Marvel’s new Spotlight branding will help you cut through the MCU’s noise

In an effort to help viewers understand which of its spinoff projects will have significant connections to the larger Marvel Cinematic Universe and which are really meant to work as standalone stories, Marvel’s rolling out a new kind of branding just in time for its upcoming *Echo* series.

Ahead of *Echo*’s debut on both Disney Plus and Hulu, Marvel announced today that it will be the first series to arrive under the studio’s new Marvel Spotlight banner: the brand consisting of all the MCU’s spinoffs that, while set in the same universe where the Avengers exist, are not required watching to understand what’s happening in the next *Avengers* movie, for example.

Speaking to Marvel.com, Marvel’s head of streaming, Brad Winderbaum, likened the Spotlight banner to Marvel’s classic anthology by the same name in terms of it featuring fresh characters who’ve gone on to become fan favorites like Echo / Maya Lopez (Alaqua Cox). Winderbaum also described *Echo* — an action-adventure drama about a deaf Choctaw crime lord turned vigilante — as exactly the kind of “character-driven” story that Spotlight’s meant to focus on.

“Marvel Spotlight gives us a platform to bring more grounded, character-driven stories to the screen, and in the case of Echo, focusing on street-level stakes over larger MCU continuity. Just like comics fans didn’t need to read Avengers or Fantastic Four to enjoy a Ghost Rider Spotlight comic, our audience doesn’t need to have seen other Marvel series to

understand what’s happening in Maya’s story.”

Though Marvel’s framing it like a clever new feature, Spotlight feels very much like a response to the criticism that the MCU’s become much harder to follow along with than it used to be in the days before Disney Plus and Marvel’s old plan to flood the space with as many streaming series as it possibly could. Spotlight’s definitely going to be useful for folks who just want to keep abreast of the big things happening in the MCU, but it’s also going to be very interesting to see which projects get that branding going forward after *Echo*’s debut on January 10th.

https://www.theverge.com/23949013/marvel-spotlight-echo