

## **2010/2011 SMPIA Digital Media Initiative Report**

### **BACKGROUND**

In 2009, the Federal Government announced that the Canadian Television Fund would be rebranded as the Canada Media Fund and that all content funded would now be required to be produced for at least 1 digital platform in addition to television broadcast. This decision made digital content production a reality for many television producers.

For film producers, digital content has become more directly about the audience's migration to consume media and supporting materials on digital platforms rather than traditional ones. Many producers are finding alternative funding and distribution sources in addition to new audiences for their films in the digital space.

The product for entertainment and communication media creators has become convergent and digital content has become part of their landscape.

In order to create strong convergent projects, the Saskatchewan Film and Television Industry must have strong Interactive creators to partner with. Saskatchewan's Interactive community is ripe with talent in creating hardware and software and corporate service work that is world-renowned. But few local interactive companies can claim to have produced rich and substantial digital media content as aspired to by the CMF and other Digital content funding agencies. The province possesses the skills and talents to create, but many of our digital creators who would be solid partnership candidates are not aware of the opportunities or business models for partnership with the Film/TV industry and thus, do not have experience in this area.

The lack of Saskatchewan Digital Content creation partners has resulted in many of the province's TV programs including Insecurity, Rabbit Fall and Wapos Bay working with out-of-province digital creators. It is only through strengthening and supporting the interactive content creation industry that the Film/TV industry will have strong local partners for the creation of convergent media -- and only through the creation of these partnerships that a strong indigenous Digital Media Content creation industry that includes Film and Television will emerge.

A healthy Digital Content creation industry will include a diverse ecosystem of projects and creators. Service production, corporate work, and indigenous production across a multitude of digital formats, genres and distribution platforms will create an environment of stability for digital content creators that can be compared to the structure of a healthy Film/TV industry.

### **INITIATIVE OVERVIEW**

In response to the situation, in September 2010, SMPIA launched the Digital Media Initiative, designed to bring together Film, TV and Interactive Media creators and support them in the creation of Digital Content. A report issued October 2006 by Statistics Canada identified industry associations as the organizations of choice to lead in times of innovation and they nationally outperform governments and universities as innovation enablers. Industry associations for screen-based media throughout Canada had recognized their role in helping to

prepare their industries for innovation in new business models, partnerships and creative content generation and began offering programming and support to their memberships. Given the absence of similar activity within Saskatchewan, SMPPIA's new Digital Media Initiative aimed to fill that role for our province.

SMPPIA's Digital Media Initiative program seeks to support content creators in the development, production and exhibition of rich and substantial interactive media content experiences that are being created for audiences. SMPPIA members are interested in using software and hardware together to create and deliver a cultural product or experience to an audience. Sometimes this requires the invention of new hardware or software tools with the end goal of using them to create an experience, but the development or exploitation of the software or hardware technology itself is not the goal. Sometimes these experiences may have a connection with a form of linear content such as Film/TV in that they share characters or story locales, but they are stand alone forms of media with their own independent audiences rather than marketing tools. These experiences are interactive, allowing the user to participate, and are not linear or fixed. They are usually different each time the user chooses to engage and are ongoing without end. Examples include video games, interactive art, e-books, and interactive documentaries.

The DMI is the only Saskatchewan organization currently offering programming to develop or support training, professional development, marketing and networking for creators of rich and substantial interactive non-linear and non-convergent material that is cultural in focus as defined by the Digital Media Initiative.

Other Saskatchewan associations supporting digital media include: Saskatchewan Advanced Technology Association (SATA), who represent the developers of technology in software and hardware; and SaskInteractive, who represent the programmers, designers, developers and users of practical and marketing based interactive media.

## **METHODOLOGY:**

Following the goals and objectives of the initial Digital Media Initiative proposal, the DMI manager began attending events and researching the state of digital media in Canada and Saskatchewan. In addition to becoming informed on digital media methods and trends, the DMI researched the activities of other jurisdictions and their effectiveness in order to best inform like programming in Saskatchewan. The local industry was surveyed on their needs through a combination of phone calls, meetings and a formal digital survey.

The DMI manager spent time reaching out to various communities, organizations and individual creators to develop relationships across the country and the province. Much time was also spent educating the local community about the kind of content we are looking to create and the opportunities that are available for creators. Following this, events were held to begin providing value to the community that was excited and prepared to begin the learning process.

