



# Case Study – Economic Impacts of *Murdoch Mysteries*

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## Final Report

Prepared for the Canadian Media Producers Association

November 2025

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# Executive Summary

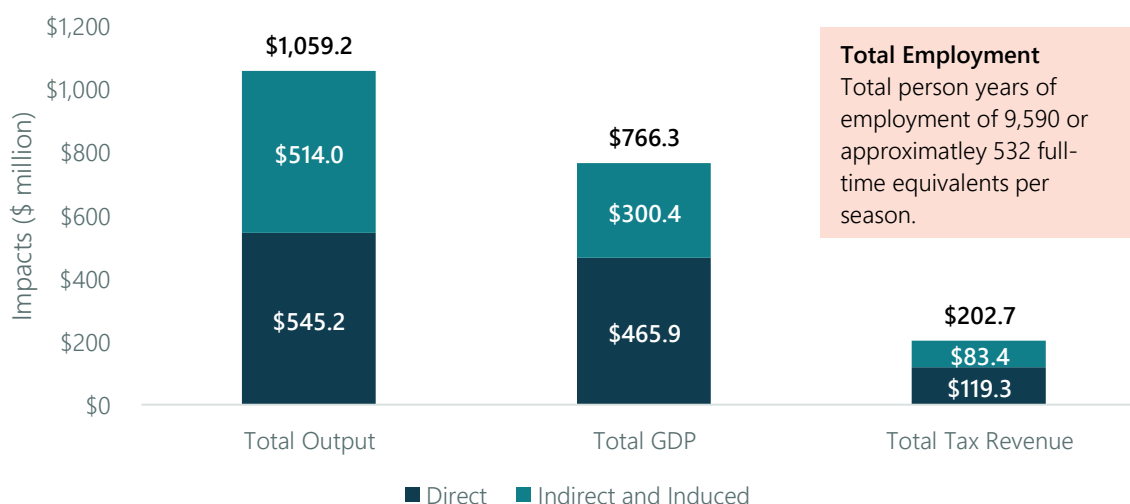
Screen-based production is a key part of Canada's arts and culture sector, which altogether, contributed \$65 billion in direct GDP to the Canadian economy in 2024.<sup>1</sup> To illustrate the impact of a Canadian television production the Canadian Media Producers Association ("CMPA") and Shaftesbury engaged MNP to develop a case study documenting the economic impacts of the production of *Murdoch Mysteries* in Ontario for Seasons 1 through 18.

*Murdoch Mysteries* is a Canadian television drama series that is based on the "Detective Murdoch" novels by Maureen Jennings. Set in Toronto during the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, the show follows Detective William Murdoch as he solves complex crimes using innovative forensic techniques. Produced by award-winning Canadian independent production company Shaftesbury, the series first premiered on January 20, 2008. Since then, 19 seasons have been produced.

## Key Findings

Figure A shows the cumulative economic impacts of spending on production for Seasons 1 to 18. Over this period more than \$1 billion in output<sup>2</sup> and \$766 million in GDP has been generated.

**Figure A: Estimated Economic Impacts of the Production Spending of Seasons 1 to 18**



<sup>1</sup> Canadian Chamber of Commerce. *Artworks: the Economic and Social Dividends from Canada's Arts and Culture Sector*. October 2025. Available here: [https://businessdatalab.ca/wp-content/uploads/2025/10/BDL\\_Artworks\\_Report\\_October2025\\_FINAL.pdf](https://businessdatalab.ca/wp-content/uploads/2025/10/BDL_Artworks_Report_October2025_FINAL.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> Output measures the total value of goods and services purchased and does not distinguish between final goods and intermediate goods (e.g., inputs)

# Introduction

## Background and Purpose

Screen-based production is a key part of Canada's arts and culture sector, which altogether, contributed \$65 billion in direct GDP to the Canadian economy in 2024.<sup>3</sup> To illustrate the impact of a Canadian television production the Canadian Media Producers Association ("CMPA") and Shaftesbury engaged MNP to develop a case study documenting the economic impacts of the production of *Murdoch Mysteries* in Ontario for Seasons 1 through 18.

