CINEMA D'EUROPA
MEDIA SALLES

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MEDIA

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THE CIRCULATION OF EUROPEAN FILMS: first improvements and much to be done

Europe's cinematographic heritage is unique and gives witness of its great cultural diversity. The enlargement by countries of Central and Eastern Europe will make the European Union even richer in this sense. Contrary to the 1950s and 1960s, which were characterised by successful European productions the trade deficit with the United States has rapidly increased since the 1980s. In the period from 1995 to 2000 alone it rose from 4.8 billion U.S. dollars to 8.2 billion U.S. dollars. The share of U.S. films as regards overall entries in E.U. cinemas ranged around 70% with 77.4% in 1998 and 66% in 2001, which indicates that 2001 was a relatively successful year for European films.

The circulation of European Films

During this year the number of European films screened in E.U. cinemas increased by 23% as compared to 2000. Although it was primarily due to an upswing that national productions experienced in their country of origin, rising by 27% as compared to the previous year, the screening of European non-national works also increased by a healthy 21%. Yet this most recent success has to be put in context with the still very dominant position of U.S. productions. Spelled out in absolute numbers, in 2001 U.S. films were seen by 600 million viewers, while European works were viewed by approximately 200 million viewers in their country of origin, and non-national European works by about 100 million viewers. Therefore there is no clear trend towards European films in general.

Support measures in place

The reasons for the problems of the European film are evident: diversity of languages, 15 national promotion and distribution systems and a lack of risk capital impose severe competitive disadvantages on European productions as compared to U.S. films. In order to reduce these disadvantageous factors, the MEDIA Plus Programme was created in 1991. In the years 2001-2005 the MEDIA Plus Programme aims at overcoming the above-mentioned weaknesses with 400 million euro giving an important impulse by supporting the promotion of films outside the country of origin, European festivals and networks in the film industry and pilot projects in digital television. The continuously positive development that has been observed since 1996 in the screening of European non-national films shows that the MEDIA Plus Programme bears fruit, although the general dominance of U.S. films is still overwhelming, as stated above. Next to the MEDIA Plus Programme, an important role is of course still played by national film support schemes. In this regard it was vital that the European Commission in its communication of 26 September 2001 examined and approved the film support programmes in the member states according to the provisions of the E.U. competition law. This is a guarantee for European films. A very valuable contribution in the attempt to overcome the chronic lack of risk capital is now being made by the European Investment Bank. In the framework of its i2i programme 600 million euro are available for the period 2001-2003, of which 400 million euro have already been attributed this year.

Future instruments for old problems

Next to the measures employed today new ways have to be examined, not least by the member states. The European Parliament made a number of useful and promising proposals in this sense in its decision of July 2nd 2002 calling for a reduced rate of indirect taxation. Taking their responsibility for the principle of subsidiarity seriously, member states also need to strengthen their financial engagement for the European film in national support measures, as well as regards contributions to MEDIA. Furthermore, both member states and the European Union have to reinforce their efforts for the safeguarding of Europe's great cinematographic heritage. Pilot projects in the framework of the MEDIA Plus Programme would be helpful in this respect. Finally, in the medium term a general demand by the European Parliament is of course the introduction of qualified majority voting in this field.

Ruth Hieronymi
Member of the Committee on Culture, Youth, Education, the Media and Sport of the European Parliament, Rapporteur *for the MEDIA Plus Programme and Co-President of the Intergroup on Film and Audiovisual Policy*

MEDIA SALLES' COMING EVENTS

MIFED
Milan (I), 3-7 November
MEDIA Salles will be present at the MEDIA Programme's stand.
5 November, 5 pm
Presentation of Newsletter no. 4/2002 at the stand.

Focus on Europe at "Castellinaria" 2002
Bellinzona (CH), 15-17 November
MEDIA Salles will be organising the second Focus on Europe event at "Castellinaria", especially for exhibitors programming films for young audiences.

