

TFE THE FILM ENTREPRENEUR:

A Newsletter for Independent Filmmakers and Investors



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EXCLUSIVE: Post Pandemic Opportunities for Independent\$ on FREE \$streaming Platform\$



Can AVOD streaming channels generate profits for indies? Producer Maggie Pamplin and author Louise Levison both say yes.

Clients are Cashing in on FREE Channels

It may sound crazy, or even shocking, but post pandemic filmmakers are finding a new path to profitability for their projects via established and emerging FREE streaming channels. While theatrical venues are struggling or shuttered, they do remain in play and are most desirable, but some smaller budgeted films are opting for the steady and often quicker cash these FREE channels provide. During the pandemic audiences were driven to sample streaming channels and subscriptions skyrocketed. But as some theaters opened and life returned to normal, subscribers were turned off by the rising monthly subscription fees.

A Case Study of One Client's Successful Launch

A documentary feature film written and directed by client Rick Pamplin was completed, then sidelined during lockdowns, then shopped to distributors and released earlier this year by Kaczmarek Digital Media Group (KDMG). The motion picture, which features Salma Hayek and Burt Reynolds in his last film, played theatrically in five U.S. cities, with some additional site licenses across the country including colleges and film festivals. Some revenue was generated but the focus then became streaming, first with 14 Video-On-Demand (VOD) sites, exclusively for four months, then some foreign sales, a DVD and multiple FREE channels.

FREE Channels Can Bring BIG Profits

Inspired by Levison's best-selling book *Filmmakers and Financing*, the documentary *Movie Money CONFIDENTIAL* caught fire with audiences receiving a 98% Audience Score on RottenTomatoes.com and an 80% Certified Critic rating. KDMG expanded the film to American Airlines and FREE Ad Supported Video-On-Demand (AVOD) platforms including Tubi, Freevee, Vudu, Plex, Docurama - and Hoopla (without ads). Client and producer Maggie Pamplin is committed to this new distribution model saying, "It worked for us and KDMG did a magnificent job. This is the plan for our next film being released in 2023 and others in the foreseeable future."

For more information and up-to-date streaming sites visit www.MovieMoney.com

AFM 2022 WAS A “NEAR NORMAL” SUCCESS

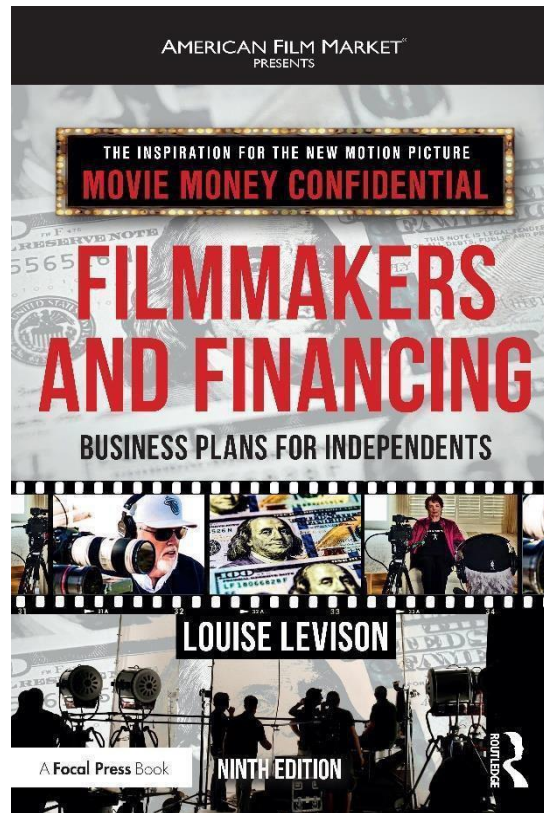
Almost 6,000 attended the 43rd edition of the American Film Market November 1st to 6th. The fact that it lasted six days instead of the traditional ten changed the mood of the market. “Regardless of the virtual sales bazaar, physically seeing people in one spot in a short space of time focuses us, creates momentum and helps make these projects become reality,” The Exchange CEO Brian O’Shea noted. “Cannes was an experiment for many folks. This is the market that people are coming to in order to do business,” said Jean Prewitt, CEO of the Independent Film & Television Alliance which produces The AFM. “After three years away, new energy filled Santa Monica throughout the week, with a steady drumbeat of business being done and participants from 87 countries enthusiastically engaged in sharing the industry knowledge that makes face-to-face markets so vital.”

Buyers were enthusiastic but being cautious about acquisitions. “Fortissimo Films GM Gabrielle Rozing noted, “Buyers are looking for things that are sure bets. Audience friendly...does it spark joy? That doesn’t mean it has to be light or easy, but it needs to come with a message from the heart.” Noting that indie distributors were active, Protagonist Pictures Commercial Officer George Hamilton said, “It doesn’t feel like its been super aggressive for the streamers. “It feels like the narrative for this market will be the indies and studio action, rather than the streamers.” Many individuals felt that weakness of foreign currencies compared to the U.S. dollar affected decisions, as well as companies still recovering from the effects of COVID. Rozing noted that it doesn’t help that AFM is the most expensive market “especially for Europeans, it’s really expensive to go to L.A. I’m spending \$300 a night on a mid-range hotel.” As a former 43-year L.A. resident, I want to know where I can get one that cheap!

