

Innovation and the Big Screen



UNION INTERNATIONALE DES CINÉMAS
INTERNATIONAL UNION OF CINEMAS

Welcome to this,

our latest report exploring innovation and change in European cinemas.

Phil Clapp

**CEO of the UK Cinema Association
and President of the International
Union of Cinemas**

UNIC, the Union Internationale des Cinémas/International Union of Cinemas, is the European grouping of cinema trade associations and key operators, covering 39 territories. We promote the social, cultural and economic benefits of a vibrant cinema-going culture and seek to provide an influential voice for cinemas on issues of shared interest.

Following the recent challenges experienced by our sector, the recovery of European cinema-going is now well advanced, driven in large part by continuing efforts to make the Big Screen experience ever more engaging, diverse and immersive.

Key to this, remains investment in innovation by cinema operators and their partners. This report explores how the sector continues to embrace new technologies and drive, navigate new consumer trends.

As our partners across the value chain and national governments consider the future of our industry, we hope that this report helps further position cinema operators at the centre of their growth strategies.

Enjoy the read!



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What's new in European cinemas?

A Journey Through Innovation in European Cinemas

Cinema-going in Europe has become an ever more engaging, diverse and immersive experience thanks to creative entrepreneurship and ongoing investments in innovation by cinema operators and their business partners – even in challenging times.

European cinema operators stand tall as global leaders, setting the pace with cutting-edge technologies and creative solutions both within and beyond the screening room. This commitment has also played a pivotal role in bolstering box office results and fuelling the industry's recovery after a global pandemic.

In 2023, the 39 territories represented by UNIC witnessed a remarkable 25% increase in box office revenue, soaring to an impressive 7.2 billion. This success story is a testament to the visionary investments made by European cinemas – while navigating the challenges of rising operational costs and inflation – marking a trajectory of growth and resilience.

The digital revolution, a milestone pioneered by European cinemas, saw an investment exceeding €1.5 billion in the transition to digital projection. This monumental shift not only transformed the cinematic landscape, but also laid the foundation for subsequent innovations. Today, the industry boasts premium cinematic experiences, streamlined operations, and sophisticated audience engagement strategies, to name just a few examples.

As the world grapples with the imperative of sustainability, European cinema operators have also embraced a new approach. Investments in greening initiatives, coupled with a focus on diversity and inclusion, reflect the industry's commitment to responsible growth. Acknowledging the significance of these endeavours, EU, national, and local support remain instrumental in driving positive change in the sector.

European cinemas are where the cinematic experience evolves into an immersive journey like never before.

European cinemas – regardless of size or location – are where tradition meets the future, and the cinematic experience evolves into an immersive journey like never before, as you will discover in this brochure.

In a world where people are spoilt for choice when it comes to watching films and enjoying out-of-home activities, cinemas need to constantly think about the best way to get audiences in. Strategies for staying competitive in an ever-changing market are vital to the industry's future success, and the sector must remain responsive to emerging trends and shifts in consumer behaviours.

How can cinemas be more accessible and inclusive? How do cinemas engage with audiences through social media and digital marketing? How do they understand audiences' preferences and behaviours?

Innovation in audience engagement

Accessibility

Cinemas are becoming increasingly inclusive and engaged in diversifying their programming and services to cater to all audiences, regardless of their cultural, educational, social or ethnic background. In this regard, accessibility and inclusion is a key work stream - which includes the built environment and facilities, accessibility of communications and through different senses, as well as economic and social accessibility.

Digital film distribution has increased the opportunities for viewers to enjoy films in a cinema, regardless of their individual characteristics. This requires developing new operating models, cooperating with disability organisations and taking audiences' specific needs into account.

Supporting initiatives that encourage diverse cinema attendance, such as technologies fostering accessibility for audiences with physical and sensory disabilities, like

deaf/hard of hearing or blind/visually impaired, is for example crucial. According to the British start-up Built for Good Technology, 9 to 12 million British people are deaf, deafened or hard of hearing – almost 20% of the adult population. In the EU, this group is estimated at over 50 million. The prevalence of disabilities rises with age and European demographics are shifting towards an increasingly older population. Services that promote the accessibility of film screenings include, for example, subtitling and audio-description. Subtitling for deaf, deafened or hard of hearing people can be open captions on screen, visible to all viewers, which not only display dialogue, but also text describing sounds, sound effects, speaker identification, music, and other auditory information not conveyed in speech. Alternatively, there is also a growing number of personal devices on the market providing closed captions through a mobile app or smart glasses. Similarly, for blind or visually impaired audiences, audio-description is available and designed to enjoy a film through the use of headphones or a mobile app, with a narration of the film which describes the visual elements of the scenes on screen. A growing number of cinemas are also offering autism-friendly and dementia-friendly screenings.



Autism-friendly screenings,
Glasgow Film Theatre,
United Kingdom.

Odeon Cinemas Group is Europe’s largest cinema operator, with leading brands in the UK, Ireland, Spain, Italy, Sweden, Finland, with a strong presence in Norway, Germany and Portugal, counting 278 cinemas and 2,500 screens overall. In the UK and Ireland, they have developed an umbrella inclusion programme “Open for all” to allow guests and communities to find content suitable for them. The accessibility strand of this programme also includes autism-friendly and dementia-friendly screenings. As part of their regular programming, Odeon Cinemas also include screenings with audio-description and open captions in order to make accessibility a standard practice. In recent years, Odeon’s accessibility film programming has been streamlined to ensure that all guests can access the big blockbusters at peak times.

Glasgow Film Theatre, a Scottish independent and community-driven cinema built almost one century ago, is strongly focused on accessibility. Its Access Film Club includes autism-friendly screenings, with introduction and post-film chat led by an autistic host who can offer information and volunteers with autism-awareness training on hand to answer any questions. The initiative, organised together with National Autistic Society Scotland, also includes a quiet room available for anyone who wants to take time out of the screening for any reason, a calm kit and a glow stick if visitors need assistance from the usher.

The Spanish circuit **Odeon Multicines** with 15 sites across the country, holds special screenings for visitors with autism. In these shows, the volume is lowered, the lights in the auditorium are dimmed and there is no pre-show, with the films starting at the scheduled time. Odeon Multicines has noticed that these measures considerably lower the stress level of people with this condition, a stress that cinema cause.


In the Czech Republic, **“Kino pro každého”** (Cinema for Everyone) started in 2017 with the support of the Czech Film Fund. Independent cinemas such as Bio Central in Hradec Králové, Kino Hvězda in Uherské Hradiště and Oko in Šumperk invested in closed captions devices and wireless audio-description for some screenings of Czech films. This project meant equipping the DCPs of subsidised Czech films with subtitles for hearing-impaired viewers and an audio-description track for visually impaired viewers.

Open for All,
Odeon Cinemas Group,
United Kingdom.


Picturehouse Cinemas, Cineworld’s arthouse branch in the UK, boasting 29 cosy and arty venues with a total of 86 screens, were the first UK cinema group to introduce autism-friendly and dementia-friendly screenings. In addition, the group commits to hold regular captioned sessions each week for audiences with hearing loss and audio-description screenings across their sites for audiences with visual impairments. Dementia-friendly and autism-friendly screenings offer a relaxed option to enjoy the Big Screen in a safe, comfortable environment. Adaptations for these screenings include lower volume levels, lighting left on low, the removal of adverts and trailers, increased signage around the building, and additional staff training to ensure their confidence in providing customer service to audiences with additional needs.

9 to 12 million British people are deaf, deafened or hard of hearing. In the EU this group is estimated to include 50 million citizens.


ODEON
[NEWBIES]




ODEON
[KIDS]



ODEON
[DIVERSE CINEMA]




ODEON
[SILVERS]



ODEON
[SPOTLIGHT]



ODEON
[EVENT CINEMA]



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WE MAKE MOVIES BETTER

The prevalence of disabilities rises with age and European demographics are shifting towards an increasingly older population. Services that promote the accessibility of film screenings include subtitling and audio-description.



Cinema Without Barriers is a Polish inclusion and accessibility project initiated in 2022 by Zamek Cultural Centre in Poznań, thanks to the financial support of PFRON and continued within Europa Cinemas' Collaborate to Innovate scheme. Cinema Without Barriers is a project consisting of a series of regular screenings for visually and hearing-impaired audiences two days a week in cinemas in Poznań, Wrocław and Jarocin. The project is looking to expand further in Poland and also internationally in Slovakia, Slovenia, Hungary and Romania from 2024.

The accessibility side also includes the economic side, with cinema tickets at 5 PLN, the equivalent of €1. Once a month a particular film becomes the keynote of a Meeting Without Barriers, during which an expert discusses an issue related to human rights, sustainable development and democratic values. In February 2024, the first Forum Without Barriers took place at Zamek Culture Centre over three days, an event intended for the cinema industry, discussing issues of accessibility and social inclusion.

The Irish Film Institute, Ireland's national film institute offering independent cinema and organising various film education programmes, festivals and retrospectives, launched an accessible cinema pilot project in 2018, to explore the viability of making arthouse cinema accessible to audiences who are blind/vision impaired or deaf/hard of hearing. Following an access audit, technology upgrades, some focus group meetings, research and test events, the IFI started the regular accessible programme which offers audio-description through headsets to audiences with viewing disabilities and open-captioned screenings to audiences with hearing disabilities. Targeting and promoting directly to relevant interest groups and supporting agencies served to spread the word, as well as helping the IFI develop their audience for accessible cinema. A Collaborate to Innovate support from Europa Cinemas assisted cinemas in embedding the programme further in their regular cinema offering. The Irish Film Institute has also introduced open-captioned screenings in their monthly film programme for senior audiences, which was welcomed.

Although accessibility initiatives are spreading across European cinemas, devices offering closed captions or audio-description are still a fairly niche and costly technology and cinemas would welcome public support to invest and have dedicated staff to accompany dementia-friendly or autism-friendly screenings.

Dementia-friendly screenings,
Picturehouse Cinemas,
United Kingdom.

A number of companies across Europe provide solutions with personal devices, mobile apps, side screens or smart glasses delivering closed captions or audio-description.

Among those, Sonoristicks mobile app is a French/Belgian project aiming at providing written or audio subtitles, audio-description and dubbing versions for 3 films per week (to be further extended) for disabled or non-native audiences. This technology targets both visually and hearing-impaired audiences and language minorities or expats not speaking the local language. The mobile app can be complemented by smart glasses or headsets, according to the audience's needs.