"Professional Cinema Days"
Sorrento (I), 30 November
During the most important meeting regarding exhibition and distribution in Italy, MEDIA Salles will be presenting the 2002 edition of the "European Cinema Yearbook".

SHOWEAST 2002: MORE OF EUROPE IN AMERICA

It was so popular in its home country that it soon became a box office hit; it was a success at Cinema Expo International in Amsterdam, where it was presented by MEDIA Salles last June; it won awards at Cannes 2002 and at the Sydney and Locarno festivals. The English film *Bend it like Beckham* by Gurinder Chadha was also enthusiastically applauded by the audience at ShowEast. Presented on 10 October last by MEDIA Salles and by Fox Searchlight Pictures, who will be distributing it in America as from spring 2003, it was the "core" of the sixth Focus on Europe event promoted by MEDIA Salles at ShowEast. The core of an initiative whose main objective was, in fact, to promote the sort of European film that should have all the prerequisites for earning appreciation even outside its home boundaries but which often remains unknown simply across the threshold of its own country. Yet perhaps things are beginning to change, although slowly. "In America there is a sector of audiences that seems to be showing signs of a growing interest in independent productions," says Steve Gilula, head of distribution for Fox Searchlight Pictures. He is to be believed, if a film such as *My Big Fat Greek Wedding*, a comedy about a Greek-American wedding, has met with such unexpected acclaim by audiences. Made on a budget of 5 million dollars, after 28 weeks of exhibition, at the end of last October, it had already earned 178 million dollars at the box office.

In 1996 Gilula, who was then with Landmark Theatres, received the MEDIA Salles award for exhibition, thanks to this very attention to European films. Now that he has become a distributor, he confirms this attention: "If we have chosen to distribute films such as *Bend it like Beckham*," continues Gilula, "it's because we believe in the success of a distribution strategy that American audiences have already responded well to: broadening the offer, offering spectators who are more sensitive to these novelties the opportunity to take a look beyond their own borders, both cultural and linguistic, at European productions. This is how Fox Searchlight Pictures' offers for 2003 come to include films such as *L'Auberge espagnole*, a Franco-Spanish comedy in which a total of five different languages are combined (French, Spanish, English, Catalan and Danish), *The Dancer Upstairs*, directed by John Malkovich and produced by the Spanish company Lolafilms, and *The Dreamers*, the UK production directed by Bernardo Bertolucci.

ShowEast also dedicated greater attention to Europe, with a day focusing on independent productions - from amongst the leading distributors of European films in America - and

(continues on page 4)

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THE ECONOMIC POTENTIAL OF THE CINEMA INDUSTRY IN CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPEAN COUNTRIES

This paper[1] concerns the following Central and Eastern European countries: Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Hungary, Czech Republic, Slovak Republic, Romania, Bulgaria, Slovenia, Croatia and Yugoslavia. Ten of these countries have applied to become members of the European Union. Therefore, the subject of this study is of current interest.

The total population of these twelve countries (in 2000) is 119.8 million, whilst the total of Western Europe is 388.3 million, thus 3.24 times as much ("European Cinema Yearbook" - 2001 final edition).

Apart from Hungary, the respective frequencies per capita are very, even extremely, low. (The weighted average frequency in the countries belonging to Western Europe was 2.23 in 2000, i.e. about four times higher).

Hungary has about the same frequency as Finland and the Netherlands, the countries with the lowest frequencies in Western Europe. It is not surprising that the Hungarian cinema association was the first Central or Eastern European country that became a member of Union Internationale des Cinémas (UNIC), the federation of cinema associations in European countries, and also became a member of MEDIA Salles. The Hungarian association may well become a go-between for other Central and Eastern European countries for becoming members of European umbrella organisations, which certainly would ease their adaptation to European circumstances.

