



Canadian
Heritage

Patrimoine
canadien

SHORT FILM RESEARCH STUDY

Conducted by

**The Canadian Film Centre's
Worldwide Short Film Festival**

Written by

**Jason Beaudry
Jennifer Chen
Shane Smith**

October 2006

Canada

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
Introduction	4
Objectives of Study and Areas of Research	4
Objective 1: Financial Viability	5
Canadian Broadcasters and their International Counterparts:	5
Broadcaster Profiles	5
International Broadcasters: Canadian Data	6
License Statistics and Figures	6
Future Initiatives and Changing Trends of Deliverables	7
Distribution:	7
Current Distribution Channels in Canada	7
Canadian Distribution and Marketing Plans and International Counterparts	8
Cost-benefit Analysis of the Filmmaker and Distributor Relationship	9
New Media:	9
New Media Company Profiles	9
Alternate Canadian Content Delivery Platform and International Counterparts:	10
Promotion and Revenue Generation Strategies and Statistics	11
Audience statistics and Figures (outside of respective native territories)	11
New Media Distributor Revenue and Site Traffic Statistics	11
Revenue Statistics for Filmmakers	11
Promotion and Audience Statistics and Figures	11
Evaluation of the Mobile Distribution Business Model	11
Objective 2: Promotion	13
Festival Overview	13
Case Studies:	15
Canadian Oscar Nominated Short Films' Festival strategies	16
International Oscar Nominated Short Films' Award Strategies	17
Global Festival Marketing and Promotional Statistics and Figures	17
Press and Publicity at Festivals	19
Distribution:	20
Marketing service for Short Films Filmmakers	20
Audience Figures of the Top 10 Festival Venues for Short Films	20
Objective 3: Production Funding Agencies	22
Funding Agencies Overview	22
Evaluation of Funding Agencies	26

Overall Assessment / Conclusion	28
Financial Viability	28
Promotion	28
Production	29
That's a Wrap!	30

Introduction

Objectives of Study and Areas of Research

Short films are the launch pad for the careers of almost every filmmaker in the world, and an art form in their own right. However, the impact of Canadian shorts in the global market has yet to be documented or measured in any meaningful way. At the 2005 Academy Awards, the Canadian film, RYAN, won best animated short. Why? How? This research study offers a global snapshot of the short film market and the current state of Canadian short films within this industry. The practices examined and the organizations profiled provide a comprehensive look at the business of short film and demonstrate how the short film world can be an arena for directors to further their craft in creating their first films, how producers can potentially test the markets before their feature projects, how festivals promote and support short films and how distributors can finally begin to generate a return on their investments.

This study will use the following factors to evaluate the international short film market and Canadian short films:

1. Financial viability (including revenue generating potential versus costs),
2. Promotion – what avenues are available and what is the value of each initiative (festivals and other platforms, including mobile devices and other new media platforms),
3. Production – Comparisons of Canadian productions to other countries in quantity and quality.

It is a common misconception that short films have been considered little more than expensive “calling cards” for filmmakers. However, the perception that short films are merely non-commercial, first steps in a filmmaker’s career is rapidly changing. In the past, short films relied almost exclusively on festival, art house, and academic exhibition to achieve public display, but this is no longer the case. Taking its place is the notion that any place where people wait for more than a few minutes has become a venue for shorts, and thereby a possible business transaction. In addition to a diversification of traditional broadcast opportunities such as specialty short film channels – and due to a perfect confluence of bandwidth and application development – short films are becoming the most popular form of online entertainment. Every well-known entertainment company has branched out onto the Net, and they’re not alone. The marketplace is filled with talented newcomers. Short film is increasingly being recognized as a medium that offers larger freedoms, where creators often take higher risks. Short films are also receiving widespread praise as a medium that trumpets conciseness and economy while providing a unique combination of form and content.

Objective 1: Financial Viability

Canadian Broadcasters and their International Counterparts

Television broadcasters are predominantly the largest area of revenue generation for a short film. Not only can filmmakers market to a broad territory and audience but they can earn a license fee in return. We examine four broadcasters from around the world with varying rates and criteria to illustrate the impact of Canadian short films on their programming.

Broadcaster Profiles

The Sundance Channel, USA:

Under the creative direction of Robert Redford, Sundance Channel is the television destination for independent-minded viewers seeking something different. Bold, uncompromising and irreverent, Sundance Channel offers audiences a diverse and engaging selection of films, documentaries, and original programs, all unedited and commercial free. Launched in 1996, Sundance Channel is a venture of NBC Universal, Showtime Networks Inc. and Robert Redford. Sundance Channel operates independently of the non-profit Sundance Institute and the Sundance Film Festival, but shares the overall Sundance mission of encouraging artistic freedom of expression. Sundance Channel's website address is www.sundancechannel.com

Canal + Poland, Poland:

Canal + Cyfrowy Sp. z o.o is one of the largest television companies in Poland. It owns one of the digital television platform carriers: Cyfra+. It produces seven channels, among them: the company offers Canal +, the family of movie channels and another film channel branded ale kino! The programming consists predominantly of main stream and commercial films for the Polish public.

TV Man Union, Japan:

Since its foundation in 1970 as the first independent television production company in Japan, TV MAN UNION, INC. has been actively producing popular television programs, documentaries and feature films. In 1996, it launched a unique movie channel, CINEFIL IMAGICA, in partnership with Imagica Corp. to bring a wide variety of art cinema to film fan audiences in Japan.

The Short List, USA:

The Short List" is the 26-part, half-hour, weekly showcase for the best short films in the world. Recipient of four Emmy Awards, the showcase is credited with bringing the art of short film to U.S. series television (public TV stations, Cox Cable). Geared to a general audience, ages 18 – 80, the showcase features fiction, animation and documentary packaged with its distinctive theme music and award-winning graphics. As the only television series of its kind in the world, "The Short List" focuses on the art of short film, its history as the origin of motion picture and its special attributes.

International Broadcasters : Canadian Data

	TV Man Union		The Short List		Canal+ Poland		Sundance Channel	
	Countries	Program %	Countries	Program %	Countries	Program %	Countries	Program %
Top Countries of Acquired Films	France	30-40 %	France	25 %	France	25 %	USA	50 %
	Korea	15 %	Norway	25 %	UK	8 %	UK	25 %
	Norway	15 %	USA	10 %	Spain	8 %	Canada	15 %
	Japan	6 %	Germany	10 %	Poland	7 %	France	7.5 %
	Australia	5 %	England	10 %	Ireland	5 %	Australia	2.5 %
	Canada	5 %	Ireland	10 %	Canada	3 %		
			Canada	6 %				
License Fee	\$100 \$ to \$150 USD/min		Up to \$200 USD/min		25 to 40 Euros/min		\$500 + \$150 USD/min, up to \$3,000	
License Term	2 years		3 years		1 year		2 years	
Territory	Japan		North America		Poland		USA, Bermuda, Bahamas, and the Caribbean	
No. of international films licensed/year	171		203		113		40	
No. of Canadian films licensed/year	5		3		4		10	
Future Initiatives					VOD		Online streaming of select short film content, sometimes commissioned.	

License Statistics and Figures

Interestingly, the short films acquired by each of the broadcasters vary in quantity and use depending on the programming structure of each channel. Some films are acquired as interstitial programming between other featured programs or films while other broadcasters acquire short specifically for a short films series. The ranges of license fees are commonly paid as a cost per minute. There are very few broadcasters that offer a flat rate for a film though those agreements certainly exist. From \$35CAD/min to \$250CAD/min is the range of our broadcasters.

As would be expected, none of the international broadcasters program a majority of Canadian short films but what is surprising is that three of the four unrelated broadcasters acquire the bulk of their programming from France.

With the exception of the Sundance Channel, all the broadcasters acquire less than 10% of their programming from Canada. When asked how they like to do business or how they would like to be approached with new titles, they all concur that distributors are their primary sources with markets and festivals as the second option. Could there be a relationship between the lack of commercial short film distributors in Canada or is it a question of programmers taste? Some broadcasters have commented that most Canadian filmmakers make longer short films than in other countries.

Future Initiatives and Changing Trends of Deliverables

Currently, the common list of deliverables requested by a broadcaster of any territory involves a copy of the film on Beta SP format (approx \$50 including stock and transfer) or sometimes, Beta SP PAL depending on the territory and requirements of the broadcast (approx \$150-200 for stock and transfer), along with the appropriate legal documents, some basic marketing materials, the contract and the music cue sheet for the film. All of this needs to be safely delivered to either a local address or fedexed half way around the world. Those fees again can range from \$10-\$150 depending on shipping rates. Shipping can sometimes be negotiated with the broadcaster.

When selling to a foreign broadcaster, additional materials are required such as a dialogue list for translation or dubbing. Most broadcasters for short films absorb the cost of dubbing or subtitling. Should they choose to dub the film, an additional voice track is required when delivering the Beta SP.