After each event, surveys were completed in order to provide feedback on the effectiveness of the event and inform future activities of the DMI.

**THE DIGITAL MEDIA INITIATIVE INITIAL GOALS AND RESULTS**

<p><b>ACTION:</b> Travel to significant digital events to ensure that SMPIA is educated about the latest advancements in policy, equipment, funding, platforms and strategies in the interactive space</p> <p><b>ACTION:</b> Research trends, opportunities, funding and programming options that are occurring in other jurisdictions across North America and explore their potential for implementation in Saskatchewan</p>	<p><b>RESULTS:</b> The Digital Media Initiative has attended the following conferences:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Interactive 2010 (Saskatchewan)</li> <li>- IN 2010 (Ontario)</li> <li>- BarCamp (Saskatchewan)</li> <li>- Merging + Media (B.C.)</li> <li>- All Access (Manitoba)</li> <li>- nextMEDIA (Ontario)</li> <li>- Telefilm Online Marketing for Film (B.C.)</li> <li>- Insight: Convergence and Competition (Ontario)</li> <li>- Yorkton Film Festival (Saskatchewan)</li> <li>- Banff World Media Festival (Alberta)</li> <li>- MOSO (Saskatchewan)</li> <li>- Gimli Film Festival (Manitoba)</li> </ul>
<p><b>ACTION:</b> Share knowledge through briefings and one-on-one consultation with SMPIA’s members who are not able to attend events</p>	<p><b>RESULTS:</b> An official document providing 15 recommendations for building the digital content industry in Saskatchewan based on the research of the DMI, was created and delivered upon request to SaskFilm in January of 2011. These recommendations have been endorsed by the Bell Broadcast and New Media Fund, and are under review by the National Film Board and the Canada Media Fund. In April 2011, SaskFilm announced that they would be developing a fund for non-convergent projects, which is consistent with these recommendations.</p> <p>Meetings with local interactive creators and filmmakers to consult on project funding and interactive design occur on a regular basis through the program. By Aug 31<sup>st</sup>, the DMI manager had consulted on 27 local digital media projects. Updates are also provided to members and the community through the DMI’s digital tools.</p>

	<p>In addition, the DMI developed and delivered an “Intro to Twitter” workshop for SaskFilm employees, which can also be made available upon request to other organizations, and gave a presentation on Digital Media Business opportunities at BarCamp 2010.</p>
<p><b>ACTION:</b> Share knowledge with emerging professionals by speaking to post-secondary students and advising on course content as requested</p>	<p><b>RESULTS:</b> The Digital Media Initiative has developed and delivered presentations to the University of Regina Media Production students and the University of Saskatchewan E-Map program regarding Digital Media content and the benefits of high level user-experiences.</p> <p>Visits were made to the U of R Computer Science and Fine Arts department open house events to engage with students working in interactive media. Discussions are in progress regarding similar engagement with the U of S campuses in 2011/2012.</p> <p>The DMI also arranged for 23 students from Saskatoon’s Media School to attend the SaskInteractive Summit presentation on 3D Technologies at a discounted rate, and arranged for a University of Regina student to intern with Toronto digital agency, Innovate by Day in the social media department for the locally filmed TV series “Insecurity”.</p> <p>The DMI consulted on the development and proposal of a cross-media degree program at the University of Regina (Creative Technologies) involving the departments of Computer Science, Theatre, Interactive Performance Media, Music and Media Production and Studies which hopes to begin offering classes in January 2012. The DMI also participates in regular program review meetings with SIAST.</p>