The smart glasses project "Watchword Closed Captions" was developed by Built for Good Technology in 2023, thanks to the support of the UK Cinema Association. Glasses show captions in augmented reality and synchronised with the film, which can be displayed in any language. Settings can be modified through a connected remote to change the position, size and colour of the captions. The pilot project was launched in the UK at the beginning of 2024 and intends to expand in Europe in the medium-term.

Greta is a mobile app launched by the German technology-based social business Greta & Starks that enables people with sight or hearing loss to experience fully accessible cinema. It also includes foreign language subtitles and audio versions for an international audience. As of today, more than 400 films are fully accessible with Greta app, which plays the existing audio-descriptions for sight-impaired audiences or subtitles for hard of hearing individuals at any time, place, or screening – in indoor and outdoor cinemas, at home or at school.

Inclusion & Diversity

A growing number of operators are committed to serving the fullest diversity of the community, with investment in access, awareness and participation of underprivileged people, social and community initiatives to widen the demographic and social make-up of audiences.

The initiative of “Ticket suspendu” started in France a few years ago and has since been replicated around Europe, with visitors invited to buy an extra cinema ticket upfront from the cashier, which will be given to someone who cannot afford it.

Glasgow Film Club, organised by **Glasgow Film Theatre**, is a safe place for audience to socialise and explore films, in a welcoming and casual environment, open to anyone for free to chat about films with no need to register. The programme is combined with a sliding scale scheme, where people of varying incomes decide to pay what they can for a newly released film, from £0, £2, £4, £6, £8, £10.

Queen’s Film Theatre in Belfast, Northern Ireland’s leading independent cinema, embarked on a 3-year research and development project targeted around diversity and inclusion. In this project, QFT is focusing on developing ethnically diverse audiences and audiences on lower incomes. The first period of benchmarking is currently coming to a close, with preliminary results showing audience attendance for films with ethnically diverse and working-class stories and audience profiles based on ACORN demographic segmentation. Over the next two and half years, QFT will test initiatives around price, programming, partnerships, and marketing and use the research to measure their

effects to produce a well-rounded approach to audience development. Although most interventions will be devised according to the results of the research and focus groups, one of the first initiatives will be the collaboration with the local food bank, to offer complimentary tickets and popcorn. Another strategy would consist in encouraging existing customers to try out more diverse cinema, by highlighting those titles well in advance and improving the awareness of them with a dedicated promotion.

“Diverse Cinema” is a programme developed by **Odeon UK & Ireland** aimed at celebrating the power of diverse film making and storytelling on the Big Screen. “Diverse Cinema” includes a programme dedicated to showcasing Black filmmaking talent with added content, like Q&As, to help stimulate a conversation. The programme is always active and not just for Black History month, although that gives an added focus. Odeon UKI also partners with collectives to ensure to showcase diverse cinema during other key celebrations such as Pride.

Diverse cinema screening with Dark Matter, Picture-house Cinemas, United Kingdom.



reDISCOVER

GIRRRRL!
BLACK SISTERHOOD
ON SCREEN

Picture
house

dark
matter

Cinemas are often the initiators of inclusion-driven initiatives even beyond their walls, with screenings organised in hospitals, in prisons or in reception and identification centres for migrants and refugees.

Similarly, **Picturehouse** developed a tailored programme on diverse cinema as part of their inclusion approach. When cinemas closed in 2020, Picturehouse took the opportunity to analyse existing audiences and programmes to begin a process of examining how they could help make the industry more diverse, inclusive and representative. On reopening, Picturehouse made a specific commitment to reach and retain Black audiences, increase representation on screen, and celebrate Black filmmaking talent. Working closely with Dark Matter, a collaborative marketing agency focused on connecting with Black audiences on this activity, Picturehouse looked at how they could achieve this. After nearly three years of work, they have delivered a wide range of activities, including retrospectives of iconic Black talents with panel discussions, in-cinema events to amplify new releases within the Black community, and short film nights giving a platform to emerging Black filmmakers – all with the aim of bringing different corners of the Black community together in order to celebrate cinema.

Transmit Cinema is a project launched by four French independent cinemas and supported by Europa Cinemas’ scheme Collaborate to Innovate, which aims to raise awareness and train professionals from the socio-cultural world in arthouse cinema, so that they can take ownership and bring groups of visitors to discover these films in cinemas. Transmit Cinema wishes to propose training courses on cinema to professionals of local organisations, cultural mediators and social workers. The training is developed by professionals working in the field of popular culture and popular education based on the realities of each one in terms of cinematographic knowledge, while questioning the vision of each group in order to change mental boundaries and allow access to European arthouse films.

Cinemas in Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Romania and the Baltics have also proven their sense of community and inclusion by organising a large number of actions to support Ukrainian citizens fleeing from the war. In the first months of the invasion, cinemas in neighbouring countries offered shelter to Ukrainian refugees, collected donations and sent supply buses to Ukraine. Special film cycles focused on Ukrainian cinematography were programmed all across Europe, to show support to the Ukrainian film industry and to offer Ukrainian refugees a cinematic experience in their native language. For example, in the Czech Republic the Integration Centre Prague and the Czech distributor Aerofilm organised several screenings of Ukrainian films across the country in 2022. In Poland, films with dubbing or subtitles in Ukrainian are still held in the regular repertoire of **Helios Cinemas**, the largest Polish cinema chain in the country with 54 sites and 304 screens. Indeed, 39% of the total tickets sold for *Barbie* at Helios Warsaw Blue City were registered for screenings in Ukrainian version. Also, **Multikino**, Vue’s Polish branch, continues to host Ukrainian dubbed screenings since the war broke out, providing free entries for Ukrainian refugee children and their guardians.

Last but not least, cinemas are often the initiators of inclusion-driven initiatives even beyond their walls, with screenings organised in hospitals, in prisons or in reception and identification centres for migrants and refugees. For example, six independent cinemas in Greece launched the initiative “**Hope on the Big Screen**”, which consists of 20 screenings in 20 different centres and accommodation facilities located in the mainland hosting refugees, stateless individuals and asylum-seekers. The Italian independent arthouse group **Anteo Spaziocinema** organised a cycle of screenings with following debates in San Vittore prison in Milan, with the goal – besides entertainment and recreation – to propose a cultural pathway and give the inmates the opportunity to express the emotions aroused by watching the films.

Barbie screening in Ukrainian, Helios Cinemas, Poland.



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на фільм в україномовній версії!

„Барбі”

Не пропустіть сеанс та придбайте
квитки вже сьогодні!

Ваше місто, ваше кіно
перевірити репертуар: www.helios.pl/seans_ua

Innovative social media strategies



Creative social media presence, Cinema Victoria, Italy.

Cinemas have developed innovative ways to reach and attract current and new audiences to their venues, especially in the digital world. The online presence of exhibition companies and cinema groups doesn't only intend to promote their programming and activities, but also highlights their brand, their values and the experience they offer to visitors.

Social media has been used by cinemas for their marketing activities for more than a decade, but the content, tone and format used on these platforms are constantly evolving. Cinemas are using social media to build online communities, showcase their venue to a broader audience, engage with film fans and leverage buzz around new releases.

User-generated content is an increasingly strong marketing segment – people trust the opinions and thoughts of their friends, peers and popular figures. UGC is content created by a user, who is usually an existing fan and customer of the brand/company, which is then handed over to the brand to distribute on their channels. Influencer marketing, on the other hand, involves a brand partnering with an influencer to create content that they will post on their own platforms to their existing followers as a means of leveraging that following, and being introduced to new audiences. According to DX report “**Film Forward**”, the influencer marketing industry had an estimated growth of approximately \$21.1 billion in 2023.

In 2022, **Cineworld**, the second largest cinema chain in Europe with over 230 cinemas across UK, Poland, Romania, Hungary, the Czech Republic, Bulgaria and Slovakia, partnered with TikTok to raise awareness of their 4DX extreme cinema experience. Over 100 influencers were invited to the first ever “Creator Day”, an exclusive event where TikTok content creators were given a demonstration of 4DX during which they were encouraged to film their experience for their followers. The content from the event went viral, generating over 52 million views on TikTok and over 8 million engagements. In 2023, Cineworld's Creator Day returned and this time over 250 influencers experienced ScreenX as well as 4DX. Creators filmed both formats in action and shared content to their channels that garnered over 10.8 million impressions and raised awareness to a brand new younger audience.

Cinemax, the leading cinema operator in Slovakia with branches in Romania and Czech Republic, has recently embarked on a journey to redefine audience engagement. At the heart of this innovation is the integration

TikTok campaign,
Cineplex, Germany.

of local influencers into each branch's promotional activities. Cinemax has strategically appointed influencers in each locality where it operates according to their specific demographic nuances, ensuring a personalised and authentic connection with the community. These influencers serve as cultural connectors, bridging the gap between the cinema and its audience. Their local influence, credibility, and deep-rooted connections enable Cinemax to attract a diverse range of cinema-goers that might otherwise remain untapped. By collaborating closely with these influencers, Cinemax designs campaigns that go beyond conventional advertising, fostering a sense of community and shared enthusiasm for the cinematic experience. For instance, Cinemax's influencer in Bratislava, who specialises in engaging young adults, has initiated targeted campaigns promoting late-night screenings, student discounts, and exclusive events.

TikTok remains the fastest-growing social platform in 2023, with 1.92 billion subscribers and 1 billion monthly active users globally. The Chinese social media giant claims close to 150 million users in the EU, spending around 90 minutes per day on creating and watching user-generated videos. According to a survey conducted

in 2023 by TikTok Italy, content about cinema and shows is very popular on this platform, with 1.26 billion views globally, with a year-on-year increase of 622% in content research on TikTok. 1 out of 2 TikTok users has decided to watch a film or a show after having seen related content on the platform (trailers, memes, behind-the-scenes, reviews, etc). The hashtag #FilmTok has over 18 billion views to date. 49% of TikTok users are aged between 25 and 45, but its largest active audience remains the Gen Z – the cinema audience of the future – who in five years will reach their greatest earning potential, and therefore their highest purchasing power potential.

