



# CMPA international strategy – a framework

## About the Canadian Media Producers Association

The Canadian Media Producers Association is the national advocacy organization for independent producers, representing hundreds of companies engaged in the development, production and distribution of English-language content made for television, cinema and digital media channels. We work to promote the continued success of the Canadian production sector and to ensure a bright future for the diverse content made by our members for both domestic and international audiences.

## About the Canadian industry

The Canadian screen-content industry is a robust sector that generates significant economic activity - in 2018-19, the Canadian media production industry reached CAD 9.32 billion in the total volume of film and television production<sup>1</sup>. The export value in terms of the amount of foreign revenue collected by the production industry for sales reached CAD5.6 billion.<sup>2</sup> In the same period, Canada's production industry generated 180,900 full-time jobs and CAD 12.78 billion in GDP for the Canadian economy.<sup>3</sup>

## Canadian screen content in the international market

To thrive in today's global marketplace, Canadian content needs to travel across our borders and onto international screens. Canadian production companies have been successful at forging an international reputation for delivering a level of unparalleled production expertise and service. Canada has international co-production treaty agreements and memorandums of understanding with over 60 countries.

Canada makes an excellent co-production partner, thanks to the following attributes of our country and our industry:

- Variety of financing sources, including federal and provincial tax credits
- Physical and cultural proximity to the United States
- Excellent location services and diverse locations/landscapes
- High-standard, full-service production and post-production facilities
- Experienced and highly skilled production crews and talent

---

<sup>1</sup> CMPA (2019), *PROFILE: Economic Report on the Screen-Based Media Production Industry in Canada (2019)*

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

Co-productions continue to be critical to ensure the vitality of the screen-content sector in Canada. These productions are important vehicles to strengthen international ties in the audiovisual sector and a way to promote and market Canadian talent abroad. They also enhance each partnering country's production capacity by drawing foreign investment and by facilitating project financing for works that might not otherwise be produced, thereby boosting production budgets, generating employment and developing local talent.

In the last 10 years, Canada's screen content producers partnered in more than 700 international co-productions with budgets totaling almost \$6 billion. The UK and France continue to be Canada's main co-production partners, with Australia, Ireland and Germany rounding out the list of main partners. With the top two partners comprising 65% of total budgets, there is ample room to increase activity outside of these two countries - especially with those that share a common language and trading link - while further solidifying and diversifying business opportunities.<sup>4</sup>

In terms of television pre-sales, the US and UK are Canada's most important markets. Between 2016-2017 and 2018-2019, pre-sales of CMF-funded television projects US pre-sales represented 66% of all pre-sales while the UK was the second most-important market for pre-sales of Canadian productions, representing 20% of all pre-sales. Ireland represented 10% while 3% of all pre-sales were made to France. Together, the top three countries captured 96% of all pre-sales.<sup>5</sup>

In the feature film world, more co-productions funded by Telefilm Canada were undertaken with France than any other coproducing partner. Of the 78 co-productions funded by Telefilm Canada, 20 had France as a coproducing partner. Ireland was the second most frequent coproducing partner of choice. Though involving fewer films, the total sales of projects coproduced with the UK achieved over \$95 million, exceeding the value of total sales of films coproduced with Ireland.<sup>6</sup>

The CMPA will focus on providing opportunities to members in key markets, but will also create initiatives that will assist Canadian producers in succeeding in emerging markets.

## **The CMPA's objectives in the international market**

The CMPA's objectives center around five main areas:

1. Increase co-development and co-production opportunities
2. Increase international sales/export opportunities
3. Increase foreign investment in Canadian companies
4. Facilitate international networking opportunities

---

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> Communications MDR: Exporting Canadian Screen-based Productions in a Global Market: Trends, Opportunities and Future Directions (2020)

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

## 5. Enhance the visibility of CMPA members internationally

### **Strategy in brief**

Each of the above objectives will be achieved through a number of initiatives carried out throughout the year, giving access to member companies from across the country of all sizes, working in all genres and creating for all platforms.

For the first year of the strategy, the CMPA will focus on creating opportunities that are no or low cost due to budget and travel restrictions. In the subsequent two years, in-person activities will be complimenting online support activities.

The strategy will provide a framework based on activities and events taking place over each fiscal year and will be inclusive of all markets, with a special focus on markets that are of most interest to our members, those being the UK, France, USA, Ireland, Germany and Australia.

The CMPA will also provide opportunities to explore markets Canadian companies haven't traditionally worked with. We will start this process by building partnerships with powerhouses such as India, Nigeria and South Africa, among others. When engaging with non-European markets, the CMPA will work towards an approach that is non-exploitative and is based on equitable skills exchange, mentorship, and training.

In all our international activities whether it be trade missions we undertake abroad or hosting foreign delegations, we will work towards equitable representation from all communities within the CMPA membership. We will also work with our partners to ensure that they similarly work towards identifying and including their BIPOC/BAME stories and producers, creating space to present them to Canadian producers for potential co-venture/co-production opportunities.