Depending on the territory, most of the broadcasters cover the costs around subtitling or dubbing but the costs of closed captioning, which is now mandatory for broadcasters in the US, is absorbed by the filmmaker. Closed captioning usually costs roughly \$400-600/per 20 minutes of film. The broadcasters also seem to be moving in the general direction of acquiring rights for the internet and Video On Demand (VOD) even for short content as the direction of their own stations change. In the future, one can foresee one standard media deliverable in High Definition (HD) from which broadcasters will be able to transfer to the film to whichever platform they need.

Distribution:

Current Distribution Channels in Canada

Distribution is a critical part of the short film life. After the film is completed, the promotion, exhibition and distribution of the film are what give it life. Most of the distributors dedicated exclusively to short film distribution are organizations that are non-profit, and/or artist-run groups like V-Tape, CFMDC or the Canadian Film Centre. Private organizations like Locomotion Films will also acquire Canadian films not produced by themselves for sales but as an adjunct to their core business of producing commercials, documentaries or industrial videos. Often, short filmmakers have to self-distribute if they don't have an opportunity to connect with a distributor. Emerging filmmakers often don't realize there is a global film festival circuit they can capitalize on to meet distributors and buyers and make sales for their film. This also makes them ripe for exploitation by unscrupulous festivals and distributors, a knowledge gap that seems to be rarely addressed by films schools and training institutes.

Canadian Distributor Profiles

Canadian Film Centre's Flow Distribution:

Canadian Film Centre's Flow Distribution is a boutique distributor uniquely dedicated to short films. Flow Distribution specializes in the promotion, distribution and sales of short films internationally and within Canada. Flow Distribution continues to build an extensive catalogue of acquisitions featuring the best in short cinema and manages the shorts produced at the Canadian Film Centre. With a network of festival, buyer and exhibitor contacts that span the globe, Flow Distribution develops effective promotional strategies to assist filmmakers in launching their short films. Focus: Narrative fiction under 10 minutes.

CFMDC:

The Canadian Filmmakers' Distribution Centre (CFMDC) is Canada's foremost non-commercial distributor and resource for independently produced film. Based in Toronto, Canada, the CFMDC was founded in 1967 with the set goal of increasing distribution opportunities, audiences and visibility for independent film. CFMDC represents approximately 550 filmmakers worldwide and 2,600 film titles. Films are in all genres including drama, documentary, experimental and

animation by a wide range of local, national and international artists, both established and emerging. The focus is around broadcast or educational-friendly unconventional films. CFMDC also has one of the largest collections of international queer shorts in the world. They are also producing educational-orientated DVD collections.

V-Tape:

V-Tape operates as a distributor, a mediatheque and resource centre with an emphasis on the contemporary media arts. V-Tape's mandate is to serve both artists and audiences by assisting and encouraging the appreciation, pedagogy, preservation, restoration and exhibition of video and media works by artists and independents. V-Tape's agreement is non-exclusive and international. Focused on primarily experimental video of all lengths, their titles range from very conceptually art-based works to experimental documentaries. Through a partnership with the Centre For Aboriginal Media, V-Tape has worked to represent a large collection of independently produced or directed First Nations' productions.

Winnipeg Film Group:

The WFG executes its mandate by assisting members in four areas of film development: production, training, exhibition, and distribution. Distribution of WFG members' films to festivals or broadcast outlets places the work in a context where independent film is viewed as art affirming the filmmaker's role as social communicators, story tellers and artists. Work circulates constantly as films are presented to audiences around the world.

Locomotion Films:

Locomotion is a dynamic and diversified production and distribution company whose mission is to promote original creative content worldwide. In a fundamentally creative industry, Locomotion is purposefully positioned to develop and guide the top creative talent of today and tomorrow in order to maximize its business and artistic opportunities. Locomotion was founded in 2000 by GROUP EXPONENT, the parent company of both LA FABRIQUE D'IMAGES, one of Canada's largest and most highly regarded advertising film production houses and BUZZ IMAGE GROUP, a recognized benchmark for excellence in video post-production and computerized special effects.

Canadian Distribution and Marketing Plans and International Counterparts

After the filmmaker has finished his film, the most important forum in which to find buyers and distributors is the film festival circuit. It is here that the filmmakers will connect with the short film industry. With that being said, the acquisitions of titles and selling of films to international buyers occur at the various film festivals, especially those with markets. Therefore, it's no surprise that the bulk of the marketing dollars within a short film distribution company go to festivals and markets.

The marketing schedule of various distributors seems to depend mostly on the style or flavour of their catalogue. Some more niche distributors will attend festivals without official markets for acquiring titles and meeting with the local industry in that region. Other niche specialties lie in genre: animation, gay & lesbian content, horror, etc. It seems at the end of every January, all the distributors, government short film agencies and buyers flock to the Clermont-Ferrand International Short Film Festival in France, the largest short film festival and market in the world. The market at this festival is conducive to additional market screenings, cocktail receptions and events. Any additional marketing initiatives generally occur here, or at one of the other festivals with a short film market: Toronto's Worldwide Short Film Festival, Tampere Short Film Festival and the Oberhausen Short Film Festival among others.

In the early stages of a film, the best value a distributor can offer is to assist the filmmaker in planning a strategy for the festivals and markets that are appropriate for the film. The appropriate exposure for a film will get the ball rolling with other festivals and broadcasters and buyers for other platforms. The structure of the distributor, whether it is a for-profit organization or an artist

run organization, will determine how much of the costs it will cover for an acquired title. Smaller for-profit organizations will offer advice and recommendations for festivals but cover none of the costs while V-Tape, will manage the entire submission process of a film to festivals that pay screening fees on behalf of the filmmaker. In evaluating the license fees of the broadcasters and the commission fees of the distributors, it becomes clear that it's not an overly profitable business.

Finally, in territories like France and New Zealand, the Film Commission or a similar government agency manage the promotion of their short films on the film festival circuit, offering to cover the fees and costs around the festivals. For the larger markets, they have representation and dedicated staff to promote their own cultural short film products. This is an interim group between the distributor and the filmmakers. Often, this group will recommend or assist in finding a distributor for the filmmaker as part of the services they offer or, they will manage the sales themselves.

Cost-benefit Analysis of the Filmmaker and Distributor Relationship

A filmmaker's first films are usually very close to him. The challenge for distributors is to educate them on the process of doing business with the film. At the same time, filmmakers are feeling the financial burden of producing the film. At this point, the filmmaker and distributor negotiate the commission fees associated with having a distributor. Some filmmakers may feel that they don't need one. Most short film distributors around the world do not offer any cash advances nor, do they ask for any money up front in acquiring the titles. The business works on solely commissions per sale or transaction. Most of the distributors take a range of 30-50% of the sale. For some distributors, commission is based on net revenues and for others it's based on gross. There are also permutations around which costs are covered and which are not. Again, this is reflective of the distributor's size, marketing initiatives and their status as a for-profit or non-profit organization. Filmmakers need to determine the value a distributor offers them and which distributor is most appropriate for their film. Without attending most of the markets around the world, it would be very difficult for the filmmaker to meet every buyer of every platform and know whether their film works for them or not. In these instances, a distributor would be absolutely necessary. For the most part, buyers prefer to deal with distributors because of the greater ease in doing business and the volume of sales they can close with one contract.

The final decision is up to the filmmakers; are they sacrificing a 30-50% of their films revenues in order to access the expertise, contacts and markets of a distributor? Hopefully, securing a distributor is one of their goals, allowing them to focus on what they should be doing- building their career by making films.

New Media:

New Media Company Profiles

Atom Entertainment, USA:

An aggregator and distributor of games, short films, and animations on the web, Atom Entertainment works with creative independent content developers to meet the new consumer demand for fun, short, accessible and unusual digital entertainment. Their five brands reach a broad spectrum of highly-desirable audiences including AtomFilms, a pioneer in the digital video space delivering the highest-quality short-form comedies, animations and dramas to more than five million people each month.

ohm:tv, Spain:

ohm:tv and ohm:tv mobile continues to specialize in distinctive services supporting the creation, development and realization of creative and innovative cross media formats. Together with their partner Mindmatics, ohm:tv offers one of the biggest catalogues of branded and unbranded content for the small screen. Their content ranges from short films, clips, images and logos to

java games, sounds and ring tones.

CBC's Zed, Canada:

Zed uses TV, the Web and Mobile Platforms to seek out and broadcast the best new short films, documentaries, animation, visual art, performance and music in Canada and around the world.

Premium Films, France:

Premium Films is an independent international sales company specialized in award-winning and high profile short films. Their team develops long term relationships with producers and directors and handles the distribution of their movies through television, video, airlines, theatrical releases and the internet. Premium Films is also the exclusive distributor of short films to Orange, the telecommunications company.