Cineplex, the German association of 26 family-owned companies that operates over 90 cinemas in 70 cities, was among the first major cinema brands to establish itself in the customer loyalty of the young audience with a very successful TikTok channel. At least 25 spots are produced every month, presenting the new film programme, showing everyday situations in the cinema and asking staff and customers alike about all kinds of film topics. Individual clips have a reach of over one million views. The offer is supplemented by clips of individual films created exclusively by distributors.

Local Influencers,
Cinemax, Slovakia.

**1 out of 2
TikTok users
has decided
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related content
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**WITH
1.92 billion
SUBSCRIBERS AND
1 billion
MONTHLY ACTIVE USERS
GLOBALLY TIKTOK REMAINS
THE FASTEST-GROWING
SOCIAL PLATFORM IN 2023**

**\$21.1 billion
WAS THE ESTIMATED GROWTH
OF THE INFLUENCER MARKETING
INDUSTRY IN 2023**

**18 billion +
VIEWS OF THE HASHTAG
#FILMTOK TO DATE**

Lillehammer Kino, a 5-screen film theatre in the southern part of Norway, is very successful at engaging the staff in creating TikTok and Instagram content promoting the value of cinema-going and the experience that the audience can get when visiting their venue.

Cineworld's TikTok account has racked up 30 million organic views since its inception in February 2022. According to the group's Senior Social Content Executive, "It's figuring out funny ways to bring films into the videos without explicitly saying, 'Go and watch this'. You can make jokes in a way you can't on other platforms, and it's okay to make those jokes. With content that often pushes the sentimental value of cinema — popcorn, plush leather seats — TikTok is not a place to be underestimated."

Instagram is an already established social media popular both among millennials and Gen Zers, which is widely used by cinemas, with more and more tailored content, visuals and animations specifically designed for this platform, thanks also to the growing use of user-friendly design software like Canva. Similarly to TikTok, Instagram's use is pivoting more towards user-generated videos like Reels and Insta stories, where the cinema staff can record live what is going on in the cinema during events with talents or themed parties, creating catchy – indeed Instagrammable – content.

A valuable example of this trend is brought by the 10-screen multiplex **Cinema Victoria** located in Modena, Italy, where the daily life at the cinema is narrated live on the cinema's Instagram and TikTok accounts by the cinema manager. Themed decoration of the venue for long-awaited releases such as *Barbie* or *Wonka*, TikTok dances, video film reviews, new film merchandise and bar offerings are among the content featuring on Cinema Victoria's social media. With over 28,000 Instagram followers in a town of less than 185,000 inhabitants, Cinema Victoria succeeded in creating an engaged online community which turned into active cinema visitors.

Letterboxd defines itself as "the social network for film lovers", founded in 2011 by two entrepreneurs in New Zealand and then acquired by a Canadian holding company. It recently topped 13 million registered accounts with 50% of users under the age of 35. The platform allows users to write film reviews, create shareable film rankings and film lists on any topic or genre, create watchlists, rate films and keep a diary of film watching. Since December 2023, users in the US, Canada, Australia, New Zealand and the UK & Ireland can benefit from a new showtimes feature, which provides access to real-time information about film screenings over the coming seven days. In the US alone, approximately 9,000 screens are indexed, with cinemas encouraged to opt in to share their showtimes, whether they be repertory screenings at arthouse cinemas, or new multiplex releases. Several British cinema groups like Curzon, Picturehouse and Cineworld have already established their online presence on this platform, creating curated lists and publishing editorial content, showing how cinemas can further tap into the potential of this growing social media.



Filming content for TikTok, Cineworld, United Kingdom.

Digital marketing and data analytics

Digital marketing is the leading marketing approach for cinemas in recent years, complementing printed promotional supports or ads on press outlets. Having access to data, the skills and resources to analyse it, creates effective strategies, cost efficiencies and enormous advantages for cinemas.

By understanding data, cinemas can achieve greater operational efficiency and deliver better audience-driven programming. By tracking demographics, visit times, booking patterns, and film preferences, cinemas can spot trends, forecast and adapt operations dynamically. Through digital marketing and data analytics, cinemas can also target their communication according to the audience profile, for example sending segmented emails based on age, location, interests or membership tier, specific offer according to purchasing habits or create tailored rewards for special occasions like birthdays or membership anniversaries. With forecasting tools, audience data can be used to make informed decisions regarding optimal screening times, promotional deals, relevant F&B offers, and seasonal marketing activities.

Online ticket sales were already popular pre-Covid but have further boomed recently due to visitors being more tech savvy and more used to e-commerce platforms. Online ticketing – through websites or mobile apps – facilitates data sharing of the audience's purchasing habits with Customer Relationship Management and fully integrated digital marketing solutions.



Ticket kiosks in the lobby, NOS Cinemas, Portugal.

UNIC Marketing Partners

Vista Group

Vista Group provides many products to the global cinema industry including dedicated digital marketing and data analytics solutions.

Vista Group's latest solution, Oneview, brings together data from across the Group's brands for exhibition executives to leverage. With rich data insights from Vista, Numero, and Movio, Oneview provides easy top-down visualisations of everything happening in cinema circuits for CEOs and senior leadership and enables them to instantly action insights in real-time across their circuit, wherever they are.

Movio Cinema EQ is Vista Group's new intelligent data analytics and campaign management solution for cinemas. Leveraging EQ's Propensity Algorithm, marketers can better target audiences by predicting how likely an audience is to watch a given film. With dynamic content capabilities and automated triggered customer journeys, marketers can create highly sophisticated, personalised digital interactions tailored to their cinema-goers.



DX

Building for the future means empowering cinemas to offer mind-blowing experiences before, at, and after the cinema visit. DX is developing the next-gen cinema management solution for the entire cinema journey, while keeping up with disruptive tech like AI or Web3.

Web3 ticketing for example offers secure, personalised experiences through blockchain – with exclusive content and fandom. Another possibility is combining AI and immersive tech. It allows fans to become co-creators of film IP within a virtual community, expanding the cinematic universe while engaging with their favourite stories. Additionally, AI-driven data analytics will keep transforming cinema marketing, tailoring campaigns to individual cinema-goers, their interests, and film connections to maximise impact.

The DX Tech Innovation & Cinema space is an aggregator for latest cinema tech and marketing trends and projects.



Boxoffice

Positioned at the heart of the global film industry, Boxoffice fuses media, technology, and data to empower entertainment providers worldwide. With an extensive network across Europe and the Americas, Boxoffice unites 74+ million film enthusiasts under the banners of influential media brands like AlloCiné and Adoro-Cinema.

Boxoffice is transforming cinema marketing on a global scale with Boost. In 2023, 200+ cinema chains have embraced the Boost Platform to propel their online presence and revenue to new heights. With streamlined showtimes distribution to major platforms like Google and TikTok to websites built for customisation and automation, the Boost Platform played a pivotal role in generating over half a billion dollars in box office revenue last year, breaking new ground in the connection between cinema-goers and exhibitors.

Pulse, Boxoffice's exclusive access point to the wealth of industry data, creates easy-to-understand data and performance platforms covering multiple aspects of theatrical distribution. As the trusted source on showtimes data, Boxoffice brings its proprietary and actionable data to studios in a user-friendly way in all major theatrical territories across the globe.

Showtime Analytics

Showtime Analytics provides a suite of innovative data-powered solutions to cinemas in order to understand, analyse and grow their business.

Many global circuits have advanced loyalty programmes and have invested in RFM (recency, frequency, monetary) modelling before through a consultant, but it was so manual that by the time the data had been collated and exported back out it was no longer relevant. This manual analysis meant exhibitors couldn't react quickly enough to prevent losing customers and had no way of seeing if their targeting strategies were working.

To counter this, Showtime created a way in which cinemas could analyse, not just their loyalty customers, but their entire base, and do it in real time. Showtime can now record each customer's RFM and other attributes movements on a daily basis - so cinema circuits can tie in the data to use with their marketing tools and see how their strategies improve their scores.

For the first time in the cinema industry, the Showtime Customer Analytics solution enables exhibitors to undertake a strategic analysis of their entire base, addressing key executive level metrics such as Churn, Retention & Lifetime Value.



Compeso

As one of the top software companies in the cinema industry, Compeso has proved in recent years that an excellent guest experience from the very beginning of the cinema visit - i.e. the purchase of the ticket - CAN make a difference in numbers. With the help of state-of-the-art web shops and apps, cinemas are offered the potential to increase both their admissions and their concession turnover significantly.

At Compeso, the coming years will be all about cooperation with customers and partners, facing the next challenges of customer retention, winning new customer groups for cinemas, and increasing the frequency of both existing cinema-goers and potential visitors - just to mention a few.



NOS, the largest cinema group in Portugal with 30 sites and 214 screens, works with three different digital sales channels, in addition to the cashier at the cinema venue: the website, the mobile app and kiosks in the cinemas’ lobbies. The three digital channels all allow visitors to buy cinema tickets and food and beverage, but also gift cards and merchandise. Clients have to create their personal account to purchase online, which allows them to receive personalised promotions and relevant communication. The online sales of NOS group went from 15% in 2019 to 50% in 2023, whereas box office sales decreased by 34 percentage points. This is thanks to the group’s digital strategy promoting online ticketing and targeted digital marketing campaigns.