<p><b>ACTION:</b> Source funding and recruit interactive professionals to travel to Saskatchewan to provide professional development and networking opportunities for SMPIA members</p>	<p><b>RESULTS:</b> The Digital Media Initiative has delivered SR&amp;ED tax credit sessions in partnership with Meyers Norris Penny and SATA in Regina and Saskatoon with a total of 52 attendees from the IT, Interactive and Film/TV industries.</p> <p>In February SMPIA partnered with Zeroes to Heroes Media, the CMPA and the Bell Fund to deliver a half day session on Web series strategies in preparation for the IPF Web series funding deadline. The 26 attendees represented factual and fiction content creators from entry-level to senior professionals in both the interactive &amp; traditional media industries. 2 Saskatchewan applications were short-listed for IPF Funding and 1 was successful.</p> <p>The DMI also coordinated, sponsored and conducted a panel with the creators of the Multi-award winning multi-platform project “One Ocean” at the Yorkton Film Festival to a group of approximately 30 filmmakers.</p>
<p><b>ACTION:</b> Create opportunities for interactive and traditional content creators to network and do business together</p>	<p><b>RESULTS:</b> April 14<sup>th</sup> saw the return of Multi-PlatFORUM to Regina with a line-up of high profile guests and speakers and a reception to showcase some of Saskatchewan’s interactive creations. 87% of survey respondents agreed that the event was a good or excellent networking opportunity and met someone local that they did not know prior to the event.</p> <p>87% of survey respondents for the Web series workshop felt that it was a good networking opportunity. The SR&amp;ED presentations were also networking opportunities for members and other technological industry personnel.</p> <p>The Digital Media Initiative partnered with the SaskInteractive summit by coordinating programming, fund-raising and covering costs for a keynote speaker. The SaskInteractive Summit was attended by 96 professionals from</p>

	<p>the interactive and Film/TV industry as well as education and government.</p> <p>The Digital Media Initiative also participated as a sponsor and a speaker in Bar Camp Saskatoon in November 2010 and the social media/mobile conference Moso in June 2011.</p> <p>By attending and supporting these events, we increased awareness of SMPPIA and its members amongst the interactive community. The Film/TV community benefited through the addition of content that was relevant to our industry to the conference lineups, and thus saw value in participating.</p> <p>A list of Saskatchewan Interactive creators that are interested in being contacted regarding partnerships with the Film/TV industry has been developed and posted in SMPPIA's Digital Media Initiative website section.</p> <p>The DMI was also able to negotiate discounts for SMPPIA members to attend the following events: SaskInteractive Summit, nextMEDIA Toronto, Banff World Media Festival, GameON: Finance, Toronto Screen Writing Conference, Merging + Media and INPlay 2011.</p>
<p><b>ACTION:</b> Create and maintain a Digital Media Initiative section within SMPPIA's website that will include reports and other relevant digital media materials and resources</p>	<p><b>RESULTS:</b> A Digital Media Initiative section on SMPPIA's website has been developed that includes definitions, examples, resources, information on funding, business models, training, events &amp; deadlines and Saskatchewan interactive successes. A blog, Twitter and weekly newsletter messages keep members informed on the latest trends and examples in the Digital Content realm.</p>

**THE DIGITAL MEDIA INITIATIVE OBJECTIVES & ACTIONS TO DATE**

<b><u>OBJECTIVES:</u></b>	<b><u>ACTIONS/RESULTS</u></b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To provide access to digital product knowledge to further economic success</li> </ul>	<p>The DMI assisted Manitoba-based MidCan in promoting and coordinating a local 3D camera workshop and open house in Regina that was attended by 25 people. An event was scheduled for Saskatoon but was cancelled due to lack of interest.</p> <p>Digital product knowledge was also shared via Twitter and E-Buzz.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To provide access to innovative ideas and proven methods for digital products to promote commercial viability and increased saleability</li> </ul>	<p>The DMI provided the opportunity for one-on-one meetings with several agencies focused on these objectives as part of Multi-PlatFORUM including NRC/IRAP, Dept. Foreign Affairs, and the Saskatchewan Angel Investors Network. 20 members participated.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To create opportunities through special events for business partnerships, digital platform knowledge, funding access, networking and recruitment to increase commercial success</li> </ul>	<p>All events supported and held through the DMI met these objectives. Specifically, at least 2 local interactive media agencies reported that they found international partners – zu and Talking Dog Studios – through SMPIA’s Multi-PlatFORUM. Only 3% of exit survey responders reported they were not likely to do business as a direct result of the event.</p> <p>As a result of meeting one of our conference presenters, interactive agency zu was subsequently invited to have a booth and deliver a presentation at The Banff World Media Conference in June. This experience put them on display for hundreds of international delegates, and the DMI manager was able to introduce and connected them with potential business partners and investors from around the world, including the head of Digital</p>