MobiGardens Corp, Canada:

Mobifest is Canada's first mobile film festival. Launched in 2006, it recognizes excellence and innovation in made-for-mobile filmmaking. The festival has two components: an interactive website where audiences can vote on their favourite mobile movies, and an awards ceremony. Mobifest is a trademark of Mobigardens Corporation. Mobigardens also acquires and distributes mobile content around the world.

Alternate Canadian Content Delivery Platforms and International Counterparts

Definitions of the delivery platforms available

Cell phones – mobile telephones running on digital cellular networks or new systems of wireless telephony technology

Mobile devices – For the purpose of this study, mobile devices will refer to Personal Digital Assistant (PDA) like Palm units and iPaks which may also be used as phones but were originally designed for mobile information management. This term will also be used for iPods, portable gaming devices and other mp3 players.

The Internet – Although most all cell phones and mobile devices have internet access, this study refers to access of the internet from a Personal Computer (PC), whether it be a laptop or a workstation, assuming that either will offer better sound and picture quality while limiting mobility unlike the other devices.

Definitions of Delivery Methods

Downloading – Regardless of the device in use, downloading refers to the transfer of an entire file of content from one device to another via internet or any other data network.

Streaming – Fast transmission of content while connected to the internet or a network while never having any data reside on your device.

The newest and most exciting opportunity for the short filmmaker is providing content for the new media delivery platforms that are developing and evolving. Shorter form content is in high demand to satisfy the technological limitations of these platforms while providing the content that users are interested in. Every content maker, whether it be a Hollywood Studio or a television network, is looking for a way to reduce and repurpose properties to fit into these delivery channels. "Content is King" and "Content drives the technology" are terms that are driving all makers of content into a frenzy when thinking about the possibilities of new markets and new business models. Are Canadian filmmakers cashing in on the opportunities available in this new market? How are all these short films found and distributed? The new media distributors who participated in this study were keen to find content, but not overly open in how the model worked and what the exact audience numbers were.

Each distributor was looking for content that was very short and preferred comedy and animation, preferably with little to no dialogue. They were selling to the carriers themselves directly and needed to do so in larger quantities. Some distributors even had studios or production facilities to provide the exact content requirements for some of the media carriers.

Interestingly, what distributors and buyers of new media content are looking for is recurring characters or in a series or episodic format but at a running time of under 6 mins. Again, of the surveyed buyers and distributors, none would say exactly how much they paid for content and some would even negotiate a per minute rate or a flat rate. So, like the license fees by TV broadcasters, there is no consistency. However, the range for sales of short form content to various distributors and new media buyers still varies from \$0 (or worse yet, the filmmakers pay for encoding services) up to \$10,000 USD flat rate for a world premiere on-line. License fees are also platform and delivery-method dependent: cell phones- streaming or downloading, mobile devices (predominantly downloading) and the internet: streaming or downloading.

Promotion and Revenue Generation Strategies

All of the buyers and distributors based the marketing of their own organizations on relationships and partnerships with other media companies or carriers. They market themselves to filmmakers as any distributor would at film festivals, and maintain a company presence on-line and at markets at festivals. When acquiring films the rights are negotiated and contracts and delivery materials would be delivered by the filmmaker in the same method as if to any short film distributor. Once the films have been delivered to the cell phone carrier or the internet provider, the marketing strategies were completely formulated by them, meaning that content aggregators or mobile content distributors generally do minimal to no marketing of the films they acquire.

Audience Statistics and Figures (outside of respective native territories)

-

New Media Distributor Revenue and Site Traffic Statistics

-

Revenue Statistics for Filmmakers

-

Promotion and Audience Statistics and Figures

Due to the emerging nature of the new media industry, its constant modification and development, and its highly competitive atmosphere, participants in this study were not forthcoming with adequate information to make a true analysis of statistics in relation to the use of cell phones, mobile devices and the internet as a venue for short films. Although this information is at the moment considered proprietary by the vast majority of organizations active in this field, it would be well worth continuing to pursue this information as the industry and its modes of revenue generation continue to coalesce.

Evaluation of the Mobile Distribution Business Model

Mobile distribution is still in its very early stages for live action, animated or experimental short films. The carriers offer these services to specific handsets and with certain programs. Certainly the opportunity and services are far greater in Europe and Asia, but the absorption rate by the public is still slower than anticipated. Packages of minutes at a higher bandwidth are available

with most carriers. This is absolutely necessary for better screening either via download or streaming and it's priced at a premium. Video content is still quite costly for the consumer and there has yet to be a practical business application to kick-start the trend.

Objective 2: Promotion

Festival Overview

Close to 100% of survey participants in all fields (i.e. Broadcast, new media, funding / promotion agencies and filmmakers) list film festivals as playing a significant role in a short film's success. However, the nature of film festivals is almost as diverse as the short film form itself. In the interest of this study, the nature of promotion and the various dividends of participation have been separated into three distinct festival categories: A List Festivals; Short Film Festivals; and Niche Film Festivals.

A- List Festivals

A- List Festivals are well-established international festivals that have the highest recognition in terms of promotion and visibility, while having a strong reputation for their programming selections. These film festivals also attempt to cover the gamut of filmmaking, from short to feature-length, with a widespread variety of genres. The A- List Festivals referenced in this study are: Cannes Film Festival (France); Berlin International Film Festival (Germany); and, Sundance Film Festival (USA).

Prestigious A- List Festivals in Europe have a strong tendency to be mature organisations (30 years or older) that have significant ties to cinema history both in their development and in their programming. As such, European A- List Festivals also display a high regard for the short film form, its significance and its place in cinema history. For example, the Cannes Film Festival traditionally awards a Palme d'or for Short Film alongside the Palme d'or for its feature competition. The same goes for the Berlin International Film Festival with its Golden and Silver Bear categories. The same does not hold true in North America, with the Sundance Film Festival instituting an award for international short film only two years ago (in its defence, the Sundance Film Festival is renowned for its focus on American independent filmmaking and has been making inroads into international programming for some time).

What A- List Festivals offer most to short film is exposure, both in terms of publicity and access to opportunity. As A- List Festivals are the largest and most significant events on an international scale, they are also the events that garner the most media attention, and therefore public exposure. Furthermore, they are the first stop on many festival programmers' journeys; particularly those programmers from festivals that present both feature length and short films.

These programmers have limited budgets for travel and little time to set out in search of innovative, lesser-known short films. Their programs thus frequently reflect what they saw and liked at A- List Festivals.

Although A- List Festivals often have highly developed markets as part of their activities, they are likely feature-film focused and therefore provide little representation to short film. An exception to this rule would be the Cannes Film Festival's Short Film Corner. The Short Film Corner is accessible to all professionals registered at the Cannes Film Festival and provides participants with the following:

- A reception and meeting area
- Professional support from a well-trained and experienced staff
- Twenty interactive screens and two screening rooms where your films can be viewed
- A conference area
- Display racks for flyers
- Institutional exhibition Stands
- Access to buyers, feature film producers, film festival programmers and agents

Registered films can be viewed at all times on the interactive screens. Additional screenings are also organized in one of the Palais des Festivals theatres. In 2006, more than 950 films from 70 different countries were screened. Nearly 13,000 viewings were registered and 40 screenings were organized in the screening rooms. One of the major partners of the Short Film Corner is the National Film Board of Canada that curates themed programs of registered short films that are not officially screened as part of the Cannes Film Festival. Short films selected for these themed programs benefit from a presentation in one of the Short Film Corners' screening rooms.

Short Film-Specific Festivals

It is without question that the highest volume of opportunity for the short films at festivals exists in the short film-specific event. That is not to say that the A List Festival is not a powerful force in the destiny of some short films, only that, for the short film specialist, the short film-specific festival is a sure bet. Responding to the ability of A List Festivals to make an impact, Txema Munoz of Spain's KIMUAK (short film promotion agency) comments "In the majority of cases, yes. We have had a couple of films in Cannes and, after their participation in the Festival, we saw very clearly the effects of being there. Anyway, our experience tells us that, for us, festivals like Clermont-Ferrand and the Worldwide Short Film Festival are more important than Cannes." The short film-specific film festivals referenced in this study are: Clermont-Ferrand International Short Film Festival (France); Tampere Film Festival (Finland); Canadian Film Centre's Worldwide Short Film Festival (Canada); Aspen Shortsfest (USA); Flickerfest (Australia).

Study participants indicate that Short film specific festivals screen between 60 (Aspen Shortsfest) and 600 (Tampere) films per event and that there is a higher and more established regard for the short film medium in Europe indicative of the maturity and prominence of short film-specific Festivals such as 29 year-old Clermont-Ferrand (widely considered the most important short film event in the world) and 36 year-old Tampere (arguably the oldest such event).

