

VARIETY

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by Steve Clarke

Seinfeld 'Ref' sells to Abu Dhabi Mipcom winds down with deals galore

CANNES -- As the 25th Mipcom TV market began to wind down after three days of brisk activity, international distributors continued to announce deals.

Endemol's much-hyped reality comedy hybrid "The Marriage Ref," produced by Jerry Seinfeld, has nabbed its first overseas sale -- to the Abu Dhabi Media Co.

ITV Studios Global has sold more than 40 hours of primetime crime and action drama to Fox Channels Italy.

Titles include Shaftesbury Films' "Murdoch Mysteries," Mammoth Screen's "Bonekickers" and early '70s skein "The Persuaders," starring Tony Curtis and Roger Moore. The company also revealed that Germany's ZDF will make a local version of its reality hit "Four Weddings."

In addition, ITV Studios Global said it had sealed multiple international deals for animated tyke skein "Pocoyo" spanning English- and Spanish-language broadcasters in the U.S. and Asia.

Meanwhile, Greece became the latest country to catch TV dance fever. It will make a local version of what the BBC claims is the globe's most popular entertainment show, "Dancing With the Stars."

Greek commercial broadcaster Antenna is due to produce 10 90-minute episodes of the format, which will bow in primetime in March.

Discovery Kids in Latin America announced a broadcast deal to air "WordWorld" throughout the region beginning in July.

"WordWorld" is an Emmy-winning multimedia CGI property designed to help children enhance their ability to learn and understand the English language.

CBS Studios Intl. and Italy's RAI Cinema have extended their volume arrangement by three years. The agreement includes TV series, miniseries, made-for-TV movies and feature films. It's the first TV distribution deal in Italy for CBS' new feature film division, CBS Films.

ABC comedy "Cougar Town," starring Courteney Cox, has been acquired in territories across Europe, Africa and the Middle East.

Following the deal with Virgin Media Television's Living channel for the U.K., Disney-ABC-ESPN Television announced that the half-hour comedy has sold to RTE (Ireland), TVNorge (Norway), Digiturk (Turkey), M-Net (Africa), Fox Intl. Channels (Greece and Russia) and Orbit Showtime (Middle East).