For an evaluation of the situation the film industry is in, the market shares, especially of US films, are an important political and economic indicator. Table 2 contains the figures. Before composing Table 2, I expected still larger market shares of US films and smaller ones of non domestic European films. As Table 2 indicates, the latter are of the same magnitude as those in Western European countries (i.e. in the 11 countries for which the market shares are published). The fact that the market shares of US films are nevertheless larger than in Western countries, is thus due to the fact that most Central and Eastern European countries have small market shares of domestic films. Therefore, the support that is given (through Eurimages) now, seems to have effects which do not differ significantly from the effect of the support given through the MEDIA Programme in Western European countries. (A different approach may be called for concerning Hungary, Romania and the Slovak Republic with their small market shares of non domestic European films in recent years).

In the foregoing the attention was focussed on admissions. A totally different picture emerges when one also looks at Gross Box Office (GBO). As is indicated in column 3 of Table 1, the average ticket prices expressed in euro are rather low in Central and Eastern European countries, namely on average € 1.40 versus € 5.60 in Western Europe.

Considering the purchasing power in these countries, the low admission prices expressed in euro are not low for their inhabitants, and probably they are even higher than the prices in some West European countries (cf. the table 'Adjusted Average Ticket Prices', in the various editions of the "European Cinema Yearbook"). However, for West European and American film companies exporting to these countries, the earnings can only be very limited. (This is hardly altered by the fact that film rental in Central and Eastern Europe is on average somewhat higher than in Western Europe ["European Cinema Yearbook" - Source Document 2001]).

To give an impression of the theoretical potential of the Central and Eastern European countries, the following calculations can be made (on the basis of 2000):

Supposing that the average frequencies in 2000 had been the same in both groups, total GBO in the Central and Eastern European countries would have been: 149,168,000 € (2.23 : 0.56) 594,008,000 €, being about 4 times higher than it really was.

Supposing also that the average admission price had been the same, total GBO would have been: 4,847,928,000 € (119.8 : 388.1) 1,496,475,000 €, being about 10 times higher than it was.

This means that (for instance) an Italian film producer exporting to the countries concerned could potentially receive up to about ten times more out of it than he does now. A situation like that will, of course, certainly not be reached in the coming years. Besides, if the average frequency became about the same as in Western Europe, the relation between the market shares of domestic, US and non domestic European films might be quite different from what they are now (see Table 2). In other words it is not impossible that higher admissions will be mainly due to domestic and American films.

Table 1 – Admissions, frequencies of cinema going and average admission prices in Central and Eastern European countries in 2000

Country	adm. x 1,000	frequency	av. adm. price in euro
Bulgaria	2,217	0.27	2.05
Czech Rep.	8,719	0.85	2.55
Estonia	1,084	0.75	2.91
Croatia	2,743	0.59	2.52
Hungary	14,294	1.42	2.02
Lithuania	2,103	0.57	2.03
Latvia	1,457	0.60	2.61
Poland	20,892	0.54	3.07
Romania	5,112	0.23	0.78
Slovak Rep.	2,646	0.49	1.33
Slovenia	2,077	1.04	2.88
Yugoslavia	4,096	0.39	0.69
total	67,440	unw. av. 0.65 weighted av. 0.56	weighted av. 1.40 weighted av. Western Europe 5.60

Table 2 – Market shares in 2000

Country	domestic films %	US films %	non domestic European films %
Bulgaria	0.1	93.2	6.1
Czech Rep.	20.6	68.8	10.2
Estonia	-	92.9	6.6
Croatia	2.3	-	-
Hungary	3.9	93.2	2.7
Lithuania	1.2	86.0	12.8
Latvia	6.4	80.2	13.1
Poland	12.1	80.2	7.0
Romania	1.4	94.4	3.9
Slovak Rep.	1.21	95.3[1]	3.3[1]
Slovenia	4.62	79.9[2]	15.3[2]
Yugoslavia	19.7	59.6	19.7
unweighted average	6.1	84.0[3]	9.1[3]
unw. average of 11 West Eur. countries	14.2	75.1	8.9

1. 1998. 2. 1999. 3. without Croatia.