Both Clermont-Ferrand and Tampere have highly developed markets as part of their events. The difference with these markets compared to the markets of A List Festivals is that they cater exclusively to the short film form and classify short film as a category with unique production and distribution aspects. In reference to the unique needs of short film, Laurent Crouzeix of the Clermont-Ferrand Festival adds "Obviously, some of the issues that can be relevant when surveying feature film events are not so relevant when it comes to short films. Business models simply cannot be duplicated from the long to the short format. The specific interest of short films resides precisely in their sheer variety and diversity, and in the multiple ways shorts can be produced, as opposed to the generally standardized way features are produced, made and marketed."

As such, markets at short film-specific festivals are well used by those whose key business lies in short film. Virtually all of the short film-specific festivals contacted offer market-type mechanisms as part of their events, but only Clermont-Ferrand and Tampere have distinctly defined markets.

The Clermont-Ferrand Short Film Market is structured around three main axes:

- Exhibition Hall: 35 booths hosting 130 companies / organizations
- Video Library: 35 video units; 3,000 films viewed by 220 different buyers/programmers
- Market Screenings: 32 screenings in 2 theatres

Canadian organizations and short filmmakers place a high priority on a presence within Clermont-Ferrand's Short Film Market, but representation hasn't been consistent in the past. Most recently, the Canada Council for the Arts' Definitely Independent initiative provided support for Canadian short films at Clermont-Ferrand. Definitely Independent typically represents a group of Canadian distributors promoting independent film, video, new media and audio artworks at major international festivals and markets. Their collections are dedicated to "independent work by

Canadian artists that is innovative in the aesthetic strategies it employs, themes and subjects it addresses and the point of view it expresses. The goal of this collaboration is to make our collections accessible to the public and respond to the needs and interests of the artists through financial return from the sale, rental and licensing of their works.”

In Tampere, approximately 1,000 professionals and students participate in the Film Market. The Film Market offers the possibility of organizing screenings and may grant access to venues for receptions. Tampere’s Film Market also hosts 15 booths in its exhibition centre and 15 video units for its video library.

Other festivals, which are relatively younger in age, have a more casual atmosphere and use this to drive informal market activities such as screening facilities – taking advantage of the festival catalogue, which includes both selected and non-selected films submitted to the festival – as well as networking meetings and gatherings. A majority of the time spent at festivals by buyers and distributors is dedicated to these activities.

Niche Film Festivals

Niche festivals are events that screen both features and shorts with a focus on distinct subject matter. Although niche festivals can focus on a particular genre (horror, sci-fi, etc...), they are much more likely to have a purpose which involves increasing the visibility of a particular community or social issue through cultural and artistic expression. Niche festivals commonly present both feature-length and short film. However, niche festivals present a much higher percentage of short films than other festivals screening both feature-length and short film. Of the festivals examined in this study, niche festivals had programs comprised of 40-55% short film, whereas other film festivals featured a program of 25% short film. One rationale for this disparity is that niche festivals take more shorts because they offer a greater degree of diversity, are more open and take greater risks, which suits the nature and programming of niche festivals.

With regards to Canadian short films selected for niche festivals, the odds seem favourable. While the other festivals surveyed accepted between 2% and 5% of Canadian films submitted, niche festivals invited upwards of 25% of Canadian short films submitted. But does this mean that niche films are more successful at likeminded events than they would be otherwise? When asked whether niche films would fare better in regular festivals than the niche counterparts, Jennifer Morris of Frameline: San Francisco International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Film Festival replied, “Screening in both is helpful. They may get lost in a non-niche festival and never find the right audience.” Although further study is needed, preliminary results seem to indicate that niche festivals should be a component of a film’s festival strategy, but regular festivals are also a necessity regardless of a film’s subject matter and therefore, the most important element of a film’s success through festivals is a well-rounded approach.

Case Studies

This section provides a snapshot of the various methods and strategies employed to secure Academy Award nominations for 3 short films (one animated, one live action, and one documentary). Two of the films are Canadian (RYAN, HARDWOOD), while the third is from New Zealand (TWO CARS, ONE NIGHT).

The 3 films discussed in this section were represented and co-funded by government organizations (New Zealand Film Commission, NFB, and OMDC). Therefore the resources that were available to support their Oscar strategy and campaign can be considered to be more substantial than those available to independent filmmakers also nominated. It is worth noting however, that the winner of the Academy Award for Best Live Action Short Film in 2004 (the year in which all of the films below were nominated) was a government supported but independently-produced short WASP (UK, director Andrea Arnold) that had very limited funds for any kind of Oscar campaign.

WASP relied on Festival awards (of which it won many) and word-of-mouth to support its nomination. We were unable to secure detailed information on the strategy for the film as the filmmaker, Andrea Arnold, has completed her feature film RED DIRT and is currently promoting that film on the Festival circuit while preparing to shoot her next feature.

Canadian Oscar Nominated Short Films' Festival Strategies

RYAN

Directed by Canadian animator Chris Landreth, RYAN received the Oscar® for Best Animated Short Film at the 2005 Academy Awards®. Co-produced by the National Film Board of Canada in 2004, RYAN was launched internationally at the Cannes Film Festival and domestically at the Canadian Film Centre's Worldwide Short Film Festival, where it won the first of more than 80 awards (both Festivals took place in May 2004). The film qualified for the Oscars multiple times by winning awards at accredited Festivals (including Annecy Animation Festival, WSFF). The success of RYAN is due in part because the film was "marked" for Oscar® contention by its producers and the National Film Board of Canada at an early stage, and a careful Festival strategy was mapped out before it launched. Although many elements went into the determination of this strategy, one such factor was the track record of the filmmaker, as director Chris Landreth had previously been nominated in the same category in 1996 for his animated short film THE END. The Oscar® campaign in question was run by noted Toronto publicist/producer David Miller, who was a former employee of the National Film Board of Canada and was contracted by them to specifically work on this project (while at the same time running the Oscar® campaign for HARDWOOD). Furthermore, the National Film Board of Canada devoted significant resources to the promotion of the film and the execution of the campaign, stationing Miller in Los Angeles for the month leading up to the awards. During this time, Miller held screenings and events promoting the film, while also taking Landreth to meet with studios and agents, which ensured that the film was "top of mind" and widely seen not only by Academy members, but members of the close-knit animation community in Los Angeles. Advertising was also placed in trade magazines, including Variety. Chris Landreth, on comparing this nomination to RYAN to his previous one for THE END, said "There's no comparison between these two occasions. [The last time] we did no lobbying. We had no strategy. We had no clue what a dog-and-pony show this is. And we were up against the Wallace and Gromit guys. We had no chance." An Oscar® win has allowed Landreth his pick of projects (he's currently developing a feature animated film), and he has been a great ambassador not only for the film, but as well for the National Film Board of Canada and for animation in general, offering to take part in master classes, lectures, screenings and events across Canada and internationally.

HARDWOOD

Directed by Canadian filmmaker Hubert Davis, HARDWOOD was nominated for Best Documentary Short at the 2005 Academy Awards®. A co-production of the National Film Board, as part of the OMDC's Documentary Calling Card program (since discontinued!), the nomination of HARDWOOD marked a special occasion as Davis is the first African-Canadian ever nominated for an Oscar. The film premiered at Hot Docs International Documentary Festival in Toronto in May 2004. Initially, there were no major expectations with regards to awards for HARDWOOD, but buzz and interest increased that summer after the film won the Best Documentary at the Canadian Film Centre's Worldwide Short Film Festival and the film was selected for several more Festivals, garnering further attention and awards. Qualification for the Academy Awards® was received by being "four-walled" in Los Angeles as required by Academy specifications (the only other method of qualifying outside of winning an award at a recognized Festival. Note: the Documentary Branch of the Academy has different qualification criteria to the Short Film Branch). The Oscar® campaign in question was run by noted Toronto publicist/producer David Miller, who was a former employee of the National Film Board of Canada and was contracted by them to specifically work on this project (while at the same time running the Oscar® campaign for RYAN).

During the campaign, Miller secured the services of a Los Angeles Press Relations firm (TCDM and Associates) which has carved a niche in working on Oscar® campaigns for several nominated documentaries in the past. They provided valuable contacts, information and resources about the documentary community in LA and assisted in creating a strategy to promote the film. Advertising was placed in trade magazines, including Variety. Furthermore, HARDWOOD was strategically placed at the IDA (International Documentary Association) screenings in Los Angeles in order to attract the attention of Academy voters, and this was a key element in building buzz for the film and creating the momentum that saw it garner the nomination. The film was also discussed in Canada's parliament, as NFB Commissioner Jacques Bensimon stated: "I think this film does more for U.S.-Canada relations than any political strategy to meet and do business together, because it's basically about feelings, emotion, and family". In addition, HARDWOOD was screened before the Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage in February, 2005. As expected, the nomination had great positive impact on Davis' career, and has allowed him to embark on directing a feature documentary (currently in postproduction). Interestingly, he has since directed the live action short film ARUBA, which has also garnered success and has qualified for the 2007 Academy Awards.

