



PROFILE

WHO'S WHO

The power brokers

Germany's biggest media companies are among the most successful and influential in the world, both on screen and in the boardroom. Andy Fry looks at the strengths and strategies of some of the country's key players

Alexander Coridass

President and CEO, ZDF Enterprises (ZDFE)

ALEXANDER Coridass calls his company "a global player with a German home base." He says: "Our business is structured across four genres: ZDFE.drama, ZDFE.entertainment, ZDFE.factual and ZDFE.junior. Each genre is responsible for the acquisition of attractive product and the worldwide sale of their programmes."

Drilling a little deeper, Coridass says: "We manage the largest offer of German-language programmes — originating mostly from ZDF — and, at the same time, a continuously growing portfolio of international productions. The larger part of our turnover comes from international productions. Our catalogue consists of long-running series and mini-series for primetime or access primetime, TV movies, collections and event productions, documentary series and one-offs, and series from pre-school to older children in both animation and live action." Drama is a particular strength, with the catalogue containing thousands of hours of crime, comedy, romance and event films. Aside from ZDF-originated shows, content from English-speaking countries, the Benelux and Scandinavia also plays an important role, Coridass says, explaining that ZDFE often works with ZDF's editorial teams to identify premium projects whose production values and "gripping narrative concepts" will appeal to both German and international audiences. "The focus of our acquisitions is on series and event programmes," he adds. "Our main priority is to have high-calibre productions in our catalogue, no matter what their geographic origins or languages are."

Currently around 60% of ZDFE's sales volume stems from international programmes. "Any producer out there with a great project looking for a reliable co-production or distribution part-

ner is cordially invited to get in touch," Coridass says. "ZDF Enterprises was the first company in Germany to back Scandinavian drama series. In all modesty, we played a major role in paving the way for Nordic Noir on a global scale, and we continue to co-produce excellent Scandinavian product for our catalogue."

Ask Coridass to name the next big thing and he says: "It's already here, I believe. The world now has a hunger for the new drama productions originating in Germany." He cites ZDFE's MIPTV highlight *Ku'damm 56 – Rebel With A Cause*, as well as recent successful series *The Team*, *Blochin – The Living And The Dead* and *Dr Klein*. "We are always delighted at the great enthusiasm with which our drama productions are received internationally," he adds. In terms of trends, Coridass says: "In a market that is as diversified as the content market nowadays, there is no such thing as a global content trend. It's mandatory, especially in a highly competitive and technology-driven business such as ours, to never rest on one's laurels, but to always look ahead into the future. There are clients who need long-running, procedural mainstream series, others who want more edgy and horizontally narrated shows — and digital has different expectations again. Our objective is to always be part of exciting new projects at a very early stage and to work closely with authors and producers right from the very start of development."

He is especially excited about MIPTV 2016: "It will be a particularly important market for us since we are lead partner of the Focus On Germany, which will shine the spotlight on German TV programming and production. We will also host a special conference session on German drama series. As the largest

distributor of German-language programmes, a valued co-production partner of international broadcasters and producers, and a major investor in audiovisual content, we are honoured and delighted to take the opportunity of the Focus On Germany to present our market's many exciting facets and assets on the international stage."

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