS Films						1			1		<b>2</b>
Disney				1						1	<b>2</b>
DreamWorks			2	1							<b>3</b>
Fox				1	1					1	<b>3</b>
Fox Atomic	1	1									<b>2</b>
Fox Searchlight			1								<b>1</b>
Lionsgate							2				<b>2</b>
MGM			1								<b>1</b>
Paramount			1			1			1		<b>3</b>
Screen Gems			1			1					<b>2</b>
Sony		1		1	1		1	1			<b>5</b>
Sony Animation				1							<b>1</b>
Universal		2	1					2			<b>5</b>
Warner Bros.		1		1	3						<b>5</b>

Buyers (Other)	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Total
Appian Way			1								1
Alcon							1				1
Beloved					1						1
Chockstone						1					1
Dimension				1							1
The Film Dept.				1							1
Gold Circle									1		1
Imagine						1					1
Intrepid				1	1	1					3
Mandate									1		1
MRC				1							1
Montecito								1			1
National Lampoon			1								1
New Regency			1								1
Relativity					1	1			1		3
Reliance					1						1
Reliant	1										1
Sidney Kimmel		1									1
Starz Media Anim.					1						1
Summit		1									1

The one really remarkable spec sale in the past month was Relativity's purchase of Ric Roman Waugh & Michael Lerner's "Rubicon," which Waugh will direct and Atlas will produce. Nicole Clemens at ICM originally took this script out wide in March 2009.

### **Spec Sales by Seller:**

Sellers (Agents)	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Efficiency
Alpern Group						1					1/1 100%
APA							1	1			2/27 7%
Bohrman			1								1/9 11%
CAA		1	1	3	3	2		1	1		12/32 38%
Endeavor		2	2		1						5/7 71%
Gersh		1			1						2/9 22%
ICM			1	1		2	1		2		7/28 25%
Kohner	1										1/2 50%

Sellers (Agents)	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Efficiency
Original Artists				2		1					3/7 43%
UTA		2	1		2		1	2	1	1	10/28 36%
WMA		2	2	3	1						8/17 47%
WME							1		1		2/17 12%

Sellers (Managers)	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Efficiency
3 Arts											1/3 33%
Abstract			1		1						2/6 33%
Anonymous					1						1/8 17%
Art/Work				1							1/2 50%
Benderspink		2		1	1						3/10 30%
Brillstein				1							1/7 14%
Category 5					1						1/1 100%
Circle of Confusion		1									2/13 15%
Epidemic			1								1/1 100%
Gotham Group					1						1/4 25%
H2F							1				1/8 13%
Hopscotch											1/1 100%
Hung				1							1/2 50%
Industry	1										1/5 20%
Justin Silvera Mgmt						1					1/1 100%
Kaplan/Perrone	1				1	1					4/11 36%
Luber/Roklin		1	1								2/4 50%
Madhouse Ent.							1				1/1 100%
Management 360						1					1/4 25%
Marty Shapiro Mgmt					1						1/1 100%
Mosaic		1									1/3 33%
Principal				1							1/6 17%
Principato/Young			1								2/7 29%
Radmin					1						1/2 50%
Rain Mgmt Group								1			1/1 100%
Tom Sawyer Ent.									1		1/2 50%
Underground				1		1					2/5 40%

### **About The Scoggins Report**

The Scoggins Report is a semi-monthly, terribly unscientific analysis of the feature film spec script market based on information culled from a variety of public and non-public sources.

**The Report does not include pitch sales nor the film rights to underlying material.** The aggregated data in the Report are by no means official numbers, just a fairly complete summary of periodic market activity. Past installments of The Scoggins Report can be found in the BOSI archives at <http://www.thebusinessofshowinstitute.com/newsletter/past-newsletters.html>, as well as on Jason Scoggins' website, <http://www.lifeonthebubble.com>.

### **About Jason Scoggins**

Jason Scoggins is a partner at Protocol, a literary management and production company. He manages writers, directors and producers of film and TV alongside Protocol's founding partners Brian Inerfeld and John Ufland.