*Murdoch Mysteries* is a Canadian television drama series that is based on the "Detective Murdoch" novels by Maureen Jennings. It follows the life of Detective William Murdoch, an investigator based in Toronto during the late 19<sup>th</sup> to early 20<sup>th</sup> century. He uses innovative forensic techniques to solve crimes that often seem ahead of their time, such as archaic versions of blood testing and fingerprinting. The series incorporates real historical events and discoveries into the story creating a period drama concentrated on detective work.

*Murdoch Mysteries* has primarily been filmed in and around the city of Toronto, where the series is set. Filming of the series also travels across the country depending on the plotline, with episodes in Ottawa, Dawson City, St John's, Calgary and others. Throughout the production of the series, significant economic impacts were created for residents and businesses in Ontario, and substantial tax revenue accrued to federal, provincial, and local governments.

*Murdoch Mysteries* premiered in 2008 is currently airing its 19th Season on CBC and CBC Gem. In its first 18 seasons:

- The series has cultivated a global audience with viewers in over 150 countries.
- Guest stars have included William Shatner, Margaret Atwood, Luann De Lesseps, Stephen Harper and Chris Hadfield
- An ecosystem called "The Murdochverse" has been created that includes merchandise, an escape room, tours, a podcast, and several digital spin off series.

## Limitations

This report is not intended for general circulation, nor is it to be published in whole or in part without the prior written consent of MNP. The report is provided for information purposes and is intended for general guidance only. It should not be regarded as comprehensive or a substitute for personalized, investment or business advice.

We have relied upon the completeness, accuracy and fair presentation of all information and data obtained from Shaftesbury, the CMPA and public sources, believed to be reliable. The accuracy and

<sup>3</sup> Canadian Chamber of Commerce. *Artworks: the Economic and Social Dividends from Canada's Arts and Culture Sector*. October 2025. Available here: [https://businessdatalab.ca/wp-content/uploads/2025/10/BDL\\_Artworks\\_Report\\_October2025\\_FINAL.pdf](https://businessdatalab.ca/wp-content/uploads/2025/10/BDL_Artworks_Report_October2025_FINAL.pdf)

reliability of the findings and opinions expressed in the presentation are conditional upon the completeness, accuracy and fair presentation of the information underlying them. As a result, we caution readers not to rely upon any findings or opinions for business or investment purposes and disclaim any liability to any party who relies upon them as such.

## Economic Impact Methodology

To estimate the economic impacts, MNP employed an input-output methodology that uses multipliers published by Statistics Canada. Input-output modeling is a widely-used and widely-accepted approach, making it recognizable by many different stakeholders and audiences. The structure of the approach also facilitates easy comparisons between reported results for different projects and facilities. In general, economic impacts are viewed as being restricted to quantitative, well-established measures of economic activity. The most commonly used of these measures are output, GDP, employment, and government revenues:

- **Output** is the total gross value of goods and services produced by a given company or industry measured by the price paid to the producer. This is the broadest measure of economic activity.
- **Gross Domestic Product (“GDP”)**, or value added, refers to the additional value of a good or service over the cost of inputs used to produce it from the previous stage of production. Thus, GDP is equal to the unduplicated value of goods and services produced.
- **Employment** is the number of jobs created. Employment is measured in terms of full-time equivalents (“FTEs”). One FTE is considered one person-year of employment, as in one FTE is the equivalent of one person working full-time for a period of one year.
- **Government Tax Revenues** are the total amount of revenues generated for different levels of government. Tax revenues arise from personal income taxes, corporate income taxes, taxes on products, and taxes on production. Please note that because tax revenues can frequently change due to modifications in tax policy, the tax revenue impacts in this report are estimates only and subject to change. They should be viewed as approximate in nature.

Economic impacts may be estimated at the direct, indirect, and induced levels.

- **Direct impacts** are due to changes to “front end” businesses that would initially receive operating revenue as a direct consequence of the operations and activities of a facility or industry.
- **Indirect impacts** arise from changes in activity for suppliers of the “front end” businesses.
- **Induced impacts** arise from shifts in spending on goods and services as a consequence of changes to the payroll of the directly and indirectly affected businesses.

