



Spain's Globomedia adds three fiction series

'El Barco,' 'The Professor' and preparing 45-minute sitcom

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Sept 1, 2010, 03:23 PM ET

MADRID -- Spain's TV production powerhouse Globomedia has added three new fiction series to its 2011 slate, including its first production for broadcaster La Sexta, Globomedia President Daniel Ecija announced Wednesday at the Vitoria TV Festival.

"El Barco" ("The Boat"), "a mixture of comedy, suspense and emotion" is the furthest along in development and is designed for commercial web Antena 3. According to Ecija, parts of the series will be shot at sea.

"The Professor" will star one of Spain's most-loved TV actors Antonio Resines and run on rival broadcaster Telecinco, turning on a teacher who transfers to an unusual school after a dramatic life change.

Ecija said Globomedia is preparing a 45-minute sitcom, starring Antonio Molero for La Sexta. No further details were available about any of the projects.

While both Antena 3 and Telecinco are repeat customers with their respective Globomedia hits, La Sexta has never bought a Globomedia production, an unusual fact given that Globomedia owns La Sexta, which launched in 2006. Globomedia presently owns 30% of Imagina Media--the joint venture formed by Globomedia and Mediapro that owns the controlling stake in La Sexta.

Ecija said Globomedia has tabled one of its most ambitious projects "Desert Soldiers," which is about Spanish soldiers in Afghanistan, starring Belen Rueda ("The Orphanage").

"This series demands a minimum budget to be faithful to the reality of the military in Afghanistan and meet the demands of the project with the appropriate guarantees," Ecija told reporters. "It was approved when there was a lot of money at the broadcasters and now it has to be paid when there is not."

Even so, Ecija said various broadcasters have expressed interest.

When asked about the financial crisis and weak advertising plaguing broadcasters and how it affects production, Ecija was optimistic.

"More money doesn't necessarily mean more creativity," the creator of Spain's most important TV hits over the past 15 years said. "You have to combat the lack of money with a surplus of imagination and creativity."