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# Bell Media boss says 'Heated Rivalry' could be one of Canada's biggest hits ever

'If it's not the biggest hit out of Canada ever, it's one of them,' Sean Cohan declares

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Photo: Crave

Bell Media president Sean Cohan is doubling down on the global potential of *Heated Rivalry*, suggesting the breakout Crave drama could rank among the biggest television hits to ever come out of Canada. Speaking about the company's evolving content strategy, Cohan said the queer hockey romance has already proven its impact, declaring, "If it's not the biggest hit out of Canada ever, it's one of them."

The series, created by Jacob Tierney and based on Rachel Reid's bestselling novels, follows rival professional hockey players Shane Hollander and Ilya Rozanov as their on-ice animosity masks a secret romantic relationship. Starring Hudson Williams and Connor Storrie, the show premiered on Crave in November 2025 and quickly became a streaming sensation, helping elevate Bell Media's global profile and expand demand for Canadian content internationally.

Cohan pointed to *Heated Rivalry* as a key example of Bell Media's push to produce distinctly Canadian stories with international appeal, noting that the company is leaning into bold, character-driven narratives. "We want to tell stories that are authentically Canadian but can travel around the world," he said, adding that the response to the show has been "incredible" both at home and abroad.

He also highlighted how the success of *Heated Rivalry* is shaping Bell Media's broader programming strategy, with a focus on investing in ambitious original productions that can compete globally. "We're building a slate that reflects the diversity and creativity of Canadian storytellers," Cohan explained, saying the company is looking to replicate the show's success across future projects.

As anticipation builds for the series' second season, expected in 2027, *Heated Rivalry* remains central to Bell Media's ambition to position Canadian television as a major force on the international stage, with Cohan emphasizing that the series has "set a new bar" for what homegrown hits can achieve.



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