

# TV drama *Scorched* in race for Emmy

Michael Bailey

The cross-media telemovie *Scorched* has been nominated for an International Digital Emmy Award in the same week in which it was vying for the "Best Entertainment" title at the Australian Interactive Media Industry Association's (AIMIA) awards.

Redlight Productions' producers Marcus Gillezeau and Eleanor Cox and collaborators Michael O'Neill and Brad Hayward have previously won the Best Rich Media project at last year's Content & Technology Awards for the telefeature and accompanying webisodes and website.

The drama about a bushfire ravaging a waterless Sydney, starring Cameron Daddo, Vince Colosimo, Rachel Carpani and Georgie Parker, premiered on the Nine network last August with a cross-platform element anchored by daily webisodes in an online prequel and sequel drama.

It starred Kate Bell and featured realistic news stories and weather reports from Nine's Mark Ferguson and weatherman Mike Bailey.

It helped Nine win a Sunday night in all people and the 25-54 ratings demographic on a very competitive night after the 2008 Beijing Olympics as Nine rushed

to launch an "event" against Ten's *Australian Idol* and Seven's *Dancing With The Stars*.

Subsequent accolades have been scarce though, says Gillezeau, because no mainstream award event in Australia — the IF Awards, AFI Awards or TV Week Logies — has a cross-platform or digital award category.

The British Academy Awards (BAFTAs) and US Emmys do.

It is believed at least one of these Australian award events is contemplating adding a digital or cross-media category this year.

In the International Emmy award, which will be announced at the MIPTV conference in France later this month, *Scorched* will compete against entries from Argentina, Britain and Germany. "We're up against people like (major Dutch production company) Endemol, which is scary," Gillezeau says.

The project was geo-blocked within Australia, so it remains fresh as an internet commodity.

Gillezeau hopes to add some international sales to his swag while at MIPTV this month, to combine with the sale of the project to Scandinavia, where it will be reproduced in its entirety.

Perversely, the marketability of the project has probably increased after global coverage of the recent Victorian bushfire tragedy.