“Profiling Cinema” is a joint project of 15 arthouse cinemas located in Northern and Central Italy coordinated by Anteo Spaziocinema in Milan and supported by the Collaborate to Innovate scheme, which aims at developing a joint CRM tool for independent venues, to optimise customer information collection and its subsequent use for audience profiling. This approach includes reviewing the whole digital marketing and online sales strategy of participating cinemas, giving higher value to customers’ data. The ultimate objective is to offer targeted communication before and after screenings, with personalised content automatically delivered to customers when they search for information and after having watched the film. A similar collaborative project has been launched by nine Swedish cinemas coordinated by the Swedish arthouse umbrella organisation **Folkets Bio**. The nine venues have joined forces to create a marketing platform with data analytics and email marketing tools, to enable targeted marketing based on customers’ previous purchases and preferences. All participating cinemas use a shared ticketing system, Bio.se, for their online ticket sales. Transaction data containing personal information and film-related data is collected in real-time and stored in a CRM platform, providing valuable insights into audience behaviours. The project also aims to gather information about visitors’ favourite

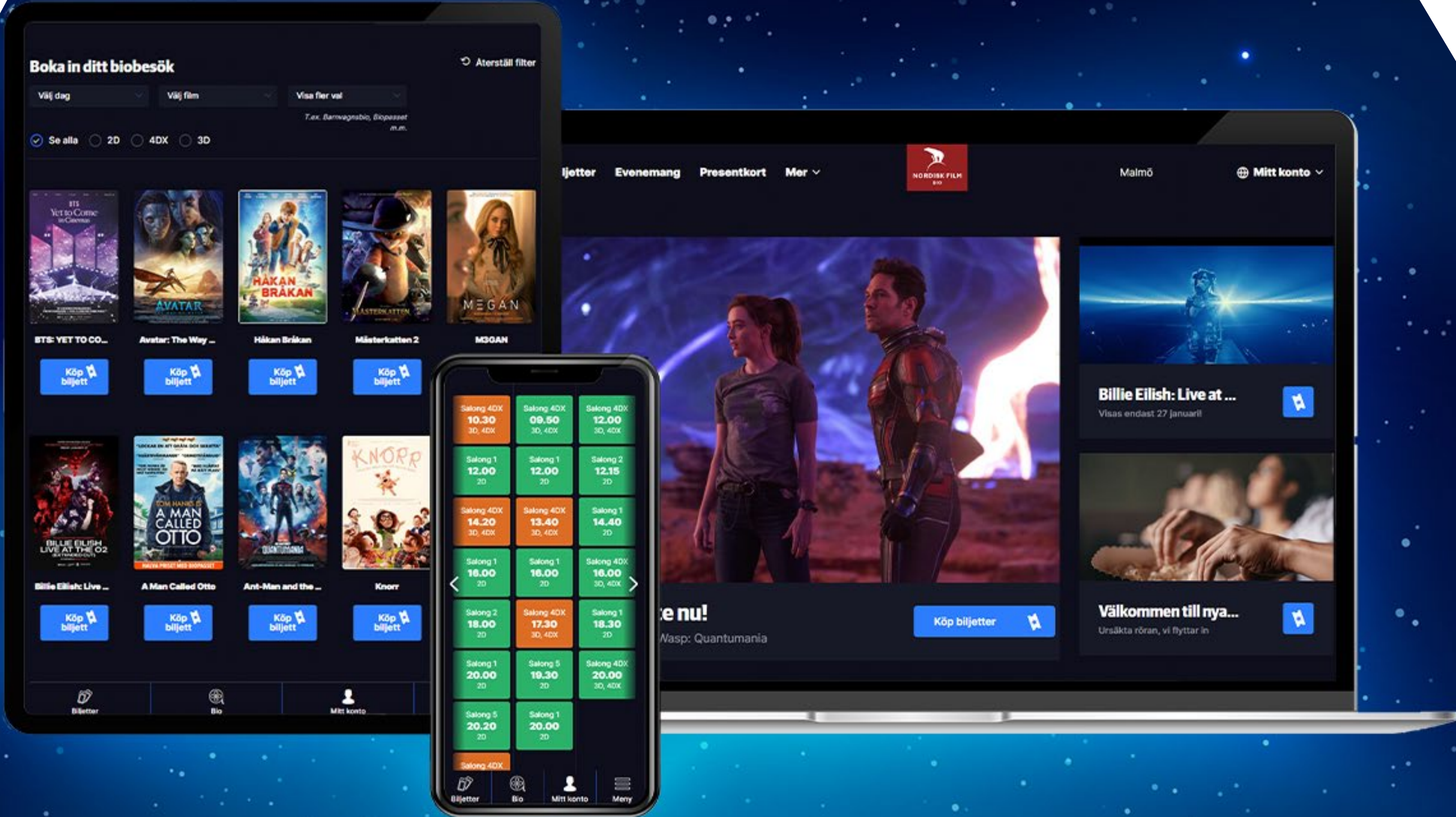
films, genres, languages, countries, actors, and directors to inform them when a relevant film is screened nearby.

Nordisk Cinemas, the largest operator in the Nordics with over 260 venues in Denmark, Sweden and Norway, has also widely invested in online sales and digital marketing through the Nordisk Film Cinema mobile app, called NFBIO App in Denmark. In 2022 the app was ranked within the top ten apps in the ‘Entertainment’ category at the internationally renowned Webby Award Show. The NFBIO App was placed on the Webby Honoree List (top 1) along with apps from Discovery+, Marvel Unlimited and Star Wars. The mobile app allows

users to discover the latest film releases, watch trailers and read reviews. Showtimes can be easily checked and the app intuitively streamlines the purchase process from film selection to seat reservation. In addition, it is possible to share the ticket cost with friends and follow preferred films to receive personalised updates. Real-time ticket notifications with a QR code to scan at the cinema entry make access to the cinema very smooth.

By tracking demographics, visit times, booking patterns, and film preferences, cinemas can spot trends, forecast and adapt operations dynamically.

NFBIO mobile application, Nordisk Film Biografer, Denmark.



Innovative ancillary content

"Sai de Cena"
podcast, NOS Cinemas,
Portugal.



As the cinema industry continues to evolve, the integration of ancillary content, such as podcasts, stands out as a forward-thinking approach by industry leaders. These initiatives not only add value to the customer experience, but also contribute to building a loyal community of film enthusiasts. As cinema brands around the world innovate, ancillary content proves to be a powerful medium for creating a lasting connection between audiences and the magic of the silver screen. Throughout Europe cinemas have been expanding their ancillary offers.

The **Screen Spirit** project in France aims to bring together the vibrant Twitch community with nine local cinemas, creating a global platform for discussions, events, and festivals. The bi-monthly cinema show on the Twitch Screen Spirit channel is shot in cinemas and invites the public to take part in discussions focusing on new releases, box office results or heritage films and filmmaking. The Screen Spirit project encompasses a professional forum and an annual Festival event hosted in partner venues but both available simultaneously on Twitch.

While some cinemas innovate with new digital formats, others have looked into a more literary medium. Magazines have long been a traditional communication tool for cinema-related content. Yorcker, the flagship cinema magazine of **Yorck Cinema Group** in Berlin, has been delivering quality editorial content since 1998. The magazine, published seven times a year, features selected content chosen by an editorial team of film journalists and cinema makers. **Katorza**, an arthouse venue in the West of France, also has a unique approach to cinema exploration through its monthly publication, Rosebud. The Katorza team shares their favourite cinematic experiences and guides readers and viewers to discover noteworthy films. With a focus on passion and curated content, both Yorcker and Katorza showcase the enduring appeal of print media in the digital age.

The **Cinema +** project launched by seven independent cinemas in the Netherlands aims to curate bonus content in connection with specific films for which customers have purchased tickets, such as the ‘making of’ of the film or earlier short films made by the same director. Building on recent collaborations, including the integration of the Mycloudcinema ticketing platform, Cinema + focuses on data analysis, CRM tools, and a content strategy.

Also embracing ancillary content in the Netherlands is **Het Ketelhuis**, an independent cinema situated in an ancient gas factory in Amsterdam now turned into a cultural district. The Ketelhuis Podcast, featuring a diverse range of conversations about film with creators, actors, and film experts, airs a new episode every Thursday and is already at its 100th episode. The tagline, “Interviews, reports, and reflections on Dutch film (and its surroundings),” highlights the podcast’s commitment to exploring the rich tapestry of their national cinemas.

The podcasting trend extends beyond Dutch borders, as evidenced by **The Space Cinemas** in Italy, Vue’s branch with 34 sites across the country. Their high-profile podcast, recognised among the top 50 best podcasts by The Hollywood Reporter, led to the creation of the Movie Talk programme. This initiative allows customers to enjoy director Q&A sessions before or after screenings,

enhancing the overall cinema experience. The integration of podcasts and live discussions creates a unique platform for interaction, adding value and excitement to the cinematic journey.

Further innovating the podcast landscape is **Cinemas NOS**, which launched its podcast in August 2023, “Sai de Cena”. Targeting the 35–50 age group, the podcast aims to reignite the passion for cinema. The engaging format features light and entertaining conversations about cinema experiences with famous cinema lovers, influencers and brand ambassadors. The videocast format, comprising 6 episodes of 25–40 minutes each, creates a cosy atmosphere, discussing for example the first film ever watched, character guests most identify with, experiences at NOS Cinemas, but also creating cinema-themed games.

As part of the programme UGC Cult, focusing on heritage restored films, the France-based circuit **UGC** has introduced the Flashback podcast which contributes to the preservation of cinematic heritage and enriches the cultural experience for its audience. The podcast has become a valuable resource for cinephiles eager to explore the roots of filmmaking and adds an extra layer to the cinema-going experience.



“Sai de Cena” by NOS Cinemas, Portugal.
Séance Tenante, Pathé, France.
“Lost in The Space: Storie di cinema”
by The Space Cinemas (VUE International), Italy.
“Flashback” by UGC, France.
“Ketelhuis Podcast” by Het Ketelhuis, Netherlands.

Eventising film releases

As cinemas continue to innovate and adapt, they have been embracing the concept of eventisation to offer even more exciting and personalised cinematic journeys for audiences worldwide. This evolution goes beyond mere film screenings, focusing on curating diverse and immersive experiences for audiences. Eventisation in cinemas is not just a trend but a transformative shift in the way we consume films. Tailor-made and curated events showcase the industry's commitment to crafting unique, immersive, and diverse experiences for visitors.

Certain films are just made for eventisation. *Barbie* saw cinemas around the world creating very original events around this much-awaited release of Summer 2023. From themed screenings with a Barbie dress-code, to Barbie box cardboard cutouts for photo sessions and

Barbie-themed props, cinemas proved very creative in terms on eventising this release. **Vue's** "Bring a Ken" campaign injected humour and community spirit into the cinema space. By tying promotions to the names of patrons, Vue created an inclusive atmosphere, fostering a sense of belonging. The exclusive Barbie-pink Candy Floss Tango Ice Blast or popcorn shared with a 'Ken' adds a playful touch to the cinema experience and shows a new tailored approach to marketing films to audiences.

Vue also initiated a "Get Lost" campaign in 2020 which was later updated, championing the immersive power of the Big Screen. A pre-show film featuring John Boyega and Ridley Scott highlighted the need to switch off your phone and Get Lost in great stories. In 2022, the campaign was updated across Vue's eight European markets in partnership with Universal with the added surprise of Jurassic World dinosaurs to coincide with the release of *Jurassic World Dominion* urging patrons to disconnect from the digital world and fully immerse themselves in compelling stories.



