



Australian Government



India: Oz Fest and Film Bazaar

FICCI Frames (14–16 March 2012)

Mumbai Film Festival (18–25 October 2012)

Film Bazaar in Goa (21–24 November 2012)

Australian Film Festival of India (December 2012)

Report by Kathleen Drumm, Head of Marketing

Background

India has been described as the most economically dynamic country on the planet, representing the world's fastest growing consumer market. From October 2012 to February 2013 the Australian Government is presenting **Oz Fest**, the biggest Australian cultural festival ever staged in India. Around 100 events across design, visual arts, architecture, music, performing arts, publishing, software, digital content, film and television will take place across 18 cities in India. The goal is to position Australia as contemporary, outward-looking, culturally diverse and creative. The target audience is twofold: young, educated Indians who will disproportionately contribute to India's economic growth and influential decision makers who set the tone of government and drive policy. Screen Australia is delivering the screen component of Oz Fest.

The opportunity

1. **Market:** India is Australia's fourth biggest export market. With a 1.2 billion population, a prolific film industry and millions of passionate cinema-goers, India suggests opportunities for Australian screen content.
2. **Production:** Since 1998, the Indian and Australian film industries have collaborated on over 160 projects including TV programs, films, music videos, TVCs, seminars and festivals. The country has low labour costs and a large pool of English-speaking workers with advanced computer skills. A new generation of Indian filmmakers are looking beyond Bollywood, seeking collaborations internationally. What's attracting them to foreign partnerships is the access to international markets these can bring. Australian producers have a growing interest in developing projects with India and a co-production treaty is in negotiation.
3. **Audience:** In 2012, for the first time, India surpassed China and the UK to become Australia's largest source of permanent migrants, comprising

15.7 per cent of the total intake in the last year. Indian migrants are making a valuable contribution to economic, social and cultural life in Australia, and comprise a growing potential audience for Australian screen content.

Challenges

1. India is a demanding, somewhat chaotic environment in which to get things done, offering a logistical nightmare for those without reliable contacts on the ground.
2. Unlike most potential co-production partners, this is not a government to government financial model, but rather Indian private money to Australian Government investment.
3. The industry is self-sufficient – Bollywood doesn't need Australian money and 'organic' co-ventures take time to seed and develop. India has a cumbersome bureaucratic structure which can get in the way of progressing projects and organising shoots.
4. Low-budget films can be made for \$10,000 or less, way below the average Australian feature, causing issues for inward-bound productions not accustomed to paying high crew rates.
5. Indian audiences like to watch films that pertain to their own culture and the industry is still inward-focused. The high level of conservatism especially by Hindi audiences and the desire to embody family values in films may restrict content in co-productions and uptake by audiences.
6. Films are often available illegally on the streets in the first week of release. Ticket prices are prohibitive in the regions, and piracy is considered a way to access content.
7. Procedures and protocols are not always followed, so flexibility is required in dealings, eg arrangements are not always in place when they're supposed to be.
8. The vertical integration and cross-platform nature of Indian companies may act as a barrier. There is no obligation to disclose ticket information or box office for locally produced, distributed and exhibited product if one company handles all those areas.

Marketplace snapshot

1. Around 1,300 films were produced in India last year, all relying heavily on the local box office to recoup their investment. GBO in 2011 grew 10.6 per cent to US\$1.47 billion, Hollywood taking a 10 per cent share. Traditionally, output has fallen into two categories: Bollywood movies (at 2.5 hours) or Satyajit Ray-style arthouse cinema which had its heyday in the 1970s and 1980s. In a recent development, filmmakers are making 90-minute indie films with commercial and critical appeal, and they are raising their own finance. These 'Hindies' reflect the increasing sophistication of audiences and filmmakers alike.
2. Releases can, in some instances, only be one weekend; turnover of product is high. The opening week of theatrical release accounts for as much as 50 per cent of GBO.

3. There are 1,000 multiplex screens and the industry is expected to double its screen count in the next five years.
4. Cinemas have entered the satellite content market and films compete with sports, particularly cricket.
5. Average digital print penetration is at 50 per cent, with up to 70 per cent for large films.
6. Movies can be on TV within four weeks of the theatrical release.
7. There is piracy across cinema and TV and the home video market is in decline.
8. Comedy, romance and action do well across all age groups.
9. Gaming has been identified as having strong growth potential.
10. India recognises a need to develop story skills in animation.
11. India has a large network of film societies, around 4,000 across India. It is through these that the majority of foreign language and international films are screened. A number of Australian films have screened at these (entry is free), attracting big regional audiences.
12. The market for overseas distribution of Indian films has not opened up at the levels anticipated and smaller movies can't afford to market outside of their home region.
13. Some Indian companies have branches based in Australia, eg Eros Films, Fame, Roadshow.

Anticipated trends for the next year

1. The country is expected to be digitised by December 2014, delivering an increase in the competitiveness of cable operators, subscriber revenues for broadcasters, demand for producers of content, choice of platforms, screen content and tax revenues.
2. Bollywood will widen its influence to deliver an experience that includes VOD, merchandising, themed entertainment and mobisodes (beyond solely a 2.5-hour film).
3. Strong underlying potential for regional markets will be fast tracked on the back of increased income, literacy, the youth market and infrastructure.
4. Entertainment companies will consolidate in an anticipated downsizing of the market.
5. Television will boost subscriptions to better navigate the uncertainties of ad revenue.
6. Advertisers will demand greater transparency and measurement.

