



Tax-break states bask in Oscar glory 'Knight' contributes \$35 mil to Chicago economy

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Film incentives are gasping for a longer run in many states, but some states, touting their ongoing run of film/TV production returns, are also sharing Oscar's spotlight.

According to the Motion Picture Assn. of America, "The Dark Knight" contributed \$35 million in revenue to Chicago's local economy. Additionally, California held forth with "Iron Man," while New Jersey and Pennsylvania garnered attention from "The Wrestler"; as did Connecticut with "Revolutionary Road" and "Rachel Getting Married"; Hawaii's "Tropic Thunder"; and "The Secret Life of Bees" from EUE/Screen Gems Studios in Wilmington, N.C.

Louisiana reaped more than half a billion film production dollars from better than 80 feature pics, including Oscar nom, "The Curious Case of Benjamin Button," and several months of lensing "W." Cameras are skedded to roll in New Orleans this spring with WB's comicbook thriller, "Jonah Hex."

Nevada's film production revenue topped the \$100 million mark for the ninth consecutive year, thanks in part to partial lensing on pics such as "Iron Man," "Love Ranch" and the upcoming "Race to Witch Mountain." TV and reality programming also contribute heavily to the state's production coffers.

"This is a tremendous accomplishment for the state, especially given the current economic climate that we are facing," said Luis Valera, commissioner for the Nevada Commission on Economic Development.

Oregon will be production host to CBS Films/Double Feature Films "Crowley." The pic, starring Harrison Ford (who also exec produces), and Brendan Fraser will lense in and around Portland as well as other Oregon locations.

"We are thrilled to have landed this high-profile film for our state," said Vince Porter, exec director of the Governor's Office of Film and Television. "It's also proof that the programs put in place by the state to attract film production are working and bringing value to Oregon."

Continuing that celebratory theme, Oregonians were treated to a proclamation delivered by Gov. Theodore Kulongoski that made Feb. 5 "Laika's Coraline Day."

The edict, delivered at the "Coraline" opening night premiere at the 32nd Portland Intl. Film Festival, was in appreciation of the Oregon-based Laika Studios' five years of work and investment on the stop-motion film. "Coraline," a Focus Features presentation, was produced solely in Oregon.

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New Mexico's Albuquerque Studios is production home to Alcon Entertainment/Silver Pictures' feature pic, "Book of Eli," helmed by the Hughes brothers and starring Denzel Washington; and recently wrapped AMC's second season of "Breaking Bad."

ReelzChannel will make the 28-acre campus facility its corporate home effective in May and, for the first time, the network's programming, production, Web development, creative services, and marketing and communications divisions will be housed and operated out of one location. ReelzChannel's lease calls for 30,000 square feet of office and production space, making it Albuquerque Studios' largest long-term tenant.

"This is a world-class addition to our facility and to the entire film and television production community here in New Mexico," said Nick Smerigan, chief operating officer of Albuquerque Studios.

The facility also has been home to several film/TV productions such as "Terminator Salvation: The Future Begins," "The Spirit" and USA TV skein, "In Plain Sight."