

# Film, television and video production, 2019

Released at 8:30 a.m. Eastern time in *The Daily*, Thursday, March 11, 2021

The film, television and video production industry in Canada was expanding rapidly before the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic and nearly doubled its operating revenue from 2013 to 2019, with the lower Canadian dollar and fiscal incentives providing a key competitive advantage. In 2019, the film, television and video production industry generated \$9.2 billion in total operating revenue—an increase of 9.4% from 2017. Similarly, operating expenses grew 9.3% from 2017 to \$8.7 billion in 2019, leading to an operating profit margin of 6.2% in 2019, a slight increase compared with 2017 (6.1%).

Among the provinces, Quebec (+\$330.3 million or +19.6%) and Ontario (+\$235.7 million or +8.0%) posted the largest gains in operating revenue since 2017. Operating revenues in British Columbia increased by \$134.6 million (+4.1%) over the same period, reaching \$3.4 billion—the highest provincial level in Canada.

Television productions generated 61.4% of total industry sales in 2019 compared with 63.7% in 2017, while feature films accounted for 19.6% in 2019.

## The COVID-19 pandemic creates challenges for the industry

The film, television and video production industry ground to a halt with the shutdown of non-essential services at the start of the COVID-19 pandemic in Canada in mid-March 2020. Although film, television and video production projects were allowed to resume in the summer months under new production protocols, the industry faced significant changes and challenges. Production companies were able to swiftly develop and implement new logistical and procedural health and safety protocols to deal with COVID-19.

Insurance companies began writing COVID-19 exclusions into their policies, which slowed the restart of production because of the liability of a COVID-19-led shutdown. However, the industry benefitted from federal and provincial government assistance, which stimulated activity. Signals from the industry indicate that it recovered more swiftly than originally anticipated because of how production companies were able to adapt to measures in place. The industry is also projecting and counting on increased demand for new content, which bodes well for its recovery.

### Note to readers

*Data for 2017 have been revised.*

*The data for reference year 2019 were collected during the spring and summer of 2020. This collection period includes the events and business disruptions around COVID-19 and, in general, response rates have been lower. As a result, there may be larger-than-normal revisions to the data in future releases. For more information on data quality and revisions, please refer to [2413— Survey of Service Industries: Film, Television and Video Production](#)*

*With the initial release of the 2017 reference year, a new methodology was implemented to produce estimates for the film, television and video production industry. This approach makes more intensive use of administrative data in addition to the collected data, which—to reduce undercoverage—allows for better coverage of the population. It also ensures that estimates by province better reflect where filming activity is taking place.*

*It is common for businesses in the film, television and video production industry to hire other businesses to handle their payrolls. This practice contributes to lower industry estimates for salaries, wages, commissions and benefits, and higher estimates for cost of goods sold, as well as for all other costs and expenses.*



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**Available tables:** [21-10-0059-01](#), [21-10-0078-01](#) and [21-10-0079-01](#).

**Definitions, data sources and methods:** survey number [2413](#).

For more information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact us (toll-free 1-800-263-1136; 514-283-8300; [STATCAN.infostats-infostats.STATCAN@canada.ca](mailto:STATCAN.infostats-infostats.STATCAN@canada.ca)) or Media Relations (613-951-4636; [STATCAN.mediahotline-ligneinfomedias.STATCAN@canada.ca](mailto:STATCAN.mediahotline-ligneinfomedias.STATCAN@canada.ca)).