Table 3 – Basis figures 2000 - Central and Eastern Europe versus Western Europe

Country	(1) 12 Central and Eastern European countries	(2) Western Europe	(2) : (1) = (3)
total admissions	67,440,000	865,761,000	ca. 13 x
population	119,800,000	388,100,000	ca. 3 x
(weighted) av. frequency	0.56	2.23	ca. 4 x
(weighted) av. adm. price	€ 2.21	€ 5.60	ca. 2.5 x
total GBO	€ 149,168,000	€ 4,847,928,000	ca. 32.5 x

Source for tables 1, 2, 3: "European Cinema Yearbook" - 2001 final edition.

Dr Joachim Ph. Wolff
Scientific advisor of the "European Cinema Yearbook" and chairman of the Research Foundation of the Netherlands Cinematographic Federation

1. Paper presented during Eurovisioni on 22 Oct. 2002. I thank Ms Elisabetta Brunella of MEDIA Salles for her comment on the draft of this text.

POLAND
Interwiew with Paweł Wachnik

Paweł Wachnik is acting Director General of Ster Century Cinemas in Poland. During the Focus on Europe event held in Amsterdam last June he spoke at the seminar "2001: admissions were up. Was it due to European films?"
We asked him some questions about the situation of the Polish film market, starting out from some of the points mentioned in his talk.

Mr Wachnik, if we look at admissions, there is a curious trend in the Polish market: growing constantly from 1992 to '95 (from 10 million admissions to almost 23 million), from '96 to 2001 it starts to fluctuate. In particular, two years that can be labelled negative - '98 (a little over 20 million) and 2000 (slightly fewer than 21) - alternate with two highly successful periods: 1999, with 27.5 million admissions, and 2001, again with over 27.5 million tickets sold. What do you think these fluctuations are due to?
I think an answer can be found by observing the relationship between the years where there were most admissions and the success obtained by Polish productions in those same years. Here a quick look at the list of films most frequently seen in the country tells us a lot. In 1999, for example, which was a record year for admissions, the first, second and fourth places in the list of the 10 most successful films were occupied by Polish films, respectively *Ogniem i mieczem, Pan Tadeusz, Kilerów 2-óch*. Moreover, if the top ten films sold a total of almost 18.2 million tickets, the three Polish films take the merit for 13.8 million of these. In 2000, however, which was, generally speaking, a negative year, the top ten films accounted for only approximately 6.4 million tickets. The title that sold most tickets was *Gladiator* with 1.3 million tickets - a result that lags a long way behind the over 7 million sold by *Ogniem i mieczem*. Concerning domestic productions, the greatest success was achieved by *Prymas. Trzy lata z tysiąca*, with just over 700,000 admissions. In 2001 the positive situation of '99 reoccurred: in first, second, third and sixth place there were Polish films, for a total of slightly fewer than 9 million tickets out of 13.6 million. Lastly, if we look at the market shares on the domestic market, in '99 Polish films gained 54.5%, in 2001 41.4%, and in 2000 only 14.5%.

It seems, then, that domestic films are a decisive factor for increasing admissions in Polish theatres. But what chance do they have of being appreciated outside their national borders, too?
I'm certain that there is no lack of potential success for Polish films in Europe, thanks mainly to the existence of talented directors, some of whom are also appreciated outside Poland. To achieve an international standing it is essential for Polish films to succeed in expressing significant aspects of European culture and so to succeed in finding, metaphorically speaking, a language shared by the other countries. It seems to me that this is an aspect that is often neglected. Frequently our films are unable to gain appreciation abroad because they concentrate exclusively on strictly local situations, immediately losing all interest for an international audience. Then there is a problem of economic support by the producers, which is often highly inadequate. If the domestic product is well-made and has the right characteristics for being appreciated abroad, but is not supported by investments, it has very little chance of making its mark outside its own country.

