

Opportunities exist to sell television programs to the four English-language television broadcasters based in Hong Kong, including one that broadcasts across Asia. Canadian artists are heard on local radio, and their records are sold locally. Hong Kong radio and television broadcasts are received in South China, and the programs are seen as trend-setters throughout Asia. Hong Kong's role as a regional cultural centre is further enhanced by the fact that the city is host to many regional trade fairs for this industry, including MIDEM (the International Market for Music Publishing, Video, Music and Radio Programs fair) and MIP (the International Film and Program Market for Television, Video, Cable Satellite fair).

Hong Kong people can afford to attend expensive performances by foreign performers, and a large number of corporations are prepared to sponsor prestigious cultural events.

Constraints

China continues to protect its film, television and radio industries. During prime time (7:30 p.m. to 10:00 p.m.), only 15 per cent of time can be allocated to non-coproduction foreign television programs.

Chinese television stations are reluctant to pay the market value for foreign programs because of budgetary constraints and because they are not accustomed to paying for programs. However, stations are expected to offer advertising time in exchange for programming in the future.

There is strong competition from Hollywood's mega-budget productions, and copyright infringement remains a concern.

Publications are monopolized by the China National Publications Import and Export Corporation (CNPIEC), which is the only corporation appointed by the central government to handle the import and export of books, newspapers and magazines, as well as audio and video programs such as music tapes, compact and laser discs and records.

The market-oriented approach taken by the cultural industry in Hong Kong, as well as the high cost of promoting and mounting a performance, will limit access to the Hong Kong market to Canadian artists who have demonstrated prior success in other markets and are likely to do the same in Hong Kong.

Action Plan

The objectives of the Action Plan in this sector are to:

- encourage and help companies to take advantage of existing agreements between the governments of Canada and China, such as the 1987 co-production agreement;
- assist Canadians in entering China's market for film and television programs; a long-term commitment and participation in Chinese television and film festivals are necessary to develop substantial contacts with the domestic industry's distribution system;