International Oscar Nominated Short Films' Award Strategies

TWO CARS, ONE NIGHT

Directed by New Zealand filmmaker Taika Waititi, TWO CARS, ONE NIGHT was nominated for Best Live Action Short at the 2005 Academy Awards®. The production of the film was supported by the New Zealand Film Commission, who distributed and sold the film internationally, and oversaw its festival strategy. Launched at the Sundance Film Festival in 2004, TWO CARS, ONE NIGHT qualified for Oscar consideration through its Sundance win and has screened at over 100 Festivals since. Beyond supporting the travel and accommodation costs for the films director and producers, the New Zealand Film Commission strategy relied on the word-of-mouth generated by the film at the festivals at which it screened, as well as the support of Bird Runningwater, Director of the Native Program at the Sundance Institute. The Institute selected Waititi (who is Maori) for its writer's lab and Runningwater talked up the film to guest lecturers at the lab and to Academy members, encouraging them to see it. The nomination garnered much press for the film in New Zealand, and shored up the position of the New Zealand Film Commission as well as generating continued support for cultural initiatives by the New Zealand government. Waititi has described the nomination as the beginning of a "snowball effect" on his career, culminating in the production of his first feature film (currently in post-production and expected to premiere at the 2007 Sundance Film Festival).

Global Festival Marketing and Promotional Statistics and Figures

One thing that becomes very obvious in the varied realm of film festivals is that the key to a short film's success is an effective festivals submission strategy. Apart from the cost of material (i.e. DVDs, press kits, postage, etc...), not to mention opportunity cost, what's to stop an ambitious film maker from applying to every film festival he or she can find a listing for? The most relevant answer to this question is submission fees. Of the ten film festivals referenced in this study, only 4 of them offer free submission. The average submission fee of the festivals examined was \$35USD (roughly \$40CDN). Therefore, if a Canadian film maker wished to submit a film to 20 of the top tier film festivals for short film, he or she should expect to pay approximately \$500 in submission fees alone.

Once a submission strategy has been devised, what are the odds of being selected for an international film festival? Of the festivals examined in this study, the percentage of programming allotted to Canadian short films at international festivals ranges from 1 to 5% with an average of 80 Canadian films submitted per year, per festival. One possible reason for this low percentage at least in Europe may be that the European Coordination of Film Festivals (ECFF) requires that the festivals it represents (approximately 250 festivals) devote 70% of their programming to European

film in order to receive grants. This is not uncommon when other countries are examined, as many require a significant share of programming devoted to national output in order to receive adequate available funding. This is the case with funding for film festivals from Telefilm Canada, which requires a domestic content quota for Canadian film festivals to be eligible for support. On the international front, some Canadian institutions seem to have found a loophole to the problem of national quotas through co-productions with other countries. Most notable among such arrangements are both the National Film Board of Canada's recent success co-producing short films with such countries as Norway, Denmark and Argentina, as well as short films produced through an agreement between Belgium and the province of Quebec.

Festival Awards

Apart from the prestige, and possible monetary compensation, that go along with winning an award, a short film that is awarded certain honours can see its potential for further screenings and awards increase tenfold. During the course of a year, an inordinate amount of festival awards will be won by a few selected titles. This is not due solely to the quality of the films in question, but can also be traced to the publicity effect of the prominent international festivals. The winners there capture the attention of programmers from other festivals, who then invite them to participate in their own events. This also gives the filmmaker leverage to request that submission fees be waived and even to request that the festival cover all shipping costs for the film.

Short Film Markets

As evidenced through the film festivals considered in this study, older festivals are most likely to have highly structured markets, while younger festivals have incorporated market-mechanisms into their activities if an official market has not been established. While festivals themselves are very effective promotional tool for short films on a film-by-film basis, markets are undoubtedly essential for the promotion of a nation's overall short film output. Most of the national funding and promotional agencies contacted for this study have a presence and conduct screenings at the market during the Clermont-Ferrand International Short Film Festival and will most likely curate a selection to be offered to interested parties via DVD.

There is also a movement towards the formation of virtual short film markets. In a co-operative effort between the Clermont-Ferrand and the Short Film Corner in Cannes, the French company Boostup was enlisted to work on this kind of virtual film market system. Since the co-operation between Clermont-Ferrand and Cannes was terminated this spring, it remains to be seen what impact this will have on the development of France's own online film market. Along with market initiatives, festivals have a growing desire to maintain their submission archives, both to preserve cultural legacy as well as to provide a further outlet for short film buyers and distributors. However, in most cases financial limitations inhibit ongoing maintenance, as the cost of digitizing and hosting an entire catalogue can be restrictive for smaller organizations.

Canadian short film is underrepresented at the major film markets or at television trade shows, with the rare exception of occasional special invitations. There are initiatives taking place within Canada to represent short film product at international markets, such as the Canada Council's Definitely Independent initiative and SODEC's "Cinema of Quebec" stand at Clermont-Ferrand annually, but these initiatives are project based or regionally specific and fail to represent Canadian short film as a whole and are limited to one or two events worldwide. A professional organisation is needed here that could travel to such events and both promote Canadian short film on a united front, using correspondingly outfitted booths (marketing materials, demo tapes, catalogues, etc), and also offer advice backed up with the relevant expertise but without seeking its own financial gain.

Press and Publicity at Festivals

The majority of creative short film production does not fit into the scheme of official promotion policy. Shorts today run up to 40 minutes and are only rarely still shot on celluloid. Both stylistically and aesthetically, they go far beyond those formats traditionally considered suitable for the cinema, which would typically be animated or short feature films. But short films and short filmmakers have long since been able to find novel and alternative dissemination channels.

Short film's independence from the economic restraints of feature film breeds creativity, experimentation and innovation. In addition, short film production has grown dramatically in the last ten years due to technological advances, and provides a constant influx of new talent and new ideas. As a medium for innovation, short film can be deemed the "canary in the coal mine" when it comes to future trends in the film industry. Many new techniques are pioneered by short film, such as Canadian filmmaker Chris Landreth's RYAN, which has received over 100 awards and inspired a wave of productions that can be termed 'animated documentary. Innovation in any business is essential, and as such, short film is, in a sense, an investment in research and development for the film industry. However, much of the responsibility for the exposure of short films on the international stage, and the showcase of innovation, rests on the shoulders of individual filmmakers.

RYAN is an exception for short film in Canada as it had the support and vast resources of the National Film Board of Canada (NFB), which has strong relationships internationally and a well developed infrastructure, but which serves works produced by the NFB, and for which it retains copyright (with some exceptions). While independent filmmakers or producers manage with a considerable exertion of effort to establish contacts with television producers, festivals, distributors and potential purchasers within Canada, pursuing the same kinds of contacts outside of Canada is virtually impossible and can hardly be expected from each individual filmmaker. In this sense, success at key festivals is essential for a Canadian short film to gain an international presence.

Publicity costs at festivals are reasonable on average – residing primarily in the production of postcards, one-sheets (i.e. press kits) and DVD copies of the film – and much opportunity can be missed if the promotional material isn't of high quality. Filmmakers also cherish word-of-mouth generated from festival screenings and consider selection from top tier festivals as an invaluable credit to the success of their film. As Dale Heslip, director of THE TRUTH ABOUT HEAD, says "After winning at Cannes and the Worldwide Short Film Festival the film promoted itself. Festivals found me." This film is an exception to the rule of short filmmaking (and filmmaking in general) as it was financed solely by the director, but agency advice was still needed. In order to devise a festival strategy, Heslip contacted Telefilm Canada's now defunct Short Film office, which told him "The important festivals to play. Not sending to all. Trying for the A List first then, moving onto the B List for the next round."

A majority of the most successful films and filmmakers apply to a select list of film festivals rather than as many as possible in order to focus their resources, which include costs such as shipping, submission fees, and film dubbing. Some of the more fortunate Canadian short films are able to rely on the advice, guidance, and services offered through the organization that funded their film. Although this is far from the norm in Canada, there are certain organizations that provide an "under-one-roof" service, which will look after the needs of filmmakers from production through festival submissions, and even distribution. Such is the case with Jim Mauro, who produced EVELYN: THE CUTEST EVIL DEAD GIRL with the "Canadian Film Centre's Short Dramatic Film Program – a training institution where materials and costs were covered. Part private funding, and part government funding with a substantial part of production covered by in-kind donations. The Canadian Film Centre's Flow Distribution managed the festival submissions and world sales of the films. There were budgetary constraints but the film had the opportunity to travel to a significant number of festivals that most independent filmmakers probably could not fund."