## Data Sources

Information used in the study was gathered from administrative sources and secondary sources. Administrative data related to production spending were provided by Shaftesbury. This included accounting records and marketing materials.



# Overview of Production Spending

Table 1 shows the total production spending for Season 17 of *Murdoch Mysteries* by region. Of the \$54.9 million spent on production, \$53.5 million was spent in Ontario, \$1.2 million was spent in other parts of Canada and \$0.1 million was spent outside Canada. Approximately \$33.7 million (61 percent) of production spending was on labour and \$21.2 million was on goods and services.

**Table 1: *Murdoch Mysteries* Season 17 Production Spending**

	Ontario Spending	Rest of Canada Spending	International Spending	Total Spending
Spending on Labour Related to Production and Post-Production, including Per-Diems	\$32.9 million	\$0.7 million	\$0.07 million	\$33.7 million
Spending on Goods and Services	\$20.6 million	\$0.5 million	\$0.07 million	\$21.2 million
<b>Total Spending</b>	<b>\$53.5 million</b>	<b>\$1.2 million</b>	<b>\$0.14 million</b>	<b>\$54.9 million</b>

Source: Shaftesbury



## Businesses that Benefitted from Production Spending

Table 2, shows the breakdown of the \$20.6 million spent on goods and services in Ontario. Spending was distributed across retailers and businesses in various industries. Performing arts, spectator sports and related industries and heritage institutions accounted for the largest share of spending, followed by banking, equipment rental and lessors of real estate.

**Table 2: Ontario Vendor Data for Production of *Murdoch Mysteries***

Category	Percentage of total (%)
Performing arts, spectator sports and related industries, and heritage institutions	17.0
Banking and other depository credit intermediation	11.8
Equipment rental	11.3
Lessor of real estate	9.7
Miscellaneous store retailers (except cannabis)	8.9
Automotive equipment rental and leasing	8.0
Post production	7.9
Administration	7.7
Restaurants and bars	2.7
Professional services	2.4
Insurance	1.8
Accommodation	1.7
Security	1.6
Gasoline stations	1.2
Clothing and clothing accessories stores	1.1
Waste management, utilities and other miscellaneous spending	5.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: Shaftesbury



# Economic Impacts (Seasons 1 to 18)

To estimate the cumulative impacts of Seasons 1 to 18 MNP used estimates of the cumulative impacts of Seasons 1 to 10 reported in the November 2016 *Case Study – Economic Impacts of Murdoch Mysteries* and then estimated the impacts of Seasons 11 to 18 using the same approach. This involved estimating the economic impacts of production spending for Season 17 and converting this to an average impact per episode.<sup>4</sup> The average impact per episode was then multiplied by the number of episodes in Seasons 11 to 18<sup>5</sup> to estimate the cumulative impacts of Seasons 11 to 18. Appendix B contains the economic impact estimates for Season 17 and Appendix C contains the economic impact estimates for Seasons 1 to 10.

Table 3 shows the cumulative economic impacts of production spending during Seasons 1 to 18 of *Murdoch Mysteries* in Ontario. The \$545.2 million of production spending was estimated to have generated approximately \$1.1 billion in total output, \$766.3 million in total GDP, 9,590 FTEs of employment, \$101.4 million in federal tax revenue, and \$101.3 million in provincial and municipal tax revenue.

**Table 3: Cumulative Economic Impacts of Production Spending in Ontario, Seasons 1 to 18**

	Ontario Production Impacts
<b>Direct Production Expenditures</b>	\$545.2 million
<b>Total Output</b>	\$1.059 billion
<b>Total GDP</b>	\$766.3 million
<b>Total Employment (FTEs)</b>	9,590
<b>Federal Tax Revenues</b>	\$101.4 million
<b>Provincial and Municipal Tax Revenues</b>	\$101.3 million

Source: MNP Estimates

<sup>4</sup> There were 24 episodes in Season 17.

<sup>5</sup> There were 160 episodes in Seasons 11 to 18.



