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Multi-year pacts cover Germany, Russia, Eastern Europe and Latin America

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In a sign of stability in the independent market, IM Global has signed a trio of multi-year output deals for Germany, Russia-Eastern Europe and Latin America for its homegrown films, totaling up to a dozen titles over the next several years.

The deals supplement its existing framework of similar pacts in the U.K., Canada, Spain, and much of Asia — giving the six-year-old banner dependable distribution, rather than being required to sell territories on a film-by-film basis. The IM Global pacts mirror the strategy by Lionsgate over the past year to renew most of its output deals.

“These deals give us consistent, reliable distribution,” said IM Global topper Stuart Ford. “We’re balancing the entrepreneurial approach with a more typical studio approach.”

Deals range from two to four years and will cover the mainstream films with budgets over \$20 million that IM Global finances or co-finances.

Universum Film, the theatrical distribution subsidiary of broadcaster RTL, made a commitment for rights in Germany, Austria and Switzerland. Negotiations were concluded at Berlin followed by a deal with Moscow-based Top Film covering Russia, CIS, the Baltic States, Poland, Hungary, Bulgaria, Romania, the Czech Republic and ex-Yugoslavia.

IM Global has also concluded a deal with Sun Distribution in Latin America, encompassing distribution in Argentina, Belize, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, El Salvador, French Guiana, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay and Venezuela.

Some of IM Global's notable titles include "Safe," "Dredd," "Bullet to the Head," "Dead Man Down" and the upcoming "Paranoia," starring Liam Hemsworth and Lucas Till.

IM Global's existing output deals are with E1 Entertainment for the U.K., Canada and Spain, which E1 assumed following its acquisition of Alliance Films. Its Apsara Distribution subsidiary announced a multiple picture output deal with Buena Vista Intl. last year for distribution in Hong Kong, Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore, Taiwan, Thailand and Vietnam and distribution through IM Global's parent Reliance Entertainment in India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka.

"Technically this output framework gives us guaranteed distribution for our bigger films in 130 countries across the E1, Universum, Top Film, Sun, Reliance and BVI Asia regional footprint," Ford said. "More important than that territorial number, the structure strikes a healthy balance between committed output partners in a slew of key markets and selling to the broader independent marketplace in the rest of the world."

IM Global moved late last year into a film sales joint venture company dubbed Mundial with Mexico's Canana Entertainment. It's also understood that the company is exploring the possibility of a deal in the fast-growing Chinese market.

The RTL deal was negotiated by Ford and Jonathan Deckter with Bernhard zu Castell for Universum and Jorg Graf for RTL.

IM Global's Tatyana Joffe negotiated the Top Film deal.

