

## **Outlook on distribution in the United Kingdom**

---

*By Edward Fletcher, Soda Pictures*

Great-Britain shares the English language with the USA. The release of films in another language than English is therefore very difficult.

The first 5 distributors represent 80% of the market, followed by the big Anglo-American co-productions. Then, 50 small distributors (Artificial Eyes, Soda Pictures) share about 3% of the market... Furthermore, Americans have more and more interests in the British companies: Rebdus is now American, Optimum was bought, Momentum has merged with a Canadian company, Tartan has some implantations in the US.

A dozen of those small distributors release about 10-15 films a year.

There is no vertical between distributors and exhibitors. Exhibitors have the power (namely because of the large horizontal concentration), the renting rate is 25%, which is the lowest in Europe.

In 2005, 450 films have been released, i.e. an average of 12 each week. But people go less and less to the cinema. There are very good systems of DVD location (you order a DVD, it is sent by post and you send it back when you have seen it), and the arrival of DVD will not reverse the trend.

Promotion is extremely expensive.

### **Role of the UK Film Council**

The UK Film Council helps the films that are « specialized » - in England, you are either specialized or « blockbuster » - thanks to a subsidy that covers P&A costs, it is a loan reimbursable, based on the profits. But the problem is that even a film like "Match Point" is considered as a specialized film, which lets very few space and money for the smallest distributors.

The UK Film Council also allowed the creation of a network of 200 theatres equipped in digital, thanks to the Arts Film Alliance.