Australian screen activities in 2012

Screen Australia's contribution to Oz Fest was achieved in collaboration with the High Commission in New Delhi and the Australian Consulate-General, Mumbai. With the Department of Foreign Affairs & Trade's support, we

facilitated delegations, screenings, functions, marketing collateral or other activities at the following events:

1. **FICCI Frames** (14–16 March) in Mumbai, is the largest media and entertainment conference in Asia. It is organised by the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry, attracting 2,800 delegates. It is designed for producers working in TV, animation and documentary, as well as digital and mobile content creators who want to expand existing relationships or seek co-production, investment and sales.
2. **Mumbai Film Festival** (18–25 October) hosted the premiere of **Save Your Legs!**, which was shot in Melbourne, Kolkata, Varanasi and Mumbai. Mumbai also hosted the Indian premiere of **The Sapphires** in competition. The Australian Indigenous cricket team were touring India at the time and attended *The Sapphires'* red carpet premiere. An Australian function in Mumbai celebrated the two films, hosted by the Consul General and High Commission.
3. **Australian Film Festival of India** (December) has commenced in Mumbai, and then tours to Indian cities and regional towns. The line-up includes a **Baz Luhrmann** retrospective and recent Australian films. The festival's target audience is the same as Oz Fest's: 25–40 years, educated middle class who have studied or been to Australia and who are interested in foreign culture and travel.
4. **Film Bazaar** in Goa (21–24 November) is organised annually alongside the International Film Festival of India (IFFI), where delegates buy, sell, exhibit and pitch their content at the Bazaar's co-production market. Over 750 delegates from 32 countries attended the event, including international festival programmers, development labs, sales agents, financiers and film executives. Australia increased its presence from 10 delegates in 2011 to 17 in 2012.

The 2012 Film Bazaar

Cannes Film Festival's **Christian Jeune** chose Goa as the venue to announce that India would be the guest country at Cannes 2013. This indicates that the Bazaar is gaining traction as an essential platform for the international industry to connect with India's diversified film business and to advance projects of mutual interest. The Bazaar is focused on those filmmakers who want to access foreign markets and to learn how to tune their work creatively to be viable outside India. Delegates from Canada, the US, Europe, the ME, Asia and Australia were all in India looking for ways to tap into the local market and to explore co-ventures. The Secretary of Indian Tourism spoke at the Bazaar, announcing two initiatives to encourage foreign shoots – 200,000 INR per film for up to five films (per state) to smooth the process of permits and an award for the most film-friendly state in India.

Australians in Goa

Seventeen Australians attended the Bazaar this year, five travelling with support from Screen Australia: **Sheila Jayadev** (Emerald Productions), **Anupam Sharma** (Films & Casting Temple), **Lauren Edwards** (Goalpost), **Robyn Kershaw** (Robyn Kershaw Productions) and **John Winter** (Wintertime Films). The Screen Producers Association of Australia (SPAA) also assisted five people to attend: **Mark Ruse** (Ruby Entertainment), **Peter Dodds** (Storyshare), **Ros Walker** (Walker Films), **James Lingwood** (Great

Southern Ark) and **Jane Corden** (Money Penny). The rest of the delegation comprised **Ana Tiwary** (inDiVisual Films), **Ravi Kambhoj** (7Seas Films), **Michelle Harrison** (Ausfilm), **Claire Dobbin** (Melbourne International Film Festival), **Nashen Moodley** (Sydney Film Festival), **Julie Marlow** (SPAA) and **Kathleen Drumm** (Screen Australia). **Kathryn Deyell** from the Australian High Commission in New Delhi joined us. Australians participated in the co-production market and held daily meetings with Indian producers as well as with the mix of sales agents, festival directors and financiers and other film executives present at the Bazaar.

Presentation

As part of the Knowledge Series, Screen Australia presented a session on doing business with Australia. This was followed by two case studies. Robyn Kershaw (**Save Your Legs!**) spoke about shooting a foreign movie in India, providing an Australian perspective on the role of the producer through development, casting, financing, production, post, marketing and distribution. Lauren Edwards (**The Sapphires**) spoke about producing a film from a debut filmmaker, which became an Australian box office sensation and an international hit, describing the pressures of delivering the film and managing the shoot in two countries (Australia and Vietnam).

Promotion

We created a booklet outlining the benefits and features of working with Australia, including the Producer Offset. It featured the complete Australian delegation, and was placed in every delegate's kit. Screen Australia hosted a function alongside SPAA, attended by 530 delegates.

Outcomes

The Bazaar concluded a few days ago, but some producers have already noted progress on their projects and in the furthering of relationships in the region. Australians are considered good partners by Indian producers, offering both access to and an understanding of the international marketplace. The Australian presence was covered in different stories each day in *Screen International's* trade dailies and ongoing results for participating producers will become evident over the next few months.

Kathleen Drumm
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