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Film

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Holmes heads up stylish pic promo

'Romantics' cast does fashion shot for J. Crew

By ANDREW STEWART

With a fashion-forward cast led by Katie Holmes, Anna Paquin and Josh Duhamel, the potential for stylish marketing tie-ins seemed like a natural fit.

It's no wonder then that Four of a Kind, the production shingle and distributor behind last weekend's opener "The Romantics," agreed to pose the cast for an eight-page spread in J. Crew's most recent catalog. Photos of the primary cast also appear on the re-issue of the novel the film was based on, which hit bookstores Aug. 31.

"The Romantics" launched with a promising \$45,527 at one location each in New York and L.A., earning the weekend's highest per-screen average of \$22,764.



'The Romantics' producers partnered with J. Crew for a photo shoot.

Ron Stein, founder and CEO of Four of a Kind, said the company faced similar challenges on "The Romantics" that every specialty distrib battles when marketing an indie film: "How do we promote good quality films, and still think about commercial potential, without overexploiting the film?" he asked.

Stein said the pic's cast, which also includes Malin Akerman, Adam Brody, Jeremy Strong and Rebecca Lawrence, helped the pic appeal to younger auds. Only Paquin was absent from the J. Crew ad.

The partnership between Four of a Kind and J. Crew started with the pic's wardrobe pieces, Stein said, and developed into whathe described as "not necessarily an ad, but a fun experience."

As part of the marketing plan, the clothing company sponsored the film's website, which hosted an online contest, and organized in-store activities. But Stein credited the photo shoot as most important aspect.

"Everybody realized that there was great potential, because it was such a fun cast that showed so well," Stein said. "And I think that's what audiences are responding to -- how well everyone got along."

Stein said Holmes, who was an exec producer on the film, helped organize the shoot. The thesp also showed up Friday for a Q&A session at Gotham's Regal Union Square theater, along with helmer-author Galt Niederhoffer and co-star Elijah Wood.

"Romantics" is the first pic Stein's Four of a Kind has distributed, with Paramount Famous handling North American ancillary rights. Stein, who also served as an exec producer on "The Kids Are All Right," released "8: The Mormon Proposition" through Red Flag Releasing on June 18.

Stein is producing, through Four of a Kind, Nick Stahl starrer "Meskada," which unspooled at the Tribeca Film Fest.

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