1 Million Minutes campaign, Vue International, United Kingdom.

Tailor-made and curated events showcase the industry's commitment to crafting unique, immersive, and diverse experiences for visitors.

The Belgian group **Kinepolis**, with branches in the Netherlands, France, Luxembourg, Spain, Switzerland and Canada, boosts film promotion through “Discovery Day.” Launched in 2019, Kinepolis Discovery Day is a free initiative that runs once to twice a year in all its Belgian, Dutch, Luxembourgish, French and Spanish cinemas. It’s a trailer show presenting upcoming films for the next six months, immersing visitors in a unique atmosphere with film quizzes and goodies. The goal is to give customers a sneak preview of the films coming to the cinemas over the next few months, considering that trailers that are viewed on the Big Screen have a greater impact than when viewed via other channels and that they do attract people to the cinemas. The ratings that consumers give to trailers provide Kinepolis with valuable information about a film’s potential success. Recent editions in France were not completely free of charge to avoid no-shows, but charged €1 per person, revenue that was donated entirely to a good cause.

Furthermore, Landmark Cinemas, the Kinepolis branch in Canada has introduced a human touch to their films with a “Shout Out,” a 30-second personalised video message that a cinema-goer can pay and submit to be played before the film. This innovative feature allows patrons to celebrate special occasions, turning a night at the cinema into a more personal and memorable event.

Arthouse venues like Kino Aero in the Czech Republic, Omnia in France, Cinemas Gabbiano, Beltrade and Ed-era in Italy, and Picturehouse in the UK offer a plethora of cinematic experiences. From cult screenings and new releases followed by Q&A with film critics and talents, to blind screenings at 6am with breakfast, live concerts with the film soundtrack band in the cinema hall and the “World’s Biggest All Nighter”, these venues cater to diverse tastes, creating a cinematic ecosystem that goes beyond the conventional.

Shout out,
Landmark Cinemas
(Kinepolis Group),
Canada.

Discovery Day,
Kinepolis, Belgium.



National Cinema Days 2023

In 2023, a number of European countries celebrated their national cinema days. The initiative, starting in 1985 in France, aimed to increase cinema attendance by promoting the joy of watching films on the Big Screen.

National Cinema Days vary in duration, discounts and frequency across countries, showcasing their adaptability to cultural contexts. From a one-day event to a 5-day celebration, a yearly or a biannual event, organising special contests or involving talents, there is a different recipe for everyone. In Finland for example Suuri leffapäivä (The Great Cinema Day) was held for the first time on 22 April 2023, with tickets sold at half price in cinemas across the country. In Italy two rounds of Cinema in Festa take place every year, lasting 5 days in June and in September, with all tickets set at €3.50.

The UK and Ireland's second edition of the National Cinema Day welcomed 1.56 million visitors, with 95% recommending this unique experience celebrating cinema-going. In France the 22nd edition of Printemps du Cinéma (Spring of Cinema) led to an overall growth of 10% in admissions compared to the 2022 edition. The September 2023 edition of Italy's Cinema in Festa represents 1.56M admissions, which represent an increase of 35% compared to the first edition in 2022 and +29% compared to June 2023 edition. Surveys in the UK and Germany proved that the reduced ticket price isn't the only reason for the audience to attend, but it's also an opportunity to rediscover cinemas, get family and friends together and make more experimental choices.

Visuals of National Cinema Days 2023 in some European countries.



Loyalty schemes & Subscription models

Cineville unlimited
subscription card,
The Netherlands.



In the ever-evolving landscape of cinema entertainment, loyalty schemes and subscription models have become a solid component for engaging audiences. Cinemas across Europe have been pioneering innovative loyalty programmes, providing film enthusiasts with exclusive benefits and a sense of belonging to a cinematic community.

Kinepolis introduced the ‘Movie Club’ as a monthly membership formula in 2022 and expanded it across its territories in 2023. For a fixed monthly fee (e.g., €9.95 in Belgium), Movie Club members enjoy a plethora of benefits. This includes one film visit per month, with reduced ticket prices for additional visits. Accompanying friends also enjoy the same reduced rates. Movie Club members receive discounts at Kinepolis shops, exclusive film information and promotions. Moreover, they get discounts on tickets for special Kinepolis events. This innovative approach caters to both avid cinephiles and casual cinema-goers, creating a win-win situation for both Kinepolis and its loyal customers.

Cineplex introduced its customer loyalty programme, Cineplex+ in November 2020. This programme allows members to accumulate points with each cinema purchase, which then unlock various status levels, offering enticing rewards such as free popcorn, monthly tickets, and even private screenings. With an impressive membership base exceeding 550,000, Cineplex+ has successfully engaged almost 15% of all cinema customers.

Nordisk Film Cinemas in Denmark launched the “Unlimited” subscription at the end of 2021. This groundbreaking initiative allows subscribers to enjoy unlimited access to films in their cinemas for a fixed monthly fee. Now available in Denmark and Norway, Unlimited is not only attracting avid cinema-goers but also setting a precedent as Nordisk is the first cinema chain in Scandinavia to offer such a subscription.

But it is not just large chains that are creating attractive subscription offers. Originating in the Netherlands in 2009, **Cineville** has evolved into an arthouse unlimited card, the concept of which has transcended national boundaries. In its country of origin, it now records over 80,000 subscribers and 2 million admissions per year across 70+ independent arthouse cinemas. The goal was to make arthouse films and cinemas more appealing to the 18–30-years-olds, by giving them the chance to

make more experimental film choices through a flat-rate card. Now available in the Netherlands, Belgium, then exported in Austria and soon in Germany, Cineville offers members the opportunity to watch as many films as they desire in participating independent arthouse cinemas for a fixed monthly price. Cineville subscribers can access a variety of activities to enhance their “social experience”, like special screenings, a dedicated blog and magazine, Q&As, quizzes, parties and the sale of cinema-related merchandise. This collaborative approach fosters a sense of community among arthouse cinema lovers and promotes a shared passion for independent and diverse film offerings.

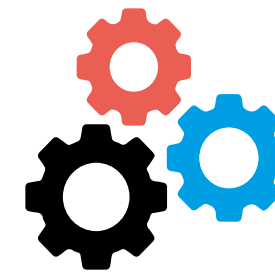
These loyalty schemes and subscription models not only reward regular cinema-goers but also foster a deeper connection between audiences and cinemas.

Innovation in technology and cinema spaces

Having invested massively into the transition to digital cinema over the last fifteen years, cinema operators across Europe continue to innovate and upgrade their cinemas to provide cutting-edge and ever-more immersive cinematic experiences - from immersive sound systems to 'Premium Large Formats' screens - and experiment with new auditorium designs.

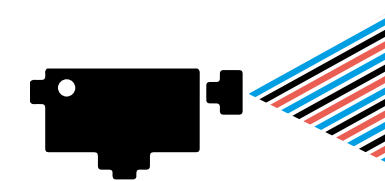
Together with a growing supply of films as well as live events and gaming shows, more dynamic and flexible programming helps meet increasingly diverse audience preferences. These developments in content are complemented by a rapid diversification of the cinema services.

Here is a non-exhaustive snapshot of recent cinema technology innovations



Automation

The automation and monitoring functionalities offer building intelligence in cinemas at a very reasonable cost. By connecting booth and foyer hardware across the cinema network, power devices can be activated or deactivated based on customisable criteria, ensuring efficient and cost-effective operations. Real-time insights and automated monitoring have become essential components of the modern cinema experience. These innovations ensure swift interventions to maintain seamless film screenings. For operators with multiple cinema locations, recent advancements have provided centralised control over projection and digital signage. This system ensures consistent quality, reduces errors, and offers a comprehensive overview of processes across all sites, enabling informed business decisions based on data.



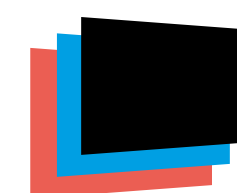
Laser projection

Laser light illumination delivers superior picture quality in terms of colour reproduction, higher contrast ratios, consistent illumination and energy savings. Around 13% of the cinema screens worldwide are installed with laser, but with lamp-based product contributing less than 20% of new projectors sold, a growing number of first-generation digital projectors approaching end of life and the cost of laser projectors decreasing, the number is expected to tick upward at pace. Laser is demonstrated to be more energy efficient compared to traditional lamp-based technology, as it generates less heat and does not require external cooling or ventilation systems, besides not requiring lamp purchase and disposal.



High Dynamic Range

HDR allows for a wider range of colours, highest brightness and greater contrast between the brightest and darkest parts of an image, resulting in a more life-like and immersive viewing experience. While HDR is a technology existing already for TV and smartphone screens, it is starting to be implemented in cinemas both for direct viewing (LED) and for projection. Manufacturers are developing new equipment based on HDR, which could further improve the cinema experience once creatives, post-production and cinemas adopt it.



High Frame Rate

High Frame Rate (HFR) refers to content that runs at a faster frame rate than the standard 24 fps commonly used in cinemas. Films or film scenes shot in HFR appear smoother and more fluid, with less stuttered movement on-screen. Films by Ang Lee, Peter Jackson and the latest *Avatar* have all been released in higher frame rates.



Avatar: The Way of Water

(released in December 2022)

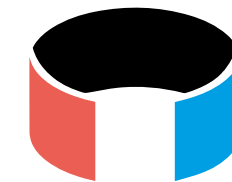
Since the advent of digital cinema, films are sent and screened in cinemas with DCPs (Digital Cinema Package), a collection of digital files used to store and convey digital cinema audio, image, and data streams. Mastering and delivering DCPs for *Avatar: The Way of Water* in multiple formats to cinemas worldwide required the industry to come together, execute and screen the film in 1,065 unique versions, making it among the most logistically challenging title ever released.

Globally, the producers created 27 “discrete” picture formats to meet the basic specifications of cinemas, including IMAX and Dolby Vision. That multiplied with the addition of audio formats (Dolby Atmos, 5.1, 7.1, IMAX 12.0 and 5.0), in most of the 51 languages supported with subtitles and 28 languages supported by dubbing. That number was then doubled by delivering both at 24 and 48 frames per second (High Frame Rate) and required combinations of 2D and 3D. There were over five different colour grades for conventional digital projection systems depending on their light output. The aspect ratio of individual screens was another key variable. In the EMEA region only, 601 DCPs were created, the film was released in 89 countries and delivered to 9,301 cinema sites (across EMEA and CIS territories).