AFM screenings were highly attended with 352 screenings taking place across 15 commercial theatre screens over the course of four days and the AFM On Demand platform. Buyers from nearly 500 companies representing 68 countries were present at the market with the highest number of buyers coming from the United States followed by Germany, the U.K., Japan, the Republic of South Korea, Italy, Spain, France, Canada, Brazil, and the Netherlands. From Asia, the largest showing of individual buyers were with companies from Japan (49) and the Republic of South Korea (48) followed by Singapore (8), Hong Kong (7), Taiwan (6), Thailand (6), and China (2). Buyers from the Russian Federation totaled 14. “Those not affiliated to the government were reportedly pursuing titles aggressively in the absence of studio fare following Vladimir Putin’s invasion of Ukraine”, reported screendaily.com.

Exhibitors included 305 registered companies from 38 countries, with the largest number of exhibitors after the United States coming from the United Kingdom, Italy, France, Germany and Canada. From Asia, the Republic of South Korea and Thailand each had a strong presence with 17 and 8 exhibition companies respectively and two countries with significant increases in participation were Italy with 29 exhibitors and Malaysia with 10. The AFM re-introduced two new exhibitor programs this year — Reserved Meeting Tables, which were in high-demand selling out quickly, as well an Offsite Exhibition program affording all companies, big and small, the options they needed at the right size and price point to fit their company’s market needs. 🍷

**The latest edition of *Filmmakers & Financing:
Business Plans for Independents***



In this new and updated ultimate filmmaker's guide, Louise Levison gives you easy-to-use steps for writing an investor-winning business plan for a feature film, including:

- Comprehensive explanations for each of the eight sections of a plan
- Full financial section with text and tables
- A sample business plan
- A companion website with additional information for various chapters and detailed financial instructions - advanced math not needed
- An explanation on how feature documentary, animated and large-format films differ
- A guide to pitching to investors: who they are, what they want and what to tell them
- Words of advice: Filmmakers share their experiences raising money from equity investors

NINTH EDITION AVAILABLE FOR PURCHASE

https://routledge.pub/Levison_Financing9e

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NEED MONEY FOR A MOVIE? DON'T GO IN EMPTY-HANDED. HAVE A BUSINESS PLAN.

The benefit of using a reliable business plan to raise financing for a film is that it allows the investors and the filmmaker to gauge the potential success of a film. Louise Levison, the President of Business Strategies, is a highly respected financial consultant in the entertainment industry, specializing in creation of film business plans. She is the author of *Filmmakers & Financing: Business Plans for Independents*, currently in its revised and expanded ninth edition (A Routledge/Taylor & Francis book, 2022). She also has a starring role in the feature documentary *Movie Money CONFIDENTIAL* which was inspired by the book. More information at moviemoney.com. Levison also is editor of the newsletter *The Film Entrepreneur: A Newsletter for the Independent Filmmaker and Investor (TFE)*.

A polished business plan with projections based on the worldwide results of other films and with clear explanations of the industry is far more effective than an incomplete document that leaves prospective investors wanting more information. In our “new normal,” *TFE* has developed (and continues to adjust) a new format for forecasting Indie films to include the current hybrid system of releasing films for a shorter span in theaters as the industry reopens and, often, into streaming rather than the standard online release pattern of DVD/Blu-ray and downloading.

Levison's clients have raised money for low-budget films including *The Blair Witch Project*, the most profitable independent film in history, as well as for companies raising as much as \$300 million.

Among other clients' projects are *The Prophet (Kahlil Gibran's)*, *Unlimited (Nathan Frankowski)*, *Burning Bodhi*, *Greater*, *The Redemption of Henry Miller*, *Emoticon:*, *Moving Midway*, *Redemption Road*, *Haunted (2012)*, *The First of May*, *The Open Road*, *Aluna*, *Yak: The Giant King*, *Visual Acoustics: The Modernism of Julius Shulman*, *My Father and the Man in Black* and *Michael Winslow Live*. Her corporate clients include Danny Glover's Louverture Films (2008 nominee for Best Documentary Academy Award *Trouble the Water*), Pamplin Film Company (*Hoover*), Majestic World Entertainment, Gundersen Entertainment and Tokuma International Ltd. Levison was an Instructor in the Extension Program at UCLA for 22 years before moving to Florida. She also has been a Visiting Professor at the Taipei (Taiwan) National University of the Arts, Chapman University (Orange County, CA) and the University of Montana (Missoula). She also has presented seminars and/or been on panels at festivals and markets around the world.

Contact Levison at louisel@earthlink.net to find out how you can put her 30 years of experience as a Film Business Consultant to work creating a business plan for your film.