## Impacts Around Ontario

While most filming is done in Toronto, three to four days of filming are done per production block in other areas of Ontario. Filming on location spreads the economic impacts of production beyond the City of Toronto to those communities. Grafton, Cobourg, Hamilton, Niagara Falls, St. Jacob's, Dundas, Orangeville, Kitchener, and Guelph are among the Ontario communities in which filming has taken place.

### *Supporting Local Economic Development*

It's always such a thrill for our community when Murdoch Mysteries comes to town. Residents are able to witness the filming firsthand on our city streets and many members of our film community get involved from background acting to location support personnel. There are Murdoch tours that happen here, even the symphony will be performing music from the series and we are here for every minute of it. Not only does this help our residents with increased economic impact and city pride, but it raises our profile to tourists so that we can demonstrate how Kingston is not only a great place to live and work but to visit as well."

*Joanne Loton (she/her), Film Commissioner  
Tourism Kingston*

### *Opening Doors and Building Relationships*

The relationship between Murdoch Mysteries and Brantford is rich and nuanced, much like the stories that unfold in the series. The production first visited Brantford in season two and has returned many times. The cast and crew quickly established a favoured reputation among local residents and businesses, often setting the standard of professionalism, approachability, and respect against which other visiting film productions would be measured. Perhaps more than any other production, the series opened the community further to supporting the film industry.

We are grateful that our historic neighbourhoods have contributed in small ways to the look and lore of this outstanding Canadian production. Many thanks belong to all cast and crew for bringing these locations to life and and piquing film interest in Brantford.

*Kevin Dekok, Economic Development Officer  
City of Brantford*

### *Demonstrating Environmental and Social Responsibility*

Many productions have visited Rockwood Conservation Area and the team associated with Murdoch Mysteries is fantastic. The crew is a pleasure to deal with from the top down. Very professional and pleasant. The Rockwood Conservation Area has many environmentally sensitive areas, and the production team is dedicated to protecting the integrity of our area. Ensuring future generations and future productions get to experience and utilize the space.

Thank you Shaftesbury / Murdoch Mysteries for allowing us to be part of the magic you create and to be part of the joy you bring to so many individuals who love your work.

*David Townsend, Superintendent, Rockwood Conservation Area  
Grand River Conservation Authority*

## Impacts of Incentives and Tax Credits

Television and film productions are eligible for a range of tax credits and incentives. At the federal level eligible productions can receive the Canadian Film or Video Production Tax Credit (CPTC), jointly administered by the Canadian Audio-Visual Certification Office and the Canada Revenue Agency. The federal film tax credit is available at a rate of 25 percent of the qualified labour expenditure.<sup>6</sup> In addition to the CPTC there are provincial incentives. The Ontario Film and Television Tax Credit (OFTTC) is a refundable tax credit based on Ontario labour expenditure incurred by a production company that has an eligible production in Ontario. OFTTC is generally “harmonized” with the CPTC.<sup>7</sup> To be eligible for OFTTC, the production company must satisfy the following criteria:<sup>8</sup>

- The production company must be a Canadian company that is Canadian-controlled. It must file an Ontario corporate tax return and have a permanent office in Ontario.
- The production’s individual producer must have been an Ontario resident for tax purposes for the two calendar years prior to the commencement of principal photography.

MNP used information on the tax credits received for Season 17 and the economic impacts of Season 17 to illustrate the impacts per dollar of tax credits (see Table 4).

**Table 4: Estimated Federal and Provincial Government Tax Credits for the Production of Season 17 *Murdoch Mysteries***

	Federal Tax Credits (CPTC)	Provincial Tax Credits (OFTCC)
Tax Credit Amount	\$5.5 million	\$15.8 million
Output per Dollar of tax credit	\$15.97	\$5.58
GDP per Dollar of the tax credit	\$11.81	\$4.13
Labour Income per Dollar of the tax credit	\$9.02	\$3.15
Employment (FTEs) per \$100,000 of the tax credit	13.0	4.6

## Comparison with Other Industries

To provide perspective on the size of the economic impacts generated by the production of *Murdoch Mysteries* in Ontario, it is useful to compare the impacts with those created by other industries. One such example is tourism. The total direct, indirect, and induced government revenue supported by the