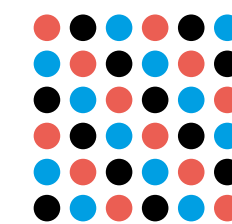
Immersive sound

Real immersive sound provides audience with a three-dimensional sound experience with sounds in front, above and all around the auditorium, providing a totally new emotional level of entertainment in watching films, giving the feeling of actually “being there”.



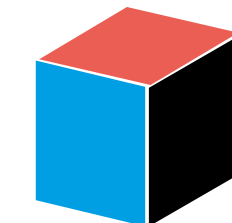
Panoramic projection

Premium cinemas focus on creating a more immersive experience sometimes providing multi-projection outside the front screen onto the side auditorium walls. This can consist of side LED panels, 270-degree screens or dome screens, to name a few.



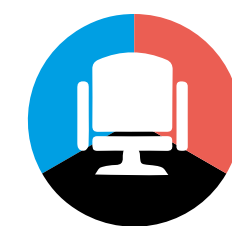
LED screens

Panels of direct-view LEDs are an alternative technology that eliminates projectors and projection screens altogether. A LED Cinema Display is a large, high-definition display that uses light-emitting diodes (LEDs) to create an image. LED Cinema Displays are typically much brighter than traditional projection, which means they can be used in a wider range of lighting conditions and are able to reproduce deeper black levels. Direct-view display can reach a luminance ten times higher than the luminance of a projected image. LEDs involve significantly more power draw and heat output, thus requiring more air conditioning, besides a structure to hold the weight of the LED panels.



3D

A 3D cinema screen displays images that appear to have depth and dimension, creating a more realistic and immersive viewing experience for the audience. The screen uses a technology called stereoscopy to create the 3D effect. 3D technology had a massive reboot with the release of *Avatar: The Way of Water* in 2022.



4D

4D or immersive motion brings cinema-going to a whole new level, with seating technology plunging audience members into the scenarios they witness on the Big Screen through an array of multi-sensory stimulants such as wind, fog and water, along with moving seats and 3D glasses.

GDC

GDC is a leading global digital cinema solutions provider with the largest installed base of digital cinema servers and Theatre Management Systems in the Asia-Pacific region and the second largest globally. They have been embracing innovation as part of their core DNA for over 20 years. GDC develops cinema automation systems that can significantly help reduce the need for on-site staff, working towards a greener cinema business model through the use of automation. The Cinema Automation CA2.0 is the first-ever centralised solution to automatically manage content storage and playback, show scheduling, power supply and screening quality. Most recently the company has partnered with DTS to deliver multiple innovative audio solutions. The solution, which supports the immersive audio bitstream (IAB) standard, allows motion picture studios to efficiently distribute immersive audio content as the filmmakers intended.



Harkness

For over 95 years, Harkness Screens has been at the forefront of cinema 2D and 3D screen technology and innovation, providing cinematic solutions that enhance every cinema-going experience.

With production facilities on three continents, Harkness is able to support its global customer base by providing sustainable solutions with low-carbon footprints. Since 2017, all Harkness coated cinema screen technologies have been produced using water-based coatings, a move that has enabled Harkness to remove more than 95% of volatile organic compounds (VOCs) from production and in turn pollutants from the atmosphere, whilst ensuring they meet fire safety standards.

In 2023, Harkness opened a new Innovation Centre in the UK focused on developing the next generation of cinema screens to support the roll-out of laser projection, whilst identifying ways to lower the environmental footprint of screens. Harkness also continues to develop Qalif automation technology to monitor and maintain presentation quality in cinemas.



Strong/MDI

Strong/MDI Screens is one of the leading manufacturers and developers of projection screens worldwide. It operates from a modern facility in Canada and has finishing plants notably in Belgium. Relying on the quality of its service and the performance of its screens, Strong/MDI has built a solid reputation amongst the world's leading cinema exhibitors, concluding many major exclusivity agreements in the USA and Europe, to name a few.

Strong/MDI has recently created and marketed HGA ReAct, a cinema screen technology that meets the needs of laser projection, the very latest technology to enter cinemas. These screens are microperforated for better image quality, compliant with 3D passive technology, with a wider viewing angle and less speckle effects.



UNIC
Technology
Partners

CinemaNext

CinemaNext is a leading cinema exhibition services company in EMEA and provides projection equipment, audio systems, central systems, cinema outfitting, content management, 3D projection systems and glasses, Theatre Management Systems, digital signage, screens and seating and consulting services.

It has recently launched the smart CinemaNext EcoBooth, which aims to revolutionise sustainability and cost-effectiveness in cinema operations. This system intends to efficiently manage auditorium lighting, sound, ventilation, and device power, reducing energy consumption and waste. By automating power procedures and enabling remote monitoring, cinemas could optimise resources, ensuring devices are utilised only when necessary.

The objective is to empower cinemas to become more sustainable and economically efficient. Connected to the CinemaNext Theatre Management System, cinemas are provided with increased energy management capabilities.

CinemaNext also has expertise in in-house turnkey premium cinema formats, such as Sphera Premium Immersive Format and the intimate 'Le Studio' boutique cinema concept, aiming to offer a great experience to all cinema-goers.



UNIC Technology Partners

Omdia

Omdia analyses and tracks content, technology, and innovation across a wide range of industries, from artificial intelligence to automotive, and media & entertainment, including the cinema research that they are known for. Nowadays, Omdia has a unique capability to look across the whole media spectrum, "Connecting the Dots". Omdia's 80+ expert analysts seamlessly integrate technology and content analysis within the broader macro-economic landscape, providing unparalleled insights across the industry.

Digital cinema shook up a cinema system that had been put in place a century before. Omdia found new ways to collect and analyse data, to help the industry measure and understand how this transition was developing and impacting the status quo. Omdia has continued this work as cinema develops into a more segmented sector, including technology and premium cinema brands.

Omdia also spends time thinking about future market data and analysis needs, such as sustainability, and how do they provide that data. New industry needs and new media landscapes require innovative approaches to data provision and partnership. Where necessity was the mother of all invention, nowadays technology drives innovation and Omdia specialises in understanding that.

OMDIA

Deluxe

Created in 1915, Deluxe is a leading company that creates, transforms, localise, and distribute content, with services spanning feature, episodic, live events and trailers.

With the release of *Avatar: The Way of Water*, the industry saw an unprecedented number of versions for cinema, which required Deluxe to leverage its services to create, validate, and distribute over 1,000 versions for theatrical release, which would not have been possible just a few short years ago. Using a new workflow method, its global infrastructure, cloud services, hyperscale processing, ultra-high-performance storage, and content delivery networks, Deluxe demonstrated how even The largest films can take advantage of the latest technologies, and film-makers can release to more PLF and immersive formats in cinemas, without compromising schedules or quality.





Premium cinema,
Cinexplexx Millennium City,
Austria.

Premium experience

Box office recovery in 2022 and 2023 has been further boosted by the growing popularity of 'Premium Large Format' (PLF) cinemas. Premium auditoriums include, but are not limited to, extra-large screens, immersive sound systems, and premium seats such as recliners and/or haptic-enabled motion seats, as well as exclusive amenities, which allow visitors to get the most out of the recent anticipated releases. Additionally, boutique cinemas with smaller rooms, high-end food and beverage and cozy décor contribute to the premium experience.

Cinema-goers have been increasingly attracted to PLF auditoriums, causing the number of these screens to double to above 7,500 screens in the past five years. Attendance at these formats continues to grow, indicating that audiences are willing to pay more for a superior viewing experience. Due to the high demand, cinema-goers seeking these immersive experiences sometimes have to wait and purchase tickets a few weeks after the initial release to secure their preferred seating and screen options. Premium formats are generally outperforming their pre-pandemic results, when measured

as a percentage of overall box office. In the US, in the opening weekend, PLF screens have generated 42% of the revenues of *Mission Impossible 7*, slightly over a third of *Fast X*'s box office and 35% of the last chapter of *Indiana Jones*. *Oppenheimer* grossed 47% of its opening weekend revenue on IMAX and PLF screens. Taylor Swift's *Eras Tour* concert film and *The Super Mario Bros. Movie* were other popular choices to watch in premium formats in 2023. In France, *Fast X* sold 11% of its tickets in PLF screens which generated 20% of the film's box office.

Premium cinemas often go hand in hand with luxury auditoriums to offer the audience an exclusive and gala-like experience. An example is the iconic 90-year-old **Grand Rex Cinema** in Paris, which after renovation reopened its Infinite auditorium in December 2023 with a modern art-deco style, with a marble bar at the bottom of the hall, leather recliners and LED lightshow on the ceiling which will adapt the auditorium's ambiance according to the film. The renovation also included the latest technologies such as Dolby Atmos and the only Read D Ultimate screen in France. **Cinema Barberini** in Rome, Italy, has also reopened at the end of 2022 with a new luxury design, with more comfortable and branded seats, Atmos sound and 4K laser projectors to offer the city centre a high-end venue for red carpet screenings and festival premieres.

Astor Film Lounge, with its 10 cinemas across major cities in Germany, can be considered the first chain of premium cinemas of the country. In 2008, the owner took over several cinemas in Germany including the Filmpalast Berlin, and converted them into luxury lounge cinemas, founding the Astor Film Lounge chain and developing an innovative premium cinema offer. Cinemas offer luxurious decoration, generous row spacing, leather recliners, seated food service, dual laser projectors and immersive sound with Dolby Atmos, among other comforts.

