



Posted: Fri., Jun. 11, 2010, 4:00am PT

Essential, Brightlight launch EBTV

Joint venture to produce, finance and distribute TV shows

By [BRENDAN KELLY](#)

Los Angeles' Essential Pictures has pacted with Canadian film and TV producer Brightlight Pictures to create EBTV, a joint venture that will produce, finance and distribute TV shows.

The new entity will have offices in L.A., Vancouver, Toronto and London, and is looking to develop one-hour and half-hour series as well as mini-series.



Brightlight, based in Vancouver, has carved a niche for itself by producing Canadian films and TV series, as well as co-productions, particularly with European partners.

It's also a service producer in Canada for U.S. productions and just wrapped shooting in Vancouver on an untitled Seth Rogan comedy for Summit.

EBTV will develop Canadian productions and co-productions, which could take advantage of the fiscal benefits available north of the border.

"We can deliver American-style TV and structure them as (Canadian productions) or co-productions that can be exportable around the world," said Stephen Hegyes, one of the Brightlight principals. "We see American broadcasters partnering with way more partners and the American networks are a lot more sophisticated in terms of their understanding of co-productions."

EBTV already has two one-hour dramas in development with Canuck pay TV outlets TMN and Movie Central, one of which is a collaboration with Scott Free.

EBTV is awaiting approval from regulators to operate as a Canadian-based company eligible for all of the fiscal benefits.

"Working together under the EBTV banner will give us the infrastructure and experience to take full advantage of the business models for financing, producing and distributing television projects," said Essential Pictures CEO Neil Kaplan. Brightlight's credits include Canada-U.K. co-production "Fifty Dead Men Walking" and "No Clue," written by and starring Brent Butt.

Contact the Variety newsroom at news@variety.com.