

IM Global Launches TV Venture Led By Former Syfy President Mark Stern

By NELLIE ANDREEVA | Monday July 28, 2014 @ 5:55pm PDT

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EXCLUSIVE: Feature-film financing, production and sales company [IM Global](#) is expanding into television production and distribution with the launch of [IM Global Television](#). Mark Stern, former President of Original Content at Syfy, has been tapped as president and a partner of the new venture. Founded by Stuart Ford in 2007 and part of Indian conglomerate Reliance ADA since 2010, IM Global has been in a growth mode, presenting its biggest slate ever at Cannes



this year, and has offices in LA, London, Mumbai, Mexico City, and Beijing. Stern will be based in the company's Los Angeles office on Beverly Boulevard. "We've spent a considerable amount of time exploring the right entry point for IM Global to enter the television business, and Mark brings to our new operation an outstanding track record, skill set and profile," Ford said. "In just seven years we've established ourselves as one of the most prolific feature film players outside of the major studios in Hollywood, and in partnership with Mark, I look forward to us now becoming a recognized force in the fast-evolving global television arena."

When [Stern left Syfy in November after 11 years](#) and segued to producing, he says his dream was to be able to develop and produce independently, controlling distribution and financing instead of being a producer for hire, but he admits he knew that was "a tall order." That changed when he was introduced to Ford. The two hit it off, and the idea for IM Global TV was hatched over the past 3-4 months. "With their impressive feature-film track record, muscular financial backing, strong international relationships, and innovative entrepreneurial spirit, Stuart Ford and his team at IM Global are the perfect partners," Stern said. "Our ability to independently develop, produce, and distribute will give IM Global Television the creative and financial flexibility to empower top-tier talent and create distinctive, break-out television of uncompromising quality."

IM Global TV will focus on the straight-to-series model, "taking advantage of the robust straight-to-series marketplace," he said. But unlike other independent companies that employ that model, such as MRC and Gaumont International Television, IM Global TV will fully own its

shows whenever possible but also is open to teaming up with other companies and U.S. studios for co-productions if a project calls for that creatively. The company plans to rely on international co-productions and on partnership with Canadian production companies, with Stern drawing on his relationships with Canadian producers through the number of Syfy series he has overseen that had been filmed north of the border.

As for creative areas, "I'm partial to genre, sci-fi and supernatural series but am also excited about doing strong character dramas," Stern said. He would develop for Syfy, where he is executive producing new event series *Ascension*, as well as the other networks from the NBCUniversal family that he knows well but plans to sell everywhere. IM Global TV would mine the company's feature library and would work with other companies under the IM Global umbrella. One of them is Blumhouse International, the foreign sales division of Jason Blum's production company. Coincidentally, Stern already has a relationship with Blum as the two exec produce *Ascension* together.

Stern is looking to hit the ground running and start putting packages together right away, including reviving passion projects he had been looking to do for a while, but is realistic that it could take up to two years to get the new company's pipeline stocked.

During his tenure at Syfy, Stern oversaw original development, the past three as president, shepherding such series as *Face Off*, *Warehouse 13*, [Defiance](#) and [Battlestar Galactica](#). Additionally, he also served as co-head of original content for Universal Cable Prods.