



Paris, 29 August 2023

Xilam Animation Ups Safaa Benazzouz to EVP Distribution

Academy Award®-nominated French animation studio Xilam Animation has upped Safaa Benazzouz to the position of EVP Distribution, effective 1 September 2023. Previously Deputy EVP Distribution, Benazzouz will replace the company's outgoing EVP Distribution, Morgann Favennec.

In her new role, Benazzouz will lead the worldwide distribution strategies across Xilam's new and forthcoming productions, including *Karate Sheep*, *Oggy Oggy* and *Buddybot*, and its existing catalogue, which includes *Oggy and the Cockroaches*, *Zig & Sharko*, *Where's Chicky?* and *Athleticus*. Additionally, she will be responsible for driving sales across the US, UK, Ireland, Germany, South Europe, Middle East, Africa and Latin America; and managing the four teams within Xilam's distribution department: international sales, digital, licensing and marketing. She will continue to be based in Xilam's head office in Paris and will now report into the company's Founder and CEO, Marc du Pontavice.

Safaa Benazzouz first joined Xilam as SVP Media Sales Distribution (Latin America, Middle East, Africa and Southern Europe) in February 2019 from French kids' distribution company Superights. In January 2022, Benazzouz was elevated to Deputy EVP Distribution and, working alongside Favennec, she helped implement new processes and systems within the Xilam Group. Additionally, Benazzouz participated in the strategic development of the department, including Xilam's new preschool property *Oggy Oggy* (156 x 7'), which launched simultaneously across Netflix, international broadcasters and social media, alongside a dedicated consumer products e-shop.

Marc du Pontavice said: "Since joining us, Safaa has established herself as an integral part of the Xilam team and played an instrumental role in driving the success of our distribution business globally. We're thrilled to now be recognising her skills and achievements through this well-deserved promotion and are confident that with her strategic mindset, determined attitude and team-player spirit, she is ideally placed to spearhead Xilam's distribution business. We'd also like to thank Morgann for her remarkable

Xilam Animation

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leadership and the valuable contribution she's made to the company – and wish her all the very best for the next chapter.”

Safaa Benazzouz added: “I feel honoured to be taking on this new role at Xilam and that Marc and the leadership team have placed their confidence in me. As we continue building upon our robust slate of treasured franchises and new properties for both kids and adult audiences, I look forward to continuing to work with all the talented and passionate people across the company to drive the success of our portfolio for the long-term. I also would like to warmly thank Morgann for being a great mentor since we first met in 2013 and wish her well on her new adventure.”

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About Xilam

A major player in animation, Xilam is an integrated studio founded in 1999 that creates, produces and distributes original programmes in more than 190 countries for both children and adult audiences. Xilam content is broadcast on television, and is also available on SVoD platforms including Netflix, Disney+ and Amazon, and AVoD streaming platforms including YouTube and Facebook.

With its creativity and capacity for innovation recognised worldwide, as well as editorial and commercial expertise at the cutting edge of its industry, Xilam is positioned as a key player in a fast-growing market. Each year, Xilam builds real successes and capitalises on its powerful historical brands including *Oggy and the Cockroaches* and *Zig & Sharko*, as well as new properties such as *Oggy Oggy* for a preschool audience, *Mr Magoo* which has a second season in production, slapstick comedy *Karate Sheep* for Netflix, and Academy Award® nominated adult feature film *I Lost My Body*. Xilam's expanding and strong catalogue now consists of over 2,200 episodes and three feature films.

Furthermore, Xilam's acquisition of Cube Creative's in 2019, provides the company with unique expertise in 3D and computer-generated imagery, alongside a programming portfolio that offers entertainment for families worldwide, with series such as *Where's Chicky?* and *Athléticus*.

Xilam employs more than 500 individuals, including 400 artists, across its studios in Paris, Lyon, Angoulême and Ho Chi Minh in Vietnam.

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