<sup>6</sup> Canadian Film or Video Production Tax Credit. Available at: <https://www.canada.ca/en/canadian-heritage/services/funding/cavco-tax-credits/canadian-film-video-production.html>

<sup>7</sup> Ontario Film and Television Tax Credit (OFTTC), Ontario Creates. Available at: <https://www.ontariocreates.ca/tax-incentives/ofttc>

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

production spending on *Murdoch Mysteries* for Seasons 1 through 18 is equivalent to the total government revenue generated by 2.2 million visitors.<sup>9</sup> In 2022, the most recent year for which data were available, Ontario hosted approximately 14 million out-of-province visitors.

The direct employment created by a season of *Murdoch Mysteries* is 60 percent higher than the direct employment at a paper mill. In Season 17 there were 475 FTEs of direct employment on *Murdoch Mysteries*. Direct employment at a paper mill is roughly 300.<sup>10</sup>

## Social Impacts

Shaftesbury prioritizes empowering and creating opportunities for under-represented voices through all stages of production, with the goal of building pathways for participation, leadership, and long-term career growth. The company extends this commitment across all of its productions, with deliberate efforts to achieve equity in its hiring for on screen and behind the camera roles, including creative and crew positions.

Shaftesbury also works to reduce systemic barriers by creating structured opportunities that support emerging talent and broaden industry access. One example is Shaftesbury's intentional development of shadow-directing placements and story-coordinating roles specifically for emerging creators from equity-deserving communities. These initiatives not only support hands-on experience and professional mentorship, but also help build a more diverse pipeline of future directors, writers, and creative leaders, strengthening the industry as a whole.

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<sup>9</sup> Ontario Tourism Research Statistics. Available at: <https://www.ontario.ca/page/tourism-research-statistics>

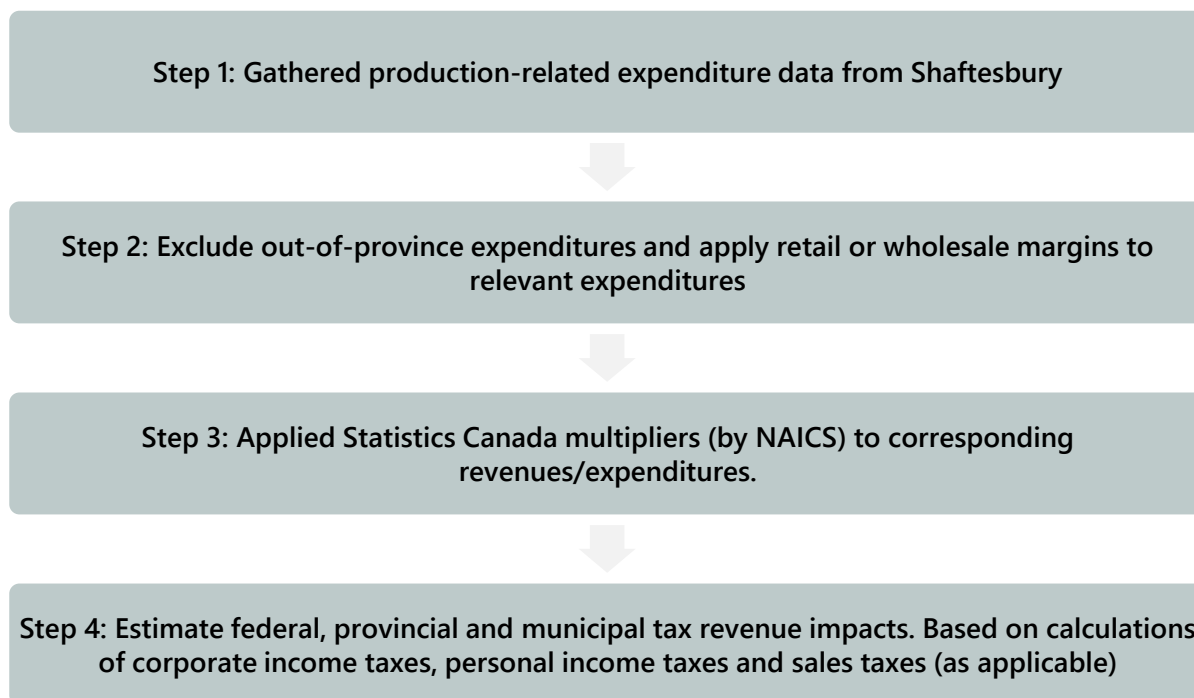
<sup>10</sup> Government of Ontario. Ontario Protecting Jobs in Kapuskasing. Available here: <https://news.ontario.ca/en/release/1005643/ontario-protecting-jobs-in-kapuskasing>