	<p>Media for MIPCOM, the world’s largest content market. The DMI was also able to arrange for 2 members to receive complimentary passes to the Banff festival.</p> <p>In May, the DMI also organized meetings with 6 local interactive companies in both Regina and Saskatoon for Telefilm at their request. Telefilm is looking to understand the state of Digital Media in Saskatchewan so they can make informed funding decisions.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To provide access to successful business models that will assist current and new production companies with the integration of digital media into their business plan</li> </ul>	<p>The Web series workshop offered in February addressed business models and innovative financing techniques. 100% of survey respondents said they learned something they did not know about digital content, and 83% indicated that they would be applying to the IPF fund this year.</p> <p>Multi-PlatFORUM had a session specifically devoted to business models for Cross-Platform content and the DMI session at the Yorkton Film Festival was focused on “The Business of Delivering Multi-Platform Content. There is also a section on SMPiA’s website for this purpose.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To develop an online resource related to digital media for film and television producers</li> </ul>	<p>Resource available at:  <a href="http://www.smpia.sk.ca/digital-media-initiative.htm">http://www.smpia.sk.ca/digital-media-initiative.htm</a></p>

**THE DIGITAL MEDIA INITIATIVE OUTCOMES**

PROJECTED OUTCOMES	ACTUAL OUTCOMES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased local availability of information on:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Digital trends</li> <li>○ Digital products</li> <li>○ Digital business models</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>Local information is now available through SMPIA’s Digital Media Tools, personal consultation and through programming offering by the DMI.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Industry presentations and programming at existing Saskatchewan events</li> </ul>	<p>Programming was created for SMPIA’s AGM, the Yorkton Short Film Festival, BarCamp Saskatoon, MOSO and SaskInteractive’s Summit.</p>

**ADDITIONAL OUTCOMES:**

Saskatchewan now plays on the national digital media stage. Through our advocacy work, the DMI has been contacted to work with Merging+Media (BC), Interactive Ontario, OnScreen Manitoba, WIFT-T, the Bell Fund, the NFB, Spidvid (Toronto), 49pixels, Achilles Media, the Canadian Digital Media Network and the Canada Media Fund on various opportunities we were able to offer to our members. We have been cited as a digital media resource by sources like the Writers Guild of Canada, the Cultural Human Resources Council and DOC Canada. Multi-PlatFORUM 2011 got the attention of the country and the world by not only hosting an enviable line-up that drew inquiries from around the world, but also by using the unique marketing strategy of a mobile game to promote the conference. “Multi-PlatFORUM – The Game” saw Saskatchewan and Canadian logos viewed in 47 countries.

SMPIA has been established and recognized as a relevant player in the provincial digital community. The DMI program is often invited to work with SATA and SaskInteractive on proposals for the development, support and marketing of the Digital Industry in Saskatchewan. SMPIA is also regularly asked to consult on curriculum for digital based programs for high schools by the Ministry of Education, and at the post-secondary level by SIAST and the University of Regina. When the CHRC wished to get the Saskatchewan perspective for their digital strategy report, SaskFilm referred them to the DMI to provide it.

SMPIA’s DMI has become the go-to-place for Digital Media content creators in Saskatchewan. Interactive creators now contact SMPIA for advice, promotion and networking opportunities. The DMI resources are often shared amongst the digital community on Twitter & Facebook. Our interactive membership grew by 31 over the course of the program including several companies.

## THE DIGITAL MEDIA INITIATIVE MEASURES OF SUCCESS

MEASURES OF SUCCESS	RESULTS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Amount of information available on website including:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Links</li> <li>○ Resources</li> <li>○ Staff reports on events attended</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>The website is available at:  <a href="http://www.smpia.sk.ca/digital-media-initiative.htm">http://www.smpia.sk.ca/digital-media-initiative.htm</a></p> <p>It includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A list of digital media events and deadlines</li> <li>• Links to online resources</li> <li>• A list of training institutions and programs</li> <li>• A list of digital media funding sources with best practices for success when available</li> <li>• Digital Media terms and examples</li> <li>• A page highlighting digital media in Saskatchewan including a list of interactive companies that are interested in partnerships</li> <li>• A explanation of business models for digital content creation</li> <li>• A blog detailing trends and happenings in digital media, searchable by date or subject</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain or increase programming opportunities at SMPIA events</li> </ul>	<p>Programming for SMPIA’s AGM was made possible through the Digital Media Initiative.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Feedback from voluntary member surveys</li> </ul>	<p>Quotes from members included below.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Feedback from event evaluation forms</li> </ul>	<p>Event evaluation forms have been positive.</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Event attendance</li> </ul>	<p>With 141 registrants, SMPIA’s AGM conference was sold out and set a record for attendance at an AGM event.</p> <p>The Web series seminar offered in February also sold out with several extra seats being added to accommodate the 26 attendees.</p> <p>Attendance at all other supported activities met or exceed expectations.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Feedback from the Digital Media Initiative Manager</li> </ul>	<p>As provided in this report.</p>