In addition to market-specific activities, the CMPA will also be organizing general support activities that will provide market intelligence and help companies to compete in the global market through training and development.

The strategy can be broken down into six main areas of focus, as outlined below:

#### **Co-production**

- Organize virtual and physical trade missions to help members explore markets of interest and familiarize themselves with incentives and opportunities, connect with potential partners
- Advise government on negotiating new treaties and renegotiating existing ones based on the evolving needs of the market
- Create and enhance existing online tools that facilitate matchmaking and collaboration
- Organize pitching opportunities



### **Provide market intelligence**

- Develop tools utilizing existing market intelligence (the CMPA's export studies, market reports from the Trade Commissioner Service, etc.) to help members identify the types of content that travel and the markets that are looking for the types of content they create

### **Training**

- Provide online courses and masterclasses that will help members enhance their market potential and reach

### **International sales/export opportunities**

- Build partnerships with foreign partners that will allow CMPA members to access decision-makers
- Assist members with developing export strategies

### **International networking opportunities**

- Organize B2B meetings, information sessions and networking receptions at international events in both Canada and abroad
- Connect with visiting delegations in Canada

### **Enhance visibility**

- Leverage partnerships to showcase members works at international events and international publications
- Provide a platform to members to showcase their projects

## **Activities and timelines**

### **Event-related international activities**

The CMPA will establish a framework that will list major events in key markets that our members regularly attend and deploy activities around them in tandem with our partners in the International Business Development Group, the Trade Commissioner Service, the Global Creative Alliance and sister organizations in key markets.

For each market the following opportunities will be identified:

- B2B meetings
- Networking receptions
- Roundtables
- Speaking opportunities for our members and staff at panels and other forums
- Types of content most suitable for the market/event

Once the opportunities are identified, activities will be prioritized and activities will be organized around them.



**Example: Content London 2020 (December)**

This virtual trade mission will focus on preparing companies to enter the UK market and make connections for each participating producer, based on their individual business needs.

Activities will include:

- Group preparatory sessions (market preparation, country-specific information)
- One on one pitching coaching (as required)
- Technical assistance with developing online pitching materials (websites, content sharing platforms, tools for conducting effective online meetings etc.)
- Roundtables with experts
- One on one business meetings
- Online networking events
- Registration to online conferences

Timeline

1. August - Reach out to C21 to get member discount and start discussions on the CMPA's involvement in the event
2. August - Connect with Pact and the TCS in London to explore business development opportunities around the event
3. August - Secure Canadian event partners and financing, including Telefilm, CMF and provincial agencies
4. September - Launch registration for CMPA members and international delegates
5. October - Select participants
6. October - Organize group preparatory sessions, market overview webinars
7. October – November - Assist selected members with one-on-one pitching coaching and pitch material development if required
8. October – November Build programming with partners and secure participation from international companies for online B2B meetings
9. October – November - Select and set up online meeting platform for B2B's and roundtables
10. October – November - Finalize agenda and meeting schedules
11. December – participate in event and provide support to CMPA members attending

The timelines and priorities will be established for each market the CMPA would provide support activities around. The markets could include:

- Sunny Side of the Doc (May)
- Marche du Film (June)
- MIFA (June)
- American Film Market (November)
- European Film Market (February)



### **Ongoing support activities**

Ongoing support activities will center around providing training, market intelligence, enhanced online resources, tools to showcase members' work and to facilitate networking.

The following activities are a collection of initiatives that the CMPA could undertake in every fiscal year, with slight variations and focus, providing bespoke opportunities CMPA members in every fiscal year.

### **International Roadmap Program**

The CMPA will work with Creatives Loop's International Road Map for Independent Producers program to offer producers a tailored strategy to develop and sell their properties in the international marketplace. The consultants are equipped with the latest market intelligence and will be able to help producers identify new markets, platforms and partners and select and prioritize new target markets.

The program helps with the identification and profiling of decision-makers, provides assistance with presentation materials and perfecting pitch delivery, and sets up meetings with broadcasters, buyers, distributors and co-production partners.

The program takes place over a 12-week period and provides access to international broadcaster, distributors, sales agents, production partners in 29 territories and in all genres.

### **Workshops and masterclasses**

The CMPA will work with experts internationally to create a series of online workshops and masterclasses. Potential topics will include:

- Finding the right online platform for your content
- Working with... series: international broadcasters/buyers
- Unexplored markets series: learning about up and coming markets and how to interact in a decolonial fashion (Nigeria, Colombia, etc.)
- How to build a website for your production company to showcase your work internationally

### **Networking opportunities**

The CMPA will work with its counterparts internationally to identify opportunities to create networking events at events internationally and in Canada. The events can include mixers and B2B meetings at physical events, online networking opportunities

### **Co-production directory**

The CMPA will continue to promote the international co-production directory globally to reach a critical mass of listings and will re-evaluate the platform to ensure that it meets the needs of our members.