So Poland is trying, quite rightly, to establish a stronger presence in European theatres. But do Polish cinemagoers go and see European films, too, when they visit the cinema?
There is no lack of European films in the theatres but, at least for the moment, they certainly attract much smaller audiences than Polish or American productions. In 1997, for example, the top ten non-domestic European films accounted for 6.6% of total admissions, in '98 the figure had dropped to 3.6%, in '99, thanks mainly to *Astérix et Obelix contre César* (1.8%) and *La vita è bella* (1%), they had climbed again to 4.7%. The situation was stable in 2000 (4.8%) and improved in 2001: 7% of the market share was obtained by European films, such as *Amélie* (1.7%) and *Traffic* (1.2%). To this figure we can add a further 3.5%, represented by European co-productions with the U.S. (e.g. *Chocolat* and *O Brother, Where Art Thou?*). It's true that the figures are still low but it can be said that a new audience is developing, interested in quality European films. Even in economic terms, then, the market for European films is proving to be an interesting one, which is growing.

If you had to outline a programme to promote the cinema market in Poland, where would you start?
Without any doubt from the necessity to support national productions, both in economic terms and in terms of promotion, to help them make significant steps across national boundaries. Secondly, for the market to really develop, it is necessary, in my view, to increase the circulation of European films in our theatres, thus reaching out to a new sort of audience which is growing and must certainly not be neglected.

TRAINING INITIATIVES FOR EXHIBITORS

EBELTOFT 2002: A PARTICIPANT'S ACCOUNT

Last June, I was lucky to take part in the training course for movie theatre operators organised by MEDIA Salles with the support of the MEDIA Plus Programme of the European Union and the Italian Government. It was held in the European Film College at Ebeltoft, Denmark, with the collaboration of Danske Biografer. I was the only Hungarian participant.
In addition to my participation, it was a great help for me to prepare this course last year in the same town, together with nine internationally recognised experts in the field of movie theatres. The training course is to be repeated annually from now on. Last year and in June this year I also presented lectures in Denmark about the present situation of movie theatre in the cities of Budapest and Szolnok. The participants consisted of exhibitors from almost all over Europe. There were lectures, film projections, seminars, practical tasks to be solved and role-playing arranged for small groups. For instance, each group had the task of rearranging the layout of an existing movie theatre, operating it and preparing a business plan for it. The most interesting thing for me was to see how differently the participants coming from various countries - in my group there were exhibitors from the Czech Republic, Italy, Switzerland and Great Britain - saw the problems and how they found the common solution.
We had an interesting summary about the European situation of the operation of movie theatres. The problems we have to face in Hungary (for instance, state subsidy for movie theatres projecting films of artistic value, shortage of film copies, etc.) are not so urgent for those living in the west of Europe any more. Almost all of the countries apply well-proven systems of state subsidy, which have been used for years. These systems support the operational problems and development issues of the non-commercial movie theatres, because these kinds of movie theatres can be found everywhere, from Lisbon to Vienna. At the same time, most of the countries located east of Hungary are in an even worse situation (compared to us). They are now experiencing the aggressive spread of the multiplex. Traditional movie theatres are not prepared for this. The situation is similar to one we experienced a few years ago.
There are ways of solving our problems, which could surely be applied and I think that we should concentrate on the concrete implementation and realisation of them. I am personally convinced, like some other people, that a separate, modern and operational movie theatre network should be maintained in each country for projecting films of artistic value and these networks should not be operated on commercial bases. This might be the response from the European countries to the challenges raised by the multiplexes flooding the good old continent with American films.

Tibor Bíró
Kossuth Cinema in Miskolc, Hungary

TRAINING COURSES FOR THE YEAR 2003

MEDIA Salles, in collaboration with the European Film College and DB, the Danish Cinema Association, will organise in 2003:
1. the second edition of *"European cinema exhibition: A new approach"*, to be held again in **Ebeltoft, 4 - 8 June 2003**;
2. an "itinerant" version of the course, that will take place in **Rome (Italy), 24 - 28 September 2003**, and will be organised in collaboration with ANEC, the Italian Cinema Exhibitors' Association.