Cineplexx, the Austria-based group with over 60 locations and 425 screens across the whole Balkan region, has massively invested to refurbish and modernise its venues in the past few years, focusing especially on providing the highest standards of immersive experience and premium comfort. For example, Cineplexx Millennium City in Vienna, which won the International Cinema Technology Association's EMEA Award for Best Cinema Refurbishment in 2020, offers a state-of-the-art PLF experiences supplied by Dolby Cinema, MX4D motion seats and Real D's Ultimate Screen. Cineplexx Wienerberg in Vienna is Austria's first and only Samsung LED Screen, in combination with Dolby Atmos. The Onyx Cinema LED Screen provides colour brilliance, luminosity, and sharpness, while making the auditorium pitch black, with no reflections. Cineplexx Ljubljana Rudnik in Ljubljana, which won the ICTA EMEA Award for Best New Build Cinema of the Year in 2023, is equipped with laser projectors, immersive sound system and 3D. More than a third of the 1,357 seats are VIP seats, offering various levels of comfort, including love seats, leather seats, and Vip Deluxe leather seats. Cineplexx Galerija Beograd in Serbia introduced the IMAX technology for the first time in the region. The largest screen has a length of 24 meters and nearly twice the size of a tennis court. The most recent refurbishment of the group is Cineplexx Westfield SCS in Vienna, which reopened in December 2023 after a 25 million euros investment. Cinema visitors can now

enjoy eleven screens instead of the previous nine, including premium screens, four so-called "Suites" with seated service by an award-winning Italian restaurant, and Dolby Atmos sound in six halls. One of the many highlights is the new IMAX auditorium. Different seating options, with recliners, small tables, box-designed seats and couple-fit sofas allow a large choice for each visitor's needs.

Nordisk Cinemas have also decided to invest in the highest picture, sound and seating quality for their visitors. In 2021, the iconic cinema Imperial in Copenhagen, which hosts nearly one thousand seats, was upgraded to include a state-of-the-art dual laser projection system, large format screen, a premium immersive audio system, and content remastered exclusively for THX Ultimate Cinema. The upgrade marked Imperial's 60th birthday and reinforced the cinema's flagship status in the Nordic region. Nordisk Film Cinema Dome Show in Oslo features 16 projectors that illuminate the vault inside the Colosseum Cinema for its "dome show". The show covers the entire inner ceiling of approximately 2,800 square meters and can also be synchronised with the screen, both with sound and image. The dome show is used for opening shows at events, cinema advertising and cinema trailers. More companies want to use the Colosseum Cinema for large conferences and events, as it is possible to produce content in the dome that interacts with a presentation and gives sponsors a great visibility.

Cinema-goers have been increasingly attracted to PLF auditoriums, causing the number of these screens to double to above 7,500 screens in the past five years.



Sala ENERGIA PLF,
ARCADIA Cinemas,
Italy.



Pathé Parnasse, the first fully premium cinema in Paris, Pathé Cinémas, France.

When speaking about PLF it's worth mentioning **IMAX Traumpalast** in Leonberg, Germany, the largest IMAX screen in the world with a size of 39 meters width per 21 (wider than a Boeing 737 airliner!). The IMAX auditorium hosts 574 seats, and features laser technology and IMAX's 12-channel sound technology. The construction of the gargantuan screen started in 2020 and concluded in September 2021, just before the release of *No Time to Die*.

The German family-run group **Kinopolis**, with 17 venues across the country, opened Kinopolis Bad Homburg in September 2023. Kinopolis first premium multiplex concept offers space for a total of 950 guests in seven auditoriums, all equipped with Dolby Atmos. Special highlights are the individual lighting design in each room and the special seating concept, which caters to every need, from recliners to cozy couple's sofas and innovative D-BOX Motion Seats. Additionally, guests can order gourmet food and drinks to their seats using the KINOPOLIS Taste App.

Pathé Cinémas, the first French cinema chain in Europe with 75 sites and 839 screens in France, Belgium, Netherlands and Switzerland, counts 40 4DX auditoriums, 16 IMAX theatres and Dolby Cinema screens. Pathé Parnasse, the first fully premium cinema in Paris, opened in December 2022 after a renovation which reduced the total number of seats from 2,100 to 800, adding more row space and reclining options for additional comfort.

In 2023 **Odeon Multicines** opened six new cinema screens in the Gran Plaza 2 Shopping Center in Madrid, all featuring LG Miraclass LED technology, marking the first 100% LED-equipped and Dolby Atmos-ready complex in the world. LED cinema display integrates more than eight million pixels, capable of displaying up to 68.7 million different colours. These screens support 2D and 3D films, and their brightness can be almost ten times higher than traditional cinema projection systems. The spectator experience is completed with ultra-immersive Dolby Atmos sound and LG climate solutions, Multi V.

Ōma Cinema introduces a unique premium cinema experience, debuting for the first time at Cinewest cinema Les Balcons de Mougins, in the South of France, in April 2024. Drawing inspiration from the grandeur of traditional theatres, Ōma Cinema takes advantage of the vertical volume to implement a pods configuration and puts the audience in a prime position to bring them emotionally and physically closer to the story. The patented architecture of Ōma Cinema also allows personalised services including VIP corporate hospitality boxes, table service on all or selected pods and exclusive access to lounge and bar. Suitable for renovation and new-build projects, its adaptable design is fit for live shows, conferences and a variety of multimedia events.

In addition to the most known PLF brands, there is a significant number of exhibitor-branded PLF screens, which are premium formats developed and installed by the cinema circuits themselves under their own signature brand. These offerings have been independently assembled by circuits themselves and often incorporate branded formats like Dolby Atmos immersive audio with non-branded fixtures like luxury seating or laser projection. The family-owned 4-cinema circuit **ARCADIA Cinemas** in Northern Italy launched its Sala ENERGIA PLF brand in 1997 at the opening of ARCADIA Melzo (Milan), the first multiplex opened in Italy. Sala ENERGIA PLF regularly records Italy's best per-screen admissions across a variety of genres, including both blockbuster digital releases as well as classics re-releases in the special 70 millimetres celluloid format. Sala ENERGIA PLF in Melzo is equipped with a huge 30 metres wide Perlux white screen, 4K Laser Christie dual projectors and two Cinemeccanica Victoria 8 projectors. With 630 seats, Sala ENERGIA PLF in Melzo is equipped with the most powerful permanent cinema system in the world by Meyer Sound, as well as one of Europe's largest Dolby Atmos systems. It has been awarded "Best Screen in Europe" by ICTA in 2017.

ARCADIA Stezzano (Bergamo), which opened in October 2021, counts two ENERGIA PLF screens, both with 180 all recliner seats, 22 metres wide Perlux white screens and immersive audio supplied by Dolby Atmos-Meyer Sound.

Kinepolis has developed its own Premium Large Format, Laser ULTRA, a combination of 4K laser projection and Dolby Atmos. It was launched in 2014 in select European Kinepolis locations (Brussels, Antwerp, Madrid, Lomme) and is now implemented in +45 locations across Europe, Canada and the US.

ICE Theaters, created by French exhibitor CGR Cinemas, was launched in 2018 and incorporates a series of LED panels into the sides of the screen, creating an immersive experience by adding background peripheral elements to a viewer's line of sight throughout a film, without distracting from the film image on the screen itself. ICE auditoriums are equipped with laser projectors, luxury recliner seating, and Dolby Atmos. CGR has exported his proprietary technology in the United States, Saudi Arabia, India, Spain and Estonia.

Premium auditoriums include, but are not limited to, extra-large screens, immersive sound systems, and premium seats such as recliners and/or haptic-enabled motion seats, as well as exclusive amenities, which allow visitors to get the most out of the recent anticipated releases.



Öma Cinema,
France.

UNIC Technology Partners



Dolby

Dolby is a leading company that creates audio, visual, and voice technologies for films, TV, music and gaming.

For 12 years now, film fans have been able to enjoy the immersive, enveloping sound of Dolby Atmos in more than 8,000 Dolby Atmos cinemas worldwide. Dolby Atmos immerses the audience right in the middle of the action.

With Dolby Cinema, the company has also introduced an innovative cinema concept with Dolby Atmos sound and Dolby Vision HDR, which displays colours, black and white, and contrasts as realistically as intended by the filmmakers. Thanks to a modern design, Dolby Cinema transports the viewer into a unique movie experience from the moment they walk through the front door - and now in more than 450 locations worldwide.



CJ4Dplex

CJ has a long history of developing next-generation technology. It has always intended to create some awe-inspiring formats to get people off their sofa and into a seat at the cinema.

ScreenX is the world's first multi-projection cinema with an immersive 270° field of view. By expanding the image beyond the frame, ScreenX places the audience directly at the centre of the story, creating a visually immersive viewing experience unlike any other. To date, there are over 365 ScreenX auditoriums around the world in 40 countries.

4DX is a multi-sensory cinema-going experience, connecting audiences with content through motion, vibration, water, wind, snow, lightning, scents, and special effects enhancing the visuals on-screen. Each 4DX auditorium incorporates motion-based seating synchronised with 21 different effects and optimised by a team of skilled editors. To date, there are 745 4DX auditoriums around the world, in 70 countries.



RealD

RealD's mission is to perfect the visual experience on every screen and on every device. They pioneered digital 3D cinema and today have the world's largest 3D cinema platform with well over 2 billion people having experienced a film in RealD 3D. RealD's network of cinemas includes more than 30,000 installed screens in 75 countries with over 1,200 exhibition partners.

They have recently developed a scientifically engineered matte-white screen that delivers images that are 75% brighter, with stereo contrast 10 times better than a traditional silver screen both in 2D and 3D. The increased brightness and control over the image that comes with the Ultimate Screen presents a crisper, cleaner, and sharper 3D display.



IMAX

As an innovator in entertainment technology, IMAX combines proprietary software, architecture, and equipment to create a fully immersive cinematic experience. From crystal-clear visuals to heart-pounding precision audio, everything in an IMAX cinema is designed to immerse audiences in a different world. IMAX's global network of bespoke auditoriums stands as a premier platform for blockbusters, attracting top filmmakers and studios with the Filmed for IMAX programme.

IMAX with Laser, IMAX's most advanced theatre experience, delivers unparalleled clarity and lifelike images through a groundbreaking 4K laser projection system, featuring a new optical engine, custom-designed lenses, and proprietary technology, enhancing brightness, resolution, contrast, and color range exclusively on IMAX screens.



Innovative cinema space concepts

Cinemas are shifting their business model to create spaces where you spend more time, socialise and engage in a different range of activities, including of course watching films. A large number of cinemas have already expanded their social facilities, with venues hosting a restaurant, bar or coffee shop open to the public, a book store, rooms for community meetings and providing educational areas for film education workshops. Visitors put great value in having community spaces in the cinema where they can hang out before or after the screening, to continue the communal experience that they can't find at home. Cinemas have always been places you go to for escape, entertainment and discovery and have further renewed their role as social hubs.