# Appendices

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## Appendix A – Economic Impact Methodology

A step-by-step overview of our approach to estimating the economic impacts of *Murdoch Mysteries* is given below.



### Direct Job FTE Adjustments

Direct job FTEs were adjusted based on the total labour expenditure provided by Shaftesbury as well as average hourly income of the information culture and recreation industry in Ontario in 2024. The direct job FTEs were obtained by dividing the total labour spending by the estimated full-time wage (2,080 hours).

## Appendix B - Economic Impacts of Season 17

Table B-1 shows the estimated total economic impacts from the production spending on Season 17 of *Murdoch Mysteries* in Ontario. The \$53.5 million spent produced \$88.2 million in total output, \$65.3 million in total GDP, 720 FTEs of total employment, \$9.5 million in federal tax revenues, and \$9.8 million in provincial and municipal tax revenues.

**Table B-1: Economic Impacts of Murdoch Mysteries Season 17**

	Output (millions)	GDP (millions)	Employment (FTEs)	Federal Tax (millions)	Provincial Tax (millions)	Municipal Tax (millions)
Direct	\$51.1	\$43.6	475	\$6.3	\$4.6	\$0.5
Indirect & Induced	\$37.1	\$21.7	245	\$3.1	\$3.3	\$1.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$88.2</b>	<b>\$65.3</b>	<b>720</b>	<b>\$9.4</b>	<b>\$7.9</b>	<b>\$1.9</b>



## Appendix C – Cumulative Economic Impacts

Table C-1 reports the cumulative economic impact estimates of production spending on Seasons 1 to 10 of *Murdoch Mysteries*. The estimates are based on 154 episodes.

**Table C-1: Economic Impacts of Season 1 through Season 10 (From 2016 Economic Impact Study)**

	Output (millions)	GDP (millions)	Employment (FTEs)	Federal Tax (millions)	Provincial Tax (millions)	Municipal Tax (millions)
Direct	\$204.5	\$175.2	2,982	\$23.9	\$16.1	\$2.8
Indirect & Induced	\$266.6	\$156.1	1,812	\$14.5	\$10.8	\$6.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$471.1</b>	<b>\$331.2</b>	<b>4,793</b>	<b>\$38.4</b>	<b>\$26.9</b>	<b>\$8.9</b>

Source: Case Study – Economic Impacts of Murdoch Mysteries (November 2016)

Table C-2 reports the cumulative economic impact estimates of production spending on Seasons 11 to 18 of *Murdoch Mysteries*. The estimates are based on 160 episodes.

**Table C-2: Economic Impacts of Season 11 through Season 18 (Extrapolated using per episode Season 17 estimates)**

	Output (millions)	GDP (millions)	Employment (FTEs)	Federal Tax (millions)	Provincial Tax (millions)	Municipal Tax (millions)
Direct	\$340.7	\$290.7	3,167	\$42.3	\$30.5	\$3.6
Indirect & Induced	\$247.4	\$144.4	1,630	\$20.7	\$22.1	\$9.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$588.1</b>	<b>\$435.1</b>	<b>4,797</b>	<b>\$63.0</b>	<b>\$52.6</b>	<b>\$12.8</b>

## Appendix D - About MNP

For 65 years, MNP has proudly served and responded to the needs of clients in public, private and not-for-profit sectors.

We customize every engagement to meet the specific needs of our clients. By having local, regional and national expertise in all of our markets, we are able to provide clients with partner-led projects, which are grounded in the unique context of the region.

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## Our Custom Research and Economic Insights Practice

### *Creating a competitive advantage from data-driven insight.*

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