Participants surveyed indicate that contacts between filmmakers and buyers / distributors is most often made through a film's inclusion in particular festivals and that taking advantage of market mechanisms at a festival is essential. According to participants, the three key elements that determine a festival's importance to filmmakers are:

1. A-list or top tier film festival in a particular territory
2. Market section or market mechanisms (especially if focus is on short films)
3. Audience that fits with their business goals for the film (i.e. A large contingent of industry at a particular festival or a niche festival appealing to an audience that fits the film)

Festival Promotional Activities

A film festival's ability to make a difference in the life of a short film is based solely on its ability to call attention to it. Thus, filmmaker attendance at festivals is highly recommended in promotion of their films and some form of subsidy is often offered by the festival (i.e. accommodations, meals, etc...). Top tier festivals have also well-developed publicity departments for filmmakers to take advantage of. And good publicity is in the best interest of both the festival and the filmmaker. George Eldred says of the Aspen Shortsfest "As our festival is intimate in scale, and our audience is reached largely through local media, our publicist arranges local press, TV and radio interviews for filmmakers. We also reach regional and national mainstream and industry press through press releases and guest journalists at the festival. Following the festival, we provide a press clippings packet to all invited films."

Broadcasters and distributors value festivals highly as an opportunity to acquire new product, as they are able to see a high concentration of product in a short period of time. Furthermore, outside of the traditional confines of a festival setting, it is becoming increasingly common to see such institutions branching out into the fields of distribution (Frameline, Flickerfest) and curated exhibition tours (Flickerfest).

Distribution

Marketing Service for Short Filmmakers

Unlike other countries, Canada does not have a government entity that focuses on short film promotion. A strong marketing campaign for a short film lies mainly through the film festival circuit, which would involve direct promotion of the film at key festivals. The costs for managing such a campaign, however, are too great to be borne by a distributor or promotional organization. The Canadian Film Centre is an organization that provides an appropriate marketing service for the films they produce. They create a full global festival strategy, and are equipped with the necessary marketing materials for their films. There are organizations like CFMDC or VTape that would submit their films to festivals that offer a screening fee. This may not serve as a complete marketing strategy to rely on, but the service provided is welcoming.

It is clear that a knowledge gap exists on what one must do with a short film once it has been produced. Only a limited number of film schools provide their students with a marketing module. Individuals, including Sue Biely (short film specialist and former Acquisitions Editor for CBC's ZeD, based in Vancouver), Danny Lennon (founder of *Prends ca court!* short film screening series, and international short film programmer based in Montreal), and the writers of this report, expend much energy educating filmmakers on marketing strategies for short films by participating on panels, guest lecturing at schools or meeting with filmmakers individually. Each of them has identified a significant knowledge gap in this area which needs to be addressed in order to ensure that Canadian short films are effectively promoted internationally. A solid festival strategy is crucial to the film after it has been made, and yet there isn't enough support to speak of.

Audience Figures of the Top 10 Festival Venues for Short Films

See table below.

Audience Figures for Top 10 Festival Venues for Short Films

	Aspen Shortsfest	Berlin International Film Festival	Cannes Film Festival	Clermont-Ferrand International Short Film Festival	Flickerfest International Short Film Festival	Frameline San Francisco International LGBT Film Festival	Puchon International Fantastic Film Festival	Sundance Film Festival	Tampere Short Film Festival	Canadian Film Centre's Worldwide Short Film Festival
Country	USA	Germany	France	France	Australia	USA	Korea	USA	Finland	Canada
City	Aspen	Berlin	Cannes	Clermont-Ferrand	Sydney	San Francisco	Puchon	Park City	Tampere	Toronto
Current Edition	15 th	57 th	59 th	29 th	15 th	30 th	10 th	26 th	36 th	12 th
Month	April	February	May	January	January	June	July	January	March	June
# of Days	5	11	12	9	10	11	10	11	5	6
Attendance	5300	186,000	39,550	132,000	10,000	62,000	97,000	29,000	30,000	15,000
Short Film Exclusive?	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
Total # of films (yearly)	60	360	120	400	60	260	250	200	600	250
# of Shorts (yearly)	See above	90	30	See above	See above	150	100	80	See above	See above
# of screenings (yearly)	20	1100	200+	350+	30	140+	300+	360+	120+	45
# of Countries Represented in film selections	20+	35+	30+	40+	20+	30+	20+	25+	35+	30+
Maximum Duration for Short Film	30 minutes	20 minutes (competition only)	15 minutes (competition only)	40 minutes	30 minutes	40 minutes	NA	60 minutes	30 minutes	40 minutes
"Best of..." DVD?	Yes	NA	NA	No	Yes	No	NA	NA	Yes	No
# of Canadian shorts selected (5 year avg)	3	5	1	4	4	10 to 25	7	4	3	80
# of Canadian shorts submitted (5 year avg)	60	NA	NA	140	20	40 to 50	NA	NA	150	750
Submission Fee for Shorts	\$35USD	50 Euros	No fee for short films	No fee for short films	\$35AUD	\$35USD	No fee for short films	\$35USD	No fee for short films	\$20CDN or 20 Euros for Int'l entries

Objective 3: Production Funding Agencies Overview

Well established international funding and promotional agencies have been highly successful in increasing the profile of specific short films primarily through capitalizing on the success of the film through awards and festivals. The vitality of short film differs from one country to another, as does both quantity and quality. The most developed funding and promotional agencies represent the interest of short filmmakers politically as well as economically and most champion a need to classify short film as a category with unique production and distribution aspects.

In Canada, most agencies which provide film funding fail to target the realities of producing and exploiting short film, and filmmakers that aren't "emerging" are often shut out of the funding process (with the exception of funding from the Canada Council for the Arts, which increases the amount available to established and mid career artists). Furthermore, although additional study is needed, there seems to be a much wider array of funding available on a provincial basis than there is at the national level. In any case, a far greater number of short films cover their production outlays almost completely by means of deferrals than is the case with feature film production. On the other hand, a high degree of international funding for short films is institutionalized (i.e. a part of an academic institution or training organization) and is more widespread and comprehensive (i.e. covering all or a majority of costs) than in Canada. With that said, there are a number of effective funding sources available in Canada which take economic and commercial realities into account in the production of short film. Key among these funding bodies is Bravo!FACT (Foundation to Assist Canadian Talent) which provides up to 50% of the total production costs of a short film (to a maximum of \$25,000CDN). An initiative of specialty Canadian broadcaster Bravo!, the short films that are financed through Bravo!FACT have a maximum duration of 6 minutes, as they are destined for broadcast on the CHUM family of television stations (the parent company of Bravo!). Although Bravo!FACT provides exposure for the shorts produced through its access to a broadcasting network, it does not ask for exclusive broadcast rights and applicants retain the copyright to their production.

On the international stage, there are certain agencies that, while they don't fund production, are heavily involved in the promotion and future success of short films in their regions once they are made, such as Unifrance in France, AG Kurzfilm (German Short Film Association) in Germany, and KIMUAK in Spain. They unite scattered forces, such as funding agencies, festivals and training institutions, and bring them together, under one roof.

National agencies that both fund and promote short films do so at various levels of commitment. The New Zealand Film Commission is set up to fund film development, provide infrastructure and training and professional development. This commission will fund 100% of short film production, up to a maximum of \$100,000 (9 short films made a year). It manages promotion and will submit to up to 30 festivals annually (looking after Press Kit, Stills, Export Scripts, Screening Copy and Freight) while also holding market screenings at Clermont-Ferrand annually. Whereas, the Mexican Film Institute (IMCINE) is a government institution whose focus is to promote Mexican cinema domestically and internationally. IMCINE will fund no more than 50% of the total cost and will also look after the cost of publicity for accepted festivals. Also, Spain's KIMUAK is an offshoot of Basque Government's Culture Department. Although KIMUAK itself does not fund short film production, the Basque Government's Culture Department provides funds for 10-12 short films with a maximum of 9,000 Euros, and the selected films are sent to more than 500 festivals all around the world – thus creating a direct link between funding and promotion in Spain's Basque region.

Funding Agencies Overview

See tables below.

