



MPA

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JAPANESE FILM INDUSTRY GENERATED USD 125.8 BILLION IN 2018

But experts say piracy will threaten jobs and stifle innovation if not countered by site blocking

TOKYO/SINGAPORE – The film and television industry generated a total economic contribution of USD 125.8 billion (13,705.2 billion Yen)¹ in 2018, an estimated 21% growth compared to a similar report researched in 2014, according to new research by Mitsubishi Research Institute (MRI). Released on October 30 during the MPA Seminar at the Tokyo International Film Festival, the report found that the industry also supported a total of 520,839 jobs, and a total tax contribution of USD 12.55 billion (1,366.9 billion Yen). The total value added contribution of the sector accounts for 1.25% of Japan’s total GDP.

Copyright academics and film industry executives speaking at the Seminar warned that piracy remained a significant threat to the jobs and the wellbeing of the industry. In a study released during the Seminar by Photonic System Solutions (PSS), entitled *Study Benchmarking and Tracking Online Film & TV Piracy in Japan*, it was found that in March 2018 there were 640 million monthly visits to 624 piracy sites in Japan, and that today, there are still more than 300 million monthly visits. It was also found that users today are infringing copyright at a rate of 40 million hours every month, and the time spent per user is increasing.

Experts attending the event agreed that site blocking would be the most effective measure for reducing piracy in Japan.

Reflecting on the scale of the piracy data, Michael Schlesinger, Vice President & Regional Legal Counsel, Asia Pacific, MPA, said, “Copyright infringement harms creators and the Japanese economy. Today’s piracy study presents a sobering reminder that a flourishing creative ecosystem cannot be taken for

¹ Currency rate: 1 JPY = 0.0091793 (2018 yearly average, calculated by getting the average of the average monthly rates over 2018)
OFX <https://www.ofx.com/en-sg/forex-news/historical-exchange-rates/>

granted and must be nurtured and protected. Site blocking has proven to be a necessary tool in the toolbox to reduce infringement and increase adoption of legal services.”

Addressing the doubts that the implementation of site blocking legislation may negatively impact on privacy of communication concerns, special guest speaker Dr. José Antonio Sanmartin, Attorney-At Law, Founding member and Partner, the Madrid office of Hoyng Rokh Monegier, argued that according to European practice, the rightful, efficient and adequate defence of copyright does not imply, at all, that freedom of expression or secrecy of communications are to be considered relegated, defeated or overtaken: “Quite to the contrary. As the experience of the European Union in general, and the experience of Spain in particular have proved, having an efficient system of protection of the rights of creators is perfectly compatible with an absolute respect of the mentioned rights of freedom of expression and secrecy of communications.”

Emphasizing that site blocking is the most effective remedy against copyright infringement and that its introduction to Japan should be seriously considered, Izumi Hayashi, Attorney-At Law, partner, Sakurazaka Law Offices, and a member of the Intellectual Property Strategy Headquarters, Cabinet Office, said, “Creators are being robbed of their legitimate returns from their creation by online piracy. Under the existing legal system, it is almost impossible to identify pirate operators, take enforcement actions against them, and provide viable relief to content creators.”

Other contributors to the Seminar included, Hiroyasu Ando, Chairman, Tokyo International Film Festival (TIFF); Akira Amari, Member of the House of Representatives, Chairman, Intellectual Property Strategy Research, Committee, Liberal Democratic Party; Hiroki Mitsumata, Secretary-General, Secretariat of Intellectual Property Strategy Headquarters, the Cabinet Office; Shintaro Ito, member of the House of Representatives, Secretary General, The League of Diet Members for Promotion of Culture and Arts; co-organizers and partners UNIJAPAN; Nicholas M. Hill, Acting Deputy Chief of Mission, Embassy of the United States of America; Tomohiro Tohyama, Attorney-At Law, Partner, TMI Associates and Michael C. Ellis, President and Managing Director, Asia Pacific Region, MPA.

On October 23, the MPA hosted Jon Kuyper (*Mad Max: Fury Road*; *The Great Gatsby*; *The Hobbit*; *The Last Face*) to give a Masterclass on tailoring your film to a specific budget at the MPA film workshop, in partnership with the Tokyo Film Market (TIFFCOM) and Digital Hollywood University (DHU). Jon Kuyper was joined by Japanese filmmakers to judge a feature film pitch competition. Five finalists from fifty entries battled it out for a first prize visit to Los Angeles to take part in a Global Film & Television Immersion Course (won by Satsuki Okawa for *The Desk Jockey Detective and the Seven Slayings*), and runner up prize visit to Brisbane, Australia to attend the Asia Pacific Screen Awards (won by Jon Hill for *The River at Night*). This is the sixth such film workshop hosted by the MPA during the Tokyo International Film Festival.

During TIFF, the MPA will sponsor the Contemporary American Film Showcase screenings at the National Film Archive of Japan.

Access photos of the MPA Seminar [here](#) and the MPA-TIFFCOM-DHU Film Workshop [here](#).

View and download the Mitsubishi Research Institute *Economic Contribution of the Film & Television Industry in Japan* [here](#).

View and download the Photonic System Solutions *Study Benchmarking and Tracking Online Film & TV Piracy in Japan* [here](#).

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Promoting & Protecting Screen Communities in Asia Pacific

The Motion Picture Association (MPA) Asia Pacific represents the interests of the six international producers and distributors of filmed entertainment. To do so, they promote and protect the intellectual property rights of these companies and conduct public awareness programs to highlight to movie fans around the world the importance of content protection. These activities have helped to transform entire markets benefiting film and television industries in each country including foreign and local filmmakers alike.

The organization act on behalf of the members of the Motion Picture Association, Inc (MPA) which include: Walt Disney Studios Motion Pictures, Netflix Studios, LLC, Paramount Pictures Corporation, Sony Pictures Entertainment Inc., Universal City Studios LLC, and Warner Bros. Entertainment Inc. The MPA has worldwide operations which are directed from their head offices in Los Angeles and Washington, D.C. and overseen in the Asia Pacific by a team based in Singapore. For more information about MPA Asia Pacific, please visit www.mpa-apac.org and <https://www.facebook.com/mpaasiapacific/>.

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