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Double Edge, Inferno pact for sales

Deal includes Asian rights to English-language films

By [PATRICK FRATER](#)

Taiwanese movie financier and production shingle Double Edge Entertainment has struck a deal with L.A.-based production and sales shingle Inferno Distribution to establish a joint sales office in Asia.

Deal gives Double Edge rights throughout Asia -- excluding Japan, but including India -- to Inferno's busy English-language production slate. Japanese rights will continue to be handled by Inferno co-founder Jim Stiebel.

Slate includes pictures flowing from Inferno's first-look co-financing and distribution deal with Sony including Meg Ryan, Annette Bening and Jada Pinkett Smith starrer "The Women" (*Variety*, May 8).

Headed by Stiebel and Bill Johnson, Inferno this year secured \$265 million of financing from private equity and venture capital sources.

Sales will be handled by Inferno's VP of international sales, James MacLean, and Double Edge's VP of sales and marketing, Steve Chicorel.

Double Edge is backed by world's No. 3 computer manufacturer BenQ and by the Taiwan government. It is already co-financing three Inferno titles, "The Women," Diane Keaton and Liv Tyler starrer "Smother," and Paul Walker-Piper Perabo vehicle "The Heaven Project."

"Our ambition is to build a one-stop shop to Asia and develop cross-cultural links," Chicorel said. "First steps included bringing two or three English-language productions to Taiwan and were followed by the establishment of (Taiwan) distribution operation. The sales operation with Inferno is next."

Productions to shoot in Taiwan include Mads Mikkelsen-starrer "Majik"; Shari Hamrick-helmed vampire movie "Punctured," with Eugene Levy, Jonathan Silverman and Kelly Hu; plus "Dead Shift," a heist movie set during the Chinese ghost month tipped to star Hong Kong thesp Kelly Lin.

In the spring, Inferno set up a similar independent sales office in Germany.

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