National Funding Sources for Canadian Short Film

	Nature of Funding Available`	Eligible Projects	Deadlines	Contact
Bravo!FACT (Foundation to Assist Canadian Talent)	<p>Production \$\$\$: Sponsored by specialty broadcaster Bravo!, this program provides producers, directors, artists and arts groups with up to 50% of the total production costs (to a maximum of \$25,000 per short) in nonrefundable grants for short Canadian films (maximum length six minutes) for broadcast on CHUM television stations. The fund is 5% of Bravo’s gross revenues from the previous year. Although the fund provides exposure for the shorts produced on the national specialty channel through nonexclusive broadcast rights, applicants retain copyright of their production.</p>	Genres such as drama, spoken word, animation, dance and visual arts.	March 17 June 23 Sept 22 Dec 22	Judy Gladstone, Executive Director (416) 591-7400 ext. 2738 bravofact@bravo.ca www.bravofact.com
Canada Council for the Arts: Grants to Film & Video Artists	<p>This program assists Canadian artists working with film and video as means of artistic expression, providing them with opportunities for research, scriptwriting, creation and production of independent artworks using film and video.</p> <p>Grants help support individual artists committed to the practice of film and video as independent artist-controlled art forms. Independent means that the applicant initiates and is the driving force behind the proposed project or program of work.</p> <p>The applicant must be the director and must maintain complete creative and editorial control over the work.</p> <p>Development \$\$\$: Research and creation grants cover time and expenses related to a program of work that advances the individual creative expression of a film or video artist. Typically, these grants are used to support experimental processes and research in production. Maximum grants are \$16,000 for emerging artists and \$60,000 for mid-career and established artists.</p> <p>Scriptwriting \$\$\$: Scriptwriting grants cover the direct costs related to developing a documentary treatment or script. Typically, the activities supported by these grants include workshops with actors, research and subsistence fees. Maximum grants are \$20,000, and this component is open to established and mid-career artists only.</p> <p>Production \$\$\$: Production grants cover the direct costs of production and post-production of an independent film or video artwork by emerging, mid-career and established film and video artists. Maximum grants are \$16,000 for emerging artists and \$60,000 for mid-career and established artists.</p> <p>Travel Grants to Media Artists: Travel grants are available to independent media artists to present their work at recognized festivals or exhibition venues, or to participate in workshops, residencies or other professional development opportunities. Amounts of \$500, \$1000, \$1500, or \$2000 may be requested, depending on the distance of the proposed travel.</p>	<p>Auteur or avant-garde films and videos, single and multi-channel video art, art installations in which film and video play a key role. Innovative and personal storytelling practices, personal point-of-view documentaries and innovations in style, technique or process are a priority.</p> <p>The following are not usually funded: projects involving commercial or journalistic approaches to film and video, conventional form of theatrical and television entertainment, and calling-card films.</p>	Oct 1 March 1	<p>Josette Bélanger (all francophones) 1-800-263-5588, ext. 5252 josette.belanger@conseildesarts.ca</p> <p>Ian Reid (anglophone established and mid-career artists) 1-800-263-5588, ext. 5203 ian.reid@canadacouncil.ca</p> <p>Joanne Desroches (anglophone emerging artists) 1-800-263-5588, ext. 5254 joanne.desroches@canadacouncil.ca www.canadacouncil.ca</p>

National Funding Sources for Canadian Short Film

	Nature of Funding Available`	Eligible Projects	Deadlines	Contact
Canada Council for the Arts: Grants to New Media & Audio Artists	<p>This program assists Canadian artists working with new media and audio as means of artistic expression, providing them with opportunities for research, production and residencies in the creation of independent new media and audio artworks.</p> <p>Development \$\$\$: Research grants cover time and expenses related to a program of work that advances the individual creative expression of a mid-career or established artist. Typically, these grants are used to support creative renewal, experimentation, professional development and research. Maximum grants are \$20,000.</p> <p>Production \$\$\$: Production grants cover the direct costs of production and post-production of an independent new media or audio artwork by artists. Maximum grants for new media are \$16,000 for emerging artists and \$60,000 for mid-career and established artists.</p> <p>Other \$\$\$: New Media Residencies encourage creative collaborations and knowledge exchange between artists and other sectors of society that are working with new or emergent technologies, supporting projects that provide mutual benefit to artists and host organizations.</p> <p>Research residencies pay the expenses of a program of work that advances a mid-career or established media artist's understanding and research in new media. The maximum grant is \$30,000. Production residencies pay for the direct costs of production of an independent new media artwork. The maximum production residency grant is \$60,000.</p>	<p>These grants support residencies for artists making creative use of interactive information and communications technologies. Priority is given to projects that involve innovation and artistic expression.</p>	Oct 1 March 1	Robin Dupuis 1-800-263-5588, ext. 5253 robin.dupuis@canadacouncil.ca www.canadacouncil.ca

National Funding Sources for Canadian Short Film

	Nature of Funding Available`	Eligible Projects	Deadlines	Contact
Canada Council for the Arts: Aboriginal Media Arts Program	<p>The program offers two components: creative development grants and production grants.</p> <p>Development \$\$\$: Development grants cover the cost of research, scriptwriting and concept development. The amount of a grant for emerging artists ranges from \$3,000 to \$16,000. For mid-career and established artists the amount ranges from \$3,000 to \$20,000.</p> <p>Production \$\$\$: Production grants cover the costs of production and post-production. For emerging artists the amount of a grant is up to \$16,000. The amount of a grant for mid-career and established artist is up to \$60,000.</p>	This program offers grants to emerging, mid-career and established Aboriginal artists to help them develop their career as media artists and produce independent media artworks (film, video, new media or audio)	April 1	<p>Ian Reid (anglophone established and mid-career artists) 1-800-263-5588, ext. 5203 ian.reid@canadacouncil.ca</p>
Canadian Independent Film and Video Fund	<p>Development \$\$\$: Up to a maximum of 49% of the development budget, or \$10,000.</p> <p>Production \$\$\$: Up to 49% of a production's budget in the form of non-equity financial participation, to a maximum of \$50,000.</p>	Projects should be designed for use by educational, institutional, business s or cultural groups or educational or specialty channels. There is a linguistic and regional quota system.	March 16	<p>Robin Jackson, Executive Director (613) 729-1900 1-888-386-5555 info@cifvf.ca www.cifvf.ca</p>
Foreign Affairs Canada	<p>The Arts Promotion Division administers a grant program for the film and television production sector that aims to promote Canadian culture abroad. Financial assistance is available to directors and/or producers to participate in international festivals and certain pre-selected markets abroad.</p> <p>The amount of funding generally covers the cost of return economy airfare and depends on the availability of funds.</p>	Applicant must be Canadian, production must be Canadian, film must be shown at one of the official sections of the festival.	NA	<p>Natalija Marjanovic, International Cultural Relations Division (613) 992-5359 natalija.marjanovic@international.gc.ca www.international.gc.ca/arts</p>
National Film Board of Canada	<p>Production \$\$\$: The NFB participates as a full producer or as a co-producer in the development and production of Canadian audiovisual works that are socially relevant and innovative. The NFB works with independent Canadian directors and co-producers as well as international partners. The board retains copyright ownership in proportion to its participation.</p> <p>Acquisitions: The NFB also acquires independently produced product for Canadian and international distribution.</p> <p>Other: NFB offers technical support to independent filmmakers to complete their productions through the Filmmaker Assistance Program and is French equivalent, Aide au cinéma indépendant.</p>	Documentary and animation projects, as well as digital content and alternative drama.	NA	<p>To receive filmmaker assistance program guidelines or to receive an application form, contact the NFB office nearest you.</p> <p>www.nfb.ca</p>

Evaluation of Funding Agencies

Scandinavian Case Study

An interesting trend is that countries with smaller yearly film outputs seem to have come to the conclusion that they can exercise a far greater impact in the short film realm than in the classic feature film arena. This is particularly apparent in the Scandinavian Countries of Iceland, Sweden and Norway.

Iceland has a small, emerging short film industry which has only been supporting shorts since the 90's, but has met with considerable success internationally. The Icelandic Film Centre provides partial funding (up to 40% of budget) but that funding amount can range from 150,000- 250,000 Euro per film, meaning the shorts they fund have a total budget in the range of 375,000- 625,000 Euro. As a result the films produced have high production values and solid storylines, as well as great acting. There have been several successes in recent years culminating in an Oscar nomination in 2006 for THE LAST FARM. They receive only a small number of applications (in 2005, 14 applications were received, 6 of which were funded; so far in 2006, 8 applications were received, 3 have been funded), but the quality of the films and the success they've seen belies the small talent pool they are drawn from. Additionally, the Icelandic Film Centre supports the completed films by sending them to festivals, printing promotional materials and representing the films at international festivals and markets (e.g.: Clermont-Ferrand, Nordisk Panorama).

Sweden has seen much success from the creation of the Novellfilm Initiative- a collaboration between Swedish Public Broadcaster and Swedish Film Institute. Launched in 2001, the Novellfilm Initiative funds the creation and production of 6 shorts per year (1.5 million Swedish Kroner- approx. 160,000 Euro per film, each around 28 minutes in length). Finished films are broadcast in prime time (9:30pm Tuesdays- May through August) nationally and premiered at a Swedish film festival. This collaboration between broadcaster, funder and festival provides a high-profile platform for the films that builds awareness and ensures a large viewing audience for their TV premiere. Filmmakers retain the rights to the films and can distribute and sell them internationally. Swedish Film Institute supports the films by promoting them at international markets and packaging a DVD collection of each year's films. The incredible success of this initiative is due, in large part, to the collaboration between different sectors of the industry. As a result, the most successful short from this initiative, director Jens Johnsson's FRAGILE, has played at over 50 festivals and won multiple awards.