**PERSONAL QUOTES FROM USERS OF THE DMI**

"The Bell Fund has been a proud sponsor of the Saskatchewan Motion Picture Industry Association Digital Media Initiative. Through the hard work of Nova Alberts and her team, Saskatchewan based producers are provided valuable insight with overviews, presentations and one-one contact with industry leaders from across the country."

- Howard Rosen, Bell Broadcast and New Media Fund

"I am a big supporter of the DMI created by SMPIA. The industry in Saskatchewan absolutely needs a point person or agency to guide producers and industry players along this new path. Other provinces have this and we would be at a definite disadvantage if this program was not available in Saskatchewan.

The convergence of internet, television, gaming and entertainment is where the world is going. We can either stand by the side and watch it go by or we can roll up our sleeves and jump in. In order to do that, we need the overall guidance, resources and cheerleading the DMI provides. I shudder to think what would happen if this service was not renewed, especially now as we seem to have gained a bit of traction."

- Mike MacNaughton, Twisted Pair Productions Ltd./Imagimedia Inc.

“After completing a course in iPhone development, the DMI was able to direct me to the areas of the industry that are looking for services I was now able to provide. Without the DMI, I may have found a path to these individuals, but now I am able to focus my new knowledge in a specific direction. I'm looking forward to the next year and the many new opportunities I have in front of me!”

- Steve Exner, U of R Computer Science student

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“Nova, you've done it again! You've managed to unearth one additional source of financing for the many tech developments we've continually been working on. How did we not know about this sooner! Thankfully it's valid for projects from the last 18 months.”

- David Cormican, Minds Eye Entertainment

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“As a new producer, the DMI has been an excellent resource. DMI Manager Nova Alberts has done an excellent job of being well informed about the evolving digital world and sharing this knowledge through a blog and through various seminars. Over the last year, I have learnt an enormous amount about tangible digital strategies that I can apply to my business from the DMI. Alberts has been available to answer my questions and she has gone out of her way to forward me and others opportunities that she thinks would benefit us. Digital media is now an important component that goes hand-in-hand with the television industry, particularly because of new CMF guidelines. As digital media grows, the DMI will continue to be an important resource to independent producers.”

- Kelly-Anne Riess, KAR Media

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"Thanks to you for sharing your time and knowledge with us...we all learned so much about the protocols and potential of Twitter and I, for one, am excited to put my newly gained knowledge to use."

- Shelley Fayant, SaskFilm

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“After attending several DMI events and one on one discussions, I was extremely pleased with the amount of information I was provided with that enabled me to understand AND pursue what the DMI has to offer.

Having said that, I think it is imperative that people understand the importance of this initiative and the value it provides through programming, personnel and other services. I think the DMI will continue to open doors for committed individuals such as myself who want to contribute and make a difference in this industry.”

– Dawn Bird, ACTRA/B.E.Z. Productions

“The future of filmmaking is digital and SMPIA's "Digital Media Initiative" addresses this crucial shift in the global TV and Film industry. As a TransMedia producer, I view this program as an essential component to building our province's capability to deliver in this environment: from training and development to networking and sales, SMPIA's efforts have provided a great base to preparing all of us for this emerging world of content creation.”

- Ryan Lockwood, Hulo Films

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“SMPIA’s Digital Media Initiative has been an extremely important and valuable resource for OH! Media through knowledge sharing and networking opportunities. For example, by participating in the DMI’s SR&ED workshop in November, 2010 OH! Media was introduced to the SR&ED program and was able to meet with the SR&ED IT specialist from Meyers Norris Penny. Since this introduction OH! Media is now accessing the program which is supporting the research and development of two exciting new projects from OH! Media. This support has allowed us to train new up-and-coming developers and continue to grow and succeed. We strongly support the renewal of SMPIA’s Digital Media Initiative as this has been an extremely effective and much needed program for Saskatchewan’s film, television, and interactive media industry.”

