

# MIPCOM: The Week in Factual

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TV Real shines a light on the MIPCOM action within the non-scripted and documentary categories.

The rising prevalence of scripted programming on what were long considered factual channels has certainly shaken up the market. National Geographic Channel is among the majors that have seen incredible success with original scripted features. The channel is building on this with its first scripted series, [based on Relativity Media's feature film Act of Valor](#), in partnership with Tandem Communications.

Nonetheless, there are several categories within the unscripted landscape that are still garnering strong demand from the international community, as evidenced by sales at last week's MIPCOM. These include character-led docu-series and high-quality, blue-chip documentaries.

The BBC, which has a rich tradition of producing and programming high-quality factual fare, has stood firm on its commitment to the genre. BBC's director-general, Tony Hall, last week announced a 20-percent [increase in funding for arts television programs](#), with a number of landmark commissions and partnerships. Its commercial arm, BBC Worldwide, also [pledged a major new investment in BBC factual content](#), across natural history, science and history as the principal co-production partner with the BBC Natural History Unit.

While Discovery Channel is dipping its toes in the scripted genre with the upcoming mini-series *Klondike*, it is still committed to the more traditional long-form documentary. Discovery signed a deal with Austria's ORF-Enterprise [to cooperate on the doc Sarajevo: The Assassination](#), which tells the story of the events on the eve of World War I. At the market it was also announced that Discovery and the BBC will be [ending their formal relationship](#), which has yielded such acclaimed factual works as *Blue Planet* and *Life*. The two, however, will continue to work together outside of an official partnership, as there are a number of ongoing projects, including *Hidden Kingdom* and *How to Build a Planet*.

ZDF Enterprises has also remained a strong proponent of classic documentary content, notably in the history and military categories. At MIPCOM, [ZDFE.factual sold another large documentary package](#) of 100 program hours to Servus TV. It also renewed its cooperation with the DAF (Deutsches Anleger Fernsehen) for 380 program hours plus 250 contunico clips. The programming and co-production deal between A+E Networks and ZDF Enterprises was renewed.

Along with docs, demand has remained high for unscripted entertainment programming that features larger-than-life characters or shines a light on interesting occupations. [Peace Point Rights sold Keasha's Perfect Dress](#), a fashion reality series starring Keasha Rigsby of *Say Yes to the Dress* fame, and its companion show *Keasha's Fashion Tips* to RTL Netherlands to air on RTL Lounge this fall. GRB Entertainment finalized a raft of sales for titles such as *Hurricane Hunters*, *Untold Stories of the ER* and *BBQ Pitmasters*. [Breakthrough Entertainment placed its auctioning show Lost and Sold](#) with broadcasters in EMEA and Australia.

Passion Distribution [agreed to a volume deal](#) with Singapore's MediaCorp for the newly launched OTT streaming service Toggle. The package of programming included such factual highlights as *5 Ingredient Fix*, *Trash to Cash*, *Extreme Clutter* and *Rescue Mediums*. Digital deals like this are becoming more common among factual distributors, a trend that is likely to continue to increase.

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