Some of the main themes covered in the next exhibitors' training courses are: marketing techniques and in-house promotional initiatives, analysis of audience expectations and styles of cinema-going, the opportunities and risks of digital projection.

The courses are open to all European professionals within cinema exhibition sector: a selected number of participants will be chosen amongst the applicants.
Deadline for the application to the Ebeltoft course: 30 April 2003.

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the screening of numerous trailers, including *Pinocchio* and *Bloody Sunday*. The interest in international cinema was also emphasised by the *International Day*. MEDIA Salles President, Jens Rykaer, also took part in this event with a talk on cinema-going in Europe in 2001. During the seminar, chaired by Tim Warner of Cinemark International, Rykaer particularly mentioned the success obtained last year in Europe by domestic films. According to tradition, the same evening during the opening reception, MEDIA Salles presented awards acknowledging particularly significant work in the distribution and programming of European films in the American continent. Philip Alexander, President of Buena Vista Columbia TriStar Films de México, thus received the award for distribution from the MEDIA Salles President, for his work over the years in promoting an interest in the circulation of films from Spanish-speaking territories and European productions. The MEDIA Salles award for exhibition also went to Latin America, being awarded to Luiz Severiano Ribeiro of the "Severiano Ribeiro" circuit, in Brasil: 180 screens in 13 towns and a project already underway for setting up a digital auditorium in each site.
At the MEDIA Salles stand the range of material giving information provided participants in ShowEast with essential data on the European films that will be released in the USA over the coming months, including *Pinocchio*, *Habla con Ella* and *The Pianist* scheduled for release by the end of 2002, as well as the "European Cinema Yearbook" in the new CD Rom version, complete with analytical tables on 32 countries in Western, Central and Eastern Europe and the Mediterranean Rim.
As happens every year, Focus on Europe concluded in Washington, at the headquarters of the European Commission, with a day dedicated to the issues of promoting and circulating European films in America and the prospects for digital distribution. During the debate, which brought together professional figures from the cinema industry, as well as representatives of European and U.S. institutions, many people voiced the necessity for an initiative directed specifically at the U.S. capital, to coordinate promotional activities on behalf of European productions.

THE SECOND FOCUS ON EUROPE EVENT AT "CASTELLINARIA"

The new Focus on Europe event organised by MEDIA Salles will be held in Bellinzona (Switzerland) from 15 to 17 November 2002, during "Castellinaria", the International Children's Film Festival. Focus will be attended by professional players from numerous European countries: Germany, Spain, France, Italy, Belgium, The Netherlands, Sweden, Great Britain, Denmark, Hungary. The contents of Focus include: programming for younger audiences; activities in co-operation with schools; financing for projects dedicated to children's films; the 'informative and formative' potential of the web.
On the afternoon of Saturday 16 November, participants will watch a screening of the German film *Hilfe, ich bin ein Junge* by Oliver Dommenget. With them, in the theatre, will be the young audience of the Festival.

MEDIA SALLES AT THE 59TH VENICE FILM FESTIVAL

The presentation of issue no. 3/2002 of the Newsletter "European Cinema Journal" on 3 September at "Cine Cinemas - 1, 2, 3", one of the liveliest and busiest spaces in the Festival, and the workshop "Mobile phones and the Internet: will they boost cinema admissions?", which took place on 5 September, were the highlights in MEDIA Salles' participation at Venice 2002.

"MOBILE PHONES AND THE INTERNET: WILL THEY BOOST CINEMA ADMISSIONS?"