- Adam Holmes, OH! Media

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“SMPIA's Digital Media Initiative constantly drives the new media industry in Saskatchewan, increasing awareness and interest of the amazing creations our people are sharing with the world. For zu, continual updates about this interactive space are valuable, as are the events that connect us with partners and competitors. The SMPIA Multi-PlatFORUM April event drew major players, allowing us to stun some with the size of our staff (60) and caliber of our clients. Connecting with key players and sparking relationships at the event even delivered a new international opportunity for us. Thank you SMPIA, for your incessant drive to transform the digital media space in Saskatchewan - we look forward to charting the interactive path with your team in the future.”

- Stephanie Hughes, Strategic Marketing Executive, zu

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“Meeting with Nova Alberts and SMPIA in regards to my web series project in development was a great help. Nova was very open about past successes in this realm and was able to give a broad view of what will work and what won't based on her and the organization's experience. In some ways, these meetings were eye-opening, filled with unique creative ideas, and reassuring. It's a comfort to know that assistance and support is there when you are an emerging producer. That coupled with the workshops, seminars and open communication SMPIA offers, and it's clear that this organization is imperative to stimulating and continuing media production in the province.”

– Daniel Redenbach, Member of the Director’s Guild of Canada (DGC)

“SMPIA DMI, love what you are doing for Film and TV in Canada. We're based in Toronto and thrive on seeing initiatives like yours!”

– Spidvid Collaborative Video

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“SMPIA's DMI has been an invaluable resource for companies like mine, who do not have the cash flow yet to spend on promotion, but are doing leading edge work in the Interactive world. In our case we are choosing to focus very specifically on one area - Augmented Reality. DMI Manager Nova Alberts has worked tirelessly to help elevate awareness of the work Saskatchewan companies like mine are doing, and her understanding of the importance of social media to accomplish that goal has given her maximum bang for the buck! For SMPIA's Multi-PlatFORUM event, Talking Dog volunteered to create an Augmented Reality game tied to the conference. The game quickly vaulted to a large network of players in several dozen countries around the world, in no small part because of the excellent work Nova and the DMI had done to build excitement and anticipation prior to the event. This experience translated directly to some new contacts that we are currently in initial discussions with to develop new AR content. And speaking of using social media for inexpensive promotion, Talking Dog signed a major contract last week with the Mayo Clinic, who are asking for us to apply our expertise to create some new Augmented Reality kiosks that will help people to visualize the inner workings of their bodies. How did Talking Dog get this contract? Through the good name we've developed via the internet, so that a person at the Mayo Clinic doing a search for Augmented Reality companies finds Talking Dog near the top of their search results. We're sure that the good work the SMPIA DMI has been doing to promote our work contributed to that positive outcome, and we give the SMPIA DMI our full and unconditional support.”

- Rob Bryanton, Talking Dog Studios

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“The knowledge and expertise that us traditional producers can access from the DMI program and personnel is extremely valuable. It is extremely helpful to have this resource easily accessible. The DMI has been very helpful to us on gathering information on a few of our convergent projects. The MultiplatForum that was also organized by the DMI was completely rewarding for us and we came out of it with a lot of new information and understanding of how to incorporate the new digital media components into our more traditional way of producing. It would be a real blow to the advancements of our industry in Saskatchewan should the DMI be cut.”

- Holly Baird, Trilight Entertainment

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## **ACTIVITIES AND GOALS FOR THE COMING YEAR**

### **In Year Two, the Digital Media Initiative will:**

- Support interactive media and traditional media content creators in learning to work together in the creation of digital media content
- Offer opportunities for members to develop and improve the creative skills that are required to create compelling and award-winning interactive media content
- Support interactive media content creators in finding international partnership and business opportunities
- Support interactive media content creators in exhibiting their work to international audiences
- Increase awareness of digital media opportunities amongst traditional content workers
- Partner with SaskInteractive, SATA, Saskatchewan FilmPool and other relevant industry associations and organizations to encourage cross-sector collaboration to reach common goals
- Reach out to the other Creative Industry Sector Organizations who may benefit from the knowledge of the Digital Media Initiative by designing and supporting resources and events that are also relevant to them