In Norway, the Norwegian Film Institute (NFI) is a powerhouse organization that has elevated the status of Norwegian short films at home and abroad. They provide multiple levels of support to filmmakers, particularly the sales and distribution of short films, and are one of the only government funded film institutes that handles the licensing of their films internationally. This is another instance of an umbrella agency which looks after the needs of associated members, as 5 years ago all funding programs for short films (except regional programs) were merged and are now organized outside of the NFI. Thus, the NFI's principal role has become the support and promotion of Norwegian shorts, features and docs. It has 8 staff in the International Department and they handle around 60 films per year (mostly shorts), including promotional support at Festivals, submission services to festivals, sales of films to international broadcasters/ airlines/ etc. They work with all of their filmmakers to plan a Festival strategy and value the importance of their relationship with them. Furthermore, the NFI Sales Strategy for short films has 3 goals:

- i) Further the career of the filmmaker
- ii) Make some money back for the filmmaker
- iii) Further the reach and reputation of Norwegian film

The formation and adherence to these goals has led to a great deal of success for the NFI. Norwegian short films are probably the most popular and widely-seen films of all the Scandinavian countries and they perform well internationally. For example, director Hisham

Zaman's BAWKE screened at over 100 festivals and has collected over 20 awards in the last year. The NFI also supports the programming of shorts in front of features in Norwegian cinemas, which is a common event in the country. In fact, more people in Norway and internationally see Norwegian short films than see their feature films. A DVD is also compiled by the NFI annually of the best Norwegian shorts and is made available for commercial sale in video stores across the country.

Norway has also made great advances in the archiving of Norwegian short films. Filmarchive.no is the Norwegian film archive and is available for viewing on-line as a video-on-demand service. It contains the latest Norwegian films as well as a collection from the archives and is subscriber-based (and password protected). This service is popular with schools and libraries, many of which have built screening facilities in order to host screenings from the archives (which can be digitally projected). All of this in a country of 4.5 million people!

Overall Assessment / Conclusion

Financial Viability

As has been made clear, broadcast sales remain the predominant revenue-generating mechanism for short films, with additional revenue possibly available from airline, DVD and other traditional distribution outlets. Canadian filmmakers fare reasonably well on these platforms, due in large part to some recent Canadian film successes at international festivals (RYAN, HARDWOOD, EVELYN THE CUTEST EVIL DEAD GIRL), and to the efforts of a few Canadian distributors (NFB, FLOW DISTRIBUTION, etc.) However, this model is in transition and emerging technologies offer the potential of additional (or greater) revenue streams.

The establishment of the sponsored-content revenue model for on-line content (as perfected and practiced by Atomfilms, with revenue being split with the filmmaker) has created an orderly marketplace for short films and led to revenue for filmmakers. The emergence of IPTV and mobile broadcasters offer opportunities for filmmakers, but revenue models have yet to be established (particularly in North America) although the sponsored-content model appears to be the preferred option at this stage.

When other technologies such as iPod and Sony PSP's are factored in, the channels of exposure and potential revenue for short filmmakers increase dramatically. However, the problem of filmmakers being able to effectively access the opportunities these platforms present persists, mostly due to the fact that the gatekeepers of content for these channels are not interested in dealing with individual filmmakers, and effective content aggregators (or distributors) for short form content are relatively few.

On the positive side, this means that those distributors/ content aggregators who are nimble and organized can more effectively carve a niche for themselves, while at the same time bringing in revenue for their filmmaker clients. However, they need to be aggressive and innovative in order to ensure their market share (and increase the demand for short form content) in the face of Hollywood studios and entertainment conglomerates who are also warming to the revenue potential of these new platforms. It is crucial that short films not be left behind or shoved out by bigger players, particularly as they've played such a crucial role in helping to establish these new platforms as viable delivery mechanisms for visual entertainment.

More detailed research should be undertaken in 2 years so as to review the effectiveness and financial viability of new technologies for short filmmakers.

Promotion

From the research undertaken it appears that the Canadian short films that are most successful internationally are those that have a well thought-out festival strategy along with the backing of an experienced distributor or funding agency. A well-made, engaging film remains, of course, paramount, as no amount of strategy or backing can bring success to a bad short film.

Generally, those countries that invest in supporting their short films through promotional efforts at festivals and markets see their films being selected for more festivals than those films which are left to fend for themselves. For example, New Zealand and Norwegian short films enjoy outstanding reputations internationally and their exposure and recognition far outpaces the size of their population and short film output. What these countries do have, however, are organizations with staff dedicated to supporting the short films made in those countries. Canada, with a population almost 8 times larger than either New Zealand or Norway (and with probably 10 times the number of short films produced annually), sees much more limited international success, and much of that success can be credited to the support the NFB provides to its films. Additionally, Quebec shorts enjoy a high profile internationally in large part due

to the support of SODEC.

Although no empirical evidence exists documenting the impact the withdrawal of Telefilm support for shorts has had on the international profile of Canadian short films, anecdotal evidence suggests that this has contributed to a decrease in their profile (particularly for shorts made in English Canada). For example, until 2003 Telefilm supported the exhibition and promotion of Canadian shorts at Clermont-Ferrand, the largest Festival and market for short films in the world (considered the “Cannes” of short film festivals). Telefilm supported Canadian filmmakers at the event by assisting with shipping costs for films, hosting a market screening of quality Canadian shorts not selected for the Festival, and supporting travel costs for those filmmakers to attend the event. Most importantly, Telefilm sent a short film specialist from their Festival’s Office to guide the filmmakers through the marketplace and introduce them to distributors and buyers. This service played a crucial role in exposing Canadian filmmakers to the international marketplace for short films, and broadened their opportunities for not only broadcast sales and distribution but for selection in other international short film festivals.

In the interim, other countries have recognized the value of supporting their short filmmakers, in particular Germany, which in 2004 launched the German Short Film Association (AG Kurzfilm). This Association acts as a promotional body for German shorts in much the same way Unifrance supports French films), and actively participates in Festivals and markets throughout Europe and internationally (including WSFF and TIFF in 2007). With the increase in platforms and promotional opportunities for short film, it would be beneficial for Canada to fund an umbrella organization dedicated to providing this kind of support for domestic filmmakers on a global basis. There’s certainly no shortage of short films being funded and produced in this country- what is lacking is a coherent approach to representing them abroad.

There are initiatives being implemented in this direction, like the Canada Council-funded “Definitely Independent” project, and while this is a step in the right direction, it’s limited to specific participants (generally not-for-profit, artist-run distribution entities funded by the Council). SODEC’s support for Quebec filmmakers and distributors at Clermont-Ferrand is a model to be emulated (paying for a booth in the market and allowing all Quebec participants to use it as a “home base”), and the British Council uses a similar model for British organizations at this event also.

Kudos must be given to two independent distributors- CFMDC for their work in distributing gay and lesbian films to Festivals globally (resulting in a very strong presence for Canadian shorts at almost every queer film festival in the world) and V-Tape for continuing to champion experimental and video art, as well as Aboriginal video works, internationally. Additionally, Ouat Media, a new distribution company started in August 2006 under the auspices of Channel Zero Inc (owners of Movieola- The Short Film Channel) promises to enhance the profile of Canadian short films on all platforms.

Production

One of the bright spots in the domestic short film industry is the wide-ranging funding support for the production of shorts. Several national funding programs exist, shored up by Provincial programs, which provide a range of funds for emerging and established filmmakers. Where noticeable differences exist between Canada and other countries with solid production support are in the amounts offered in production funds. Countries supporting a smaller number of films with larger dollar amounts per film (e.g.: Iceland, Norway, Sweden) tend to see greater “bang for their buck” in terms of the production quality and success of the resulting films.

Ironically, it is a short film fund operated by a private company- Chum Ltd's Bravo!FACT (Foundation to Assist Canadian Talent) - that is the largest funder of short film production in Canada. Bravo!FACT broadcasts the shorts they fund on Bravo! and do excellent work in promoting their shorts at festivals and events across the country and internationally. As the shorts

funded by Bravo!FACT must be under 7 minutes in length, these films are ideally positioned to take advantage of the shorter running times currently demanded by many of the new exhibition platforms. In fact, Bravo!FACT, in collaboration with the NFB has commissioned the production of cell phone specific shorts which were well-received by mobile content providers. Bravo!FACT does not act as a distributor for the short films funded by them, and the filmmakers retain the rights to their productions.

The range and quality of short films being produced in this country is impressive and underscores the need for greater support for their distribution and promotion internationally.

That's a Wrap!

The purpose of this paper is not to assign blame or bemoan the burden that faces short filmmakers in this country. Rather, it is intended to provide an overview of the opportunities for Canadian short filmmakers internationally, and offer some pertinent suggestions for how our short film industry can continue to survive and thrive. By investing in our short filmmakers, Canada is investing not only in innovation and original storytelling, it is supporting the next generation of feature filmmakers by providing them with a solid foundation on which to build their careers in a truly global marketplace. At the same time, an increasingly robust short film industry is thriving and it would be short-sighted to ignore the opportunities for Canadian filmmakers to establish a significant presence in this industry.