The most concise and realistic answer to this provocative question, chosen by MEDIA Salles as the title of the Venice workshop, came from Emanuele de Plano, co-founder of TixOS and a Ticketing Strategy consultant: perhaps it is still too soon to claim that the use of the new technologies increases cinema audiences; however, mobile phones and Internet certainly provide the chance to develop customer relationships that result in increased loyalty. This - according to de Plano - also means more accessible costs for exhibitors than other marketing channels, with the opportunity to offer audiences extra services. The purchase of cinema tickets via mobile phone, for example, is already happening in Great Britain thanks to Vizzavi; the Movietickets site (www.movietickets.com) allows U.S. audiences to buy tickets - and print them for themselves - for a considerable number of theatres.
In Italy too, there is no lack of important experiments in these fields, both in the distribution and in the exhibition sectors.
An agreement with Vodafone Omnitel was chosen by Eagle Pictures for the launch of *Tomb Raider*. Marco Tugnolo, who spoke in Venice on behalf of Vodafone Omnitel, outlined the aims of this co-marketing operation, entitled "The adventure continues on your mobile", organised in such a way as to boost the film's promotion and, at the same time, encourage a different way of using the mobile, offering more detailed information, games, melodies using music from the film and the opportunity to win prizes in competitions.
All in all a positive experience, innovative and demanding, thanks also to the wide range of different people involved in producing it.
As regards exhibition, Nicola Grispello, Director of Film Programming and Strategic Communication of Warner Village Cinemas, gave an example of synergy with mobiles. This chain of multiplexes has come to an agreement with Nokia for sending clients up-to-date information about films and initiatives in cinemas by means of short text messages sent to their mobiles. One example is the "Cinegiovedì" co-marketing operation, where 180,000 SMS were sent out giving clients information on cut-price tickets.
Judgements on sending SMS to clients are not, however, unanimous: in the MEDIA Salles workshop, too, differing opinions emerged both from speakers and from the public.
Firm believers in the effectiveness of using mobiles are Domenico Luddeni and Massimo Grazio, creators of SMSInfoMOVIE, which allows the weekly programme of a given cinema to be sent by SMS to cinemagoers who ask to have it.
It cannot be denied that there is an advantage for clients, insist Luddeni and Grazio: they receive the useful information - free of trimmings or advertising messages - thus avoiding the effort of looking for it and keeping it constantly at hand.
Other exhibitors have, instead, given priority to the Internet and to e-mail. Amongst these is the Arcadia of Melzo, which has chosen to contact its audiences by means of a Newsletter sent by e-mail, giving advance news of coming films, events organised by the cinema, special offers and the services offered by the Arcadia.
This is a choice - explained Laura Fumagalli, of the Arcadia's Press Office and Communications - which concentrates on a high-quality service for more interested clients, which is efficient yet discreet. The Newsletter is thus sent out to those who register with the Arcadia Club and who thereby have the opportunity to use a range of exclusive services, including on-line bookings and access to the film archive.
The key concept of service again lies at the heart of the strategy outlined by Gianantonio Furlan, President of ANEC Triveneto and Managing Director of Furlan Cinema e Teatri, which centres mainly on the Internet site, also giving the option of using a credit card to buy tickets. This means that the client is no longer obliged to secure his booking by collecting the ticket at least 15 minutes before the film begins.
To encourage customer loyalty, Furlan has also launched Cineram, a pre-paid card which can be renewed and used at the Multiplex Cinecity of Silea and in other theatres in Udine, Trieste, Mestre and Rovigo. Cineram makes it possible to obtain a 30% discount when buying tickets for films being screened in the member theatres, a 10% discount on purchases at the bar and further discounts on purchases in the Cinecity Shops, specialised shops for cinema fans, situated inside the theatre complexes, where sound tracks, books of photographs, screenplays, posters, T-shirts, gadgets and interactive games are to be found.
In all the talks, and especially in those sectors of the cinema industry in closest contact with the public, there emerged a growing attention to innovative forms of marketing and management of customer relationships, centring on the use of the new technologies. In connection with this, Elisabetta Brunella, Secretary General of MEDIA Salles, confirmed the Association's commitment to providing opportunities for the exchange of information and sharing of experiences amongst exhibitors. This is the same spirit that has led to the organisation of the Focus on Europe events and to the launching of training courses for exhibitors, together with the European Film College and the Danish Cinema Exhibitors' Association.

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