

## INSIGHTS > Films and Business Strategies

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# Films and Business Strategies

At the beginning of the year around the same period, the main European film agencies are analysing the results of the cinema attendances in their own country and abroad. Better or worse than the year before, the results of these analysis reflect the latest trend and tendencies of the cinema market – a market always on the move. So what is at the horizon of the cinema for 2007? It may well be the Year of the “Construction site” as the latest film marketing strategy!

“Here is the all family represented!” The remark came from a French film teacher who was leading his students among the Villages of *Le Salon du Cinema* - a three days film fiesta which aimed to be a gathering of the cinema world and its audiences. Nearly sixty exhibitors from film school and associations to film distributors have been expected to fill a space not yet taken on the market. *"Cinema has its festivals, premieres, and award shows. Meanwhile, there are Salons and Exhibitions in almost every field; from cars and chocolates, to plants and bathrooms. Surprisingly, however, there has never been a Salon du Cinéma".*

Is such an event necessary in a country that has already a long tradition in deploying massive promotion means for its films? Yes – according to the organizers whose second argument comes from recent figures showing that The Salon du Cinéma is responding to public demand. A survey made on 800 people revealed the following: 90 % of people surveyed would be interested in seeing the shooting of a film, 85 % want to see the makings of an animated film, and 70+% want to meet producers, directors and actors.

(\*)

With these figures in mind, it is possible to see the coming construction site project of “*La Cite du Cinema*” - the [EUROPA CORP](#) boss Luc Besson’s last idea for Paris Saint Denis; as another attempt to bring the audience closer to the workshops where the films are made. In a way, it would compensate in France the lack of such “studio-city” similar to the Cinecitta in Italy, UFA - Babelsberg studio in Germany, or the Barrandov studio in the Czech Republic. In Paris, the original idea of having an attraction park next to the real studio (as in the UFA – Babelsberg) seems to have been vanished from the current plans.

Park or no park, the project “*La Cite du Cinema*” is already approved by the Mairie of Saint Denis, and the expectation on the return are high! “*Un Veritable Hollywood-Sur-Seine*” reports the Official website of the Maire of Saint-Denis in its Economy section. The positive repercussions for Saint-Denis are described to be multiple: jobs, tourism, valorisation of the territory, improvement of the transportation infrastructures, and a new dynamism for the district. “*It seems that the project has already contributed to a rise in the neighbourhood’s attractiveness*” says Nicolas Pierrot, a Cultural Patrimony expert for the Ile de France region. The district sees the building of an unexpected number of apartments, office buildings and hotels.

Some may find a coincidence between the reality of the construction of “*La Cite du Cinema*” on the ground of Saint-Denis and the subject of Luc Besson last movie “*ARTHUR AND THE MINIMOYS*”- an animated film, which story goes about a real estate expected danger. The Happy Ending being the rule for this film format; a hidden treasure will prevent Arthur Grandma’s home from being demolished. The “hidden treasure” that represents Besson’s project is analyzed in the film and the construction sectors with a similar unrecorded attention. The film has already made a tremendous success after its release in France in December 2006, the spotlight is now on China where “*ARTHUR AND THE MINIMOYS*”- became the first European film to be screened in China in 2007.

**IN AND OUT - NOTHING GUARANTEE!**

Reading the global of the year results for films on the national and on the international markets provides also with some rare opportunity to know more about the film distribution strategies. These numbers, just as for the Arthur's movie – are hidden treasure during the rest of the year.

In the case of “*ARTHUR*” promotional strategies, information is starting to be made available on the net of BNP PARIPAS - the official partner of Luc BESSON world event. There is now an interview of Luc Besson and Antoine Sire, the Communication Director of [BNP Paribas](#) – to be listen on the film official website, and a lot more reading is expected concerning the promotional aspects of the film.

From a Salon to a City; the solutions to boost the film sectors can take various forms. In terms of marketing strategies there are in fact no other alternatives than to integrate always-renewed concepts. The fast-transforming environment, in which the audience lives, obliges to anticipate the public expectations.

Facts and figures from the film industry are the prime elements, which allow drawing some strategies. In an interview published by the French newspaper Liberation Margaret Menegoz, the president of [UNIFRANCE](#) comments on European films results and on the strategies of the French Union to increase the sales of French films in Europe and in Asia.

How about 2006 for French film? They made better home than outside. This may sound strange but it is not so obvious for France (a country of 63, 4 million inhabitants on January 1, 2007) to make better inside than outside the country. In 2005 French films presented abroad made 56.000.000 entrances, this was better than the result for French films seen in France in 2005!

For the tendencies also Margaret presented a series of more and less unexpected pictures. In terms of success, the period during which French films were mostly represented by comedy outside of the country is over – for good. French comedy ambassador Louis de Funes has to leaves his seat to author filmmakers. This seems to be a European tendency where the

audience is no longer coming for a star but for a story, the French daily reports.

In Asia, UNIFRANCE strategy for 2006 varied in Japan and in China. In Japan, the French association strategy was to relocate the French Film Festival from Yokohama - where it run during thirteen years, to Tokyo and Osaka. This measure had to be taken to react to a tragic drop in the film attendance during the last two years (from 3.000.000 to 1.500.000).

In China, a pushing strategy was needed. UNIFRANCE organized the « PANORAMA DU CINEMA FRANCAIS » in three major Chinese cities. The operation eventually contributed to the sale of ten films. French films made 3.000.000 entries, which “*considering the strict import quota that Beijing applies also on film*” is, a success, Margaret Menegoz said.

What about the French cinema horizon for 2007?

Excellent results are expected for Arthur and the Minimoys in China where the movie was released on January the 19<sup>th</sup> 2007, with the presence of Luc Besson. The French director and producer came to China with 200 copies of the film – a number never reached by any French movie before in China.

The success of the film will probably have a strong influence on “*La Cite du Cinema*” construction site future developments. Looking at the results already made by the film in and out of France, the Mayor of Saint-Denis has all the reason to rejoice.

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(\*) CRMMetrix July 2006

**Luc Besson to Shanghaidaily January the 20th 2007**

"Chinese and French filmmakers must be careful to protect ourselves, be ourselves and keep telling our own stories in the way we want."

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**Arthur and the Minimoys Official website**

**Cinema Cite in Saint-Denis**

**The Speech of the French Ambassador in China** for the opening of "Panorama du Cinema francais"

**Sample of survey figures from the Gaumont Virtual Museum** (Survey from Decembre 1947 on 800 people) – in French.

The box office results, the facts and figures, and professional comments on numbers can generally be found in business newspaper, film magazines and on the website of the government agencies and national film commissions. In Europe, many of the Mediadesk websites can be also visited for information on the distribution of national films.

*By Gyora Gal Glupczynski*

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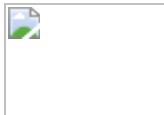
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