### **It will also continue to:**

- Identify and exploit opportunities for Saskatchewan's Digital Content creators
- Increase awareness of digital media content opportunities and methods amongst the Saskatchewan interactive media community
- Create opportunities for interactive and traditional content creators to network and do business together
- Apply for funding and recruit interactive professionals to travel to Saskatchewan to provide professional development and networking opportunities for SMPIA members
- Travel to significant digital events to ensure that SMPIA continues to be educated about the latest advancements in policy, equipment, funding, platforms and strategies in the interactive space
- Research trends, opportunities, funding and programming options that are occurring in other jurisdictions across North America and explore their potential for implementation in Saskatchewan
- Share knowledge through briefings and one-on-one consultation with SMPIA's members who are not able to attend events
- Share knowledge with emerging professionals by speaking to post-secondary students and advising on course content as requested
- Maintain an updated Digital Media Initiative section within SMPIA's website that will include reports and other relevant digital media materials and resources

The administration of this program will continue to fall under the responsibilities of the Digital Media Initiative Manager. This professional will continue to be responsible to ensure that Saskatchewan content creators are being given the tools to be in step with the rest of Canada's digital industry and therefore succeed in the marketplace. The Manager will continue the three-step cycle of research, reporting back to the membership and obtaining feedback in order to repeat the process again to meet the industry's ongoing digital needs.

The Manager will continue to meet with representatives of stakeholder organizations, businesses, students and interactive creators to listen to their needs and recommendations regarding digital media creation in Saskatchewan. These meetings will result in identified needs, desired resources and additional support available for the industry that the Digital Media Initiative Manager can then use to design programming.

### **Objectives:**

- To encourage and support the creation of interactive digital media content in Saskatchewan
- To ensure that the digital content knowledge available locally is competitive with that of other provinces
- To nurture viable interactive partners for the Saskatchewan Film/TV industry
- To further economic success amongst Saskatchewan's digital content community
- To ensure that Saskatchewan has a presence in the national interactive community
- To support Saskatchewan's Film/TV industry in learning to develop, create, exhibit, distribute and exploit digital content
- To increase awareness of digital content opportunities amongst traditional content workers
- To provide programming and value to SMPPIA's membership

### **Outcomes:**

- Continued accessible, current and knowledgeable resource and authority on digital content creation in Saskatchewan
- Digital Media presentations and programming that are relevant to digital content creators continue to be provided at existing Saskatchewan events
- Continued awareness of Saskatchewan's interactive media community at the national level
- Maintenance or increased the number of interactive workers, projects and companies in Saskatchewan
- Saskatchewan's stories are being told to international audiences using digital tools

**Measures of Success:**

- Out-of-Province entities demonstrate continued interest in Saskatchewan digital media creators, such as financial investment in professional development and/or projects; and inquiries and/or offers for partnerships and involvement in national and interprovincial opportunities
- Saskatchewan Cross-Platform and Digital Content success stories
- Maintain or increase membership relevant to the interactive media industry
- Amount of information available on website including:
  - Links
  - Resources
  - Staff reports on events attended
- Maintain or increase programming opportunities at SMPIA events
- Feedback from voluntary member surveys
- Feedback from event evaluation forms
- Event attendance
- Feedback from the Digital Media Initiative Manager

**Deliverables:**

- Written report
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## **TIMELINES & LOOKING FORWARD**

As identified at the implementation of the program, this initiative requires a minimum of two years commitment in order to see measurable growth in the volume of digital content production in the province. This is partly due to the nature of product development and funding cycles in addition to the work of the DMI program.

The first year of the DMI was focused on education, recruitment and building excitement and awareness of opportunities and models.

Year Two will focus on supporting creators in their project development and creation as they learn new skills and pursue funding and markets for their content. Many provinces have seen failure at this level as creators from the different sectors encounter language, cultural and business barriers. The DMI will aim to set our creators up for success by anticipating and addressing these challenges.

It's important to note that Year Two will also see the launch of the Creative Technologies degree program at the University of Regina and the further development of proposals and partnerships for Saskatchewan's interactive media creators that were begun in Year One.

By Year Three, we will have industry members creating and the next generation of students being taught to create, and thus our industry will be better prepared to take on service production work from outside the province. This is an important step towards global export and appreciation of Saskatchewan content and the work in the first years of the DMI program will prepare our industry and the initiative for this. In future years, the DMI program can serve as a source of support, connections and expertise for Digital Media creators to ensure the industry continues to grow.

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