

From the Pacific Business News:

<http://www.bizjournals.com/pacific/stories/2002/03/04/daily48.html>

Hawaii lands major deal with Universal Studios

Pacific Business News by Terrence Sing

Date: Friday, March 8, 2002, 5:51am HST

Terrence Sing

Hawaii appears to be the first state to sign a deal with a Hollywood studio to market the state as part of the release of a major motion picture.

"Blue Crush" is the official title of a film scheduled for release this summer that revolves around the life of surfer girls in Hawaii.

Formerly known as "Surf Girls," it's being produced for Universal Studios by Academy Award-winning Imagine Entertainment, a company run by Ron Howard and Brian Grazer, the creative talents behind "A Beautiful Mind," "Apollo 13," "Liar Liar" and "The Nutty Professor."

The state this week secured the deal with Universal to market the islands in conjunction with the movie because Universal took advantage of Act 221, the state law that provides tax breaks for qualified high-technology businesses.

Movie and television shoots qualify for the credit because of the technology used in such productions, state officials say.

"This is the first time that I have heard of a studio making a commitment to foster a mutually beneficial cross promotion between the film and the location where it's been shot," said Los Angeles-based entertainment attorney John LaViolette of Bloom Hergott Deimer and Cook, which represents Hollywood A-list actors like Arnold Schwarzenegger and Sylvester Stallone. LaViolette worked in conjunction with local producers April Masini and Adam Fields, who advised the state in its negotiation.

"If it helps attract business to Hawaii, then that's a positive thing," said Hawaii Visitors and Convention Bureau CEO Tony Vericella. "If this helps us attract one more television or film production or TV commercial, then it's good for everyone. It's a story that's more than just surfing; it's a story about kids growing up. To the degree it showcases people, places and the Hawaii lifestyle to an audience that is global, it's a very positive thing."

The deal also gives HVCB the right to use clips from the movie in promoting Hawaii.