Multifunctional venues

Blitz CineStar has 28 sites in Croatia, Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo, a total of 182 screens. Among them, Kaptol Boutique Cinema in Zagreb displays five high-end cinema auditoriums and a spacious cinema bar with a terrace. It inspired CineStar to hire the same creative team and continue investing in more cinema bars on its other sites, as part of the overall cinema experience, where visitors can spend time before or after the screening, and which may be used as B2B events locations. CineStar multiplexes have birthday party rooms, with additional entertainment on PlayStation offered in addition to the screening of films, snacks, and birthday cakes. Certain sites have dedicated “Kid Screens” specially designed to incorporate playgrounds in vivid colours that children can enjoy before watching the film.

A completely new hybrid concept of cinema/book store comes from Florence in Italy where **Giunti Odeon** has recently reopened. Partnering with the Italian book store chain Giunti, this single screen offers cinema programming in the gallery mezzanine equipped with 200 cinema seats, with night-time film projections and a LED screen with daytime entertainment in Italian and English. The new concept includes the whole ground floor and the foyer being turned into a Giunti shop,



Cinema/book store, Giunti Odeon, Italy.



Cinema box in a historical building, Lumière Michelen, Belgium.

filled with book shelves with 25,000 plus titles. The building has kept all its ancient architecture, where cinema and books mix with tapestry, ornately decorated columns and golden drapes. Book presentations, art shows, concerts, readings and children's workshops are organised. Giunti also aims to encourage students into the cultural hub with study areas equipped with fast wi-fi. After stocking up on books or before a film night, locals and internationals can enjoy a bite at the adjacent café.

In Norway there is a long tradition of public-private co-operation related to gathering cultural services in purpose-built venues. The municipality of Steinkjer opened their venue in September 2023 with a state-of-the-art cinema, a modern library, two new stages for concerts, conferences and theatre, an exhibition section, a museum, a bakery, a café and an interactive audiovisual space. **Steinkjer Kino** is a 4-screen cinema which offers a PLF auditorium called EPIQ, a colourful boutique hall called BOUTIQ with cozy sofas and lamps and a luxury concept called MAGIQ, equipped with leather recliners. The cinema has been very successful and has positioned the attendance in Steinkjer as the second largest in the region, compared to being the 4th largest prior to the opening of the new cultural venue.

Vega Scene in Oslo is a cultural hub hosting three cinema auditoriums, a theatre and a room for debates, exhibitions and concerts. The theatre is mainly used for débuts of contemporary plays, guest performances and socially engaged drama. Vega Snackbar is attended not only by cinema visitors and serves breakfast, lunch and warm dishes made from local, organic ingredients, and stocks classic cinema snacks.

The arthouse **Café des images** in the French town of Hérouville-Saint-Clair has been expanding the use of its social spaces to appeal to a variety of community needs. They host a 'repair café' once every three months on Sunday where volunteers help try to repair devices. They also welcome a polyglot café where people meet to speak in different languages. Every week a chess club is organised, in addition to a food market offering local products.

Lumière Cinema in Mechelen, Belgium, represents an example of cinema integrated in local community spaces. In 2015, the City of Mechelen granted a concession to Lumière for the operation of a small-scale city cinema in the historic city festival hall. This city hall, which combines Italian Renaissance, Classicism and 1930's characteristics, was labelled as a listed building until 2003 but lost that label due to noise pollution and fell into disrepair. A partner was found in Lumière and the former town hall was given a valuable repurposing into a new meeting place: an urban cinema with space for exhibitions, meetings and a café. The city of Mechelen is responsible for the restoration of the auditorium and Lumière for its new use. Since the building could not meet the strict acoustic standards required for a cinema, a large box-like mirror-covered structure was placed inside the building, which contains three stacked auditoriums.

TheAnyThing is a unique concept in its genre. Labelled as the first on-demand cinema in the world, it can be set up in a variety of locations. TheAnyThing is now located in three venues in the Netherlands – a hotel, a bar, and a multiplex – with a total of 13 rooms, each accommodating from 2 to 5 visitors, for a real private and personalised cinema experience. The first on-demand auditorium opened in 2023 within the newest Pathé Ypenburg, in The Hague. Each private auditorium boasts a distinct interior design and features state-of-the-art visuals and sound systems. Through a mobile app, visitors can reserve their own screening room and choose both the film and the timing that suit them best. The app also provides full control over start times, intermissions, as well as the sound and lighting within the room. Drinks, including cocktails, and snacks can be directly ordered through the app. The film selection ranges from the very latest releases to timeless classics, offering visitors a choice from over 1,000 titles. The company envisions extending this concept further in cinemas in the future, where the on-demand cinematic experience could serve as an addition in a lobby area or retrofitting existing auditoriums within a cinema building.

A large number of cinemas have already expanded their social facilities, with venues hosting a restaurant, a bar or coffee shop open to the public, a book store, rooms for community meetings and providing educational areas for film education workshops.

TheAnyThing – Personal Cinema on Demand – “The Five” at Pathé Ypenburg, The Hague, Netherlands.



These venues allow audiences to spend time in a wide range of activities all under the same roof, appealing to a broad demographic like families, teenagers and young adults.

Cinema entertainment centres

Cinema entertainment centres with arcades, mini-golf, bowling, axe throwing, among other amenities, are very popular in the US, and are growing in Europe as well, with some leading examples in the UK and Italy. These venues allow audiences to spend time in a wide range of activities all under the same roof, appealing to a broad demographic like families, teenagers and young adults. Cinema entertainment centres are often created by converting some auditoriums into entertainment areas, when possible by expanding existing cinemas by adding new surfaces for arcades or other activities, or building new purpose-designed buildings.

The **Light Cinemas** in the UK has pioneered an innovative approach beyond traditional film-watching for a fun night out. It's the first group in the UK to host bowling alleys, darts, karaoke, climbing walls, shuffle boards, among others, to offer its customers a variety of entertainment options, especially when the cinema screens are short of high-potential releases. Bars and concession areas welcome customers who can then decide whether to be entertained at the arcades, bowling, pool tables or enjoy a film night. Auditoriums are equipped with the latest premium technologies and a curated design invites customers to visit more areas of the venues.

Cinelandia in Arosio and Gallarate, Italy, are the only two family entertainment centres in the country. The exhibitor decided to convert some of its auditoriums into entertainment areas for children and teenagers, with indoor playground for the youngest and laser tags for the 10–15-year-olds, focusing on activities which are adrenaline-filled, cutting-edge and safe.

Boutique cinemas

Boutique cinemas, equipped with smaller auditoriums of no more than 100 seats offering a cozy and home-like vibe, are also growing in popularity.

The **Living Room Cinema** opened its first venue in 2017 in Liphook, UK where there were no cinemas at all. As its name suggests, it intends to be a home-like space where the local community can feel welcome. Its foyer and café are designed and decorated with plants and home furniture to give a personal touch. The café is well attended also by visitors who just want to enjoy a quality and local coffee in a cozy environment. A second venue opened in Chipping Northon, hosting two 40 and 48-seater auditoriums equipped with living room sofas and more traditional cinema seats.



Cinema Entertainment Centre, Light Cinemas, United Kingdom.



Boutique dine-in
auditorium, Everyman,
United Kingdom.



Cozy home-feel
boutique auditorium,
The Living Room
Cinema,
United Kingdom.

Everyman is the upmarket chain with 46 sites in the UK specialised in boutique auditoriums with cosy sofas and gourmet dine-in offerings. Their menu includes vegan options, fusion appetizers, wine and cocktails which can be ordered from the seat before the screening starts. Everyman is known for its unique lifestyle approach, offering next-level customer service in a stylish setting. Their programming includes a mixture of new Hollywood releases, older classics and smaller independent films.

ODEON Luxe & Dine Islington is a premium concept of Odeon Cinemas Group with 6 boutique auditoriums containing from 28 to 46 seats. The cinema offers customers first-class luxury reclining seats, in-seat service and a choice of specially selected meals to be ordered with a dedicated mobile app, for exclusive cinema dining.

Besides the UK, other cinemas in Europe have decided to create a boutique cinema feel in one of their auditoriums, such as **Filmhuis Den Haag** in the Netherlands. During the Covid period when bars and restaurants were closed, Filmhuis Den Haag opened a temporary boutique cinema, with 19 seats. It was so successful that they chose to keep it open. The room is equipped with sofas, home-like armchairs and cushions for a cozy and relaxed ambiance. This personalised room suits Filmhuis Den Haag mission, presenting itself as a 'cultural hub' with diverse programming, events, Q&As aimed at enhancing the depth of the cinematic experience.



BOUTIQ hall,
Steinkjer Kino,
Norway.

Dine-in cinemas and new food concepts

From dine-in cinemas with seated food service made of gourmet dishes or tapas, to new food kiosks designs in the lobby, the F&B offering is definitely an aspect where cinemas are showing their creativity.

Nordisk Cinemas has worked on individualising selected venues in its 23 cinemas across Denmark, with a total remodelling of the lobby to include a bar and seating area serving hot dishes and drinks as well as an improved concession area.

Kino Přítomnost in Prague is a boutique cinema that offers food service during the screening and organises events combining cinema and meals. For example, Film & Breakfast cycles includes a film screening with curated menu (meat/vegetarian sets) related to the film. The French film *La Passion de Dodin Bouffant* was accompanied with cheese tasting and grapes, beef bourguignon, brioche with apples and cinnamon custard. Similarly, Film & Dinner offers screenings with a curated dinner menu. The bar inside the auditorium allows to order seasonal cocktails during the screenings.

In Milan **Anteo Palazzo del Cinema** has dedicated one of its 10 auditoriums as a cinema-restaurant. Everyday Sala Nobel offers screenings with food for lunch, aperitif and dinner, with a seasonal menu supplied by the iconic Italian gourmet food market Eataly. Dishes are ordered before the screening starts and served on the small tables next to the seats.

Cinema concessions are kiosks, bars or sales surfaces where visitors can buy popcorn, snacks, drinks or any other types of food and beverage before, during or after the screenings.

Apollo Kino, the entertainment group in the Baltics with 17 multiplexes introduced in 2016 the first-of-its-kind self-service concession concept and now it has been implemented in all its cinemas across the region. Customers, enjoying a hassle-free experience, are more inclined to explore and purchase a wider variety of snacks and beverages. As a result, operational costs have decreased and concession sales have seen a substantial uptick.

Another Baltic cinema group **Cinamon** made substantial changes in its concessions operations by introducing kiosks. Using CINAMON GO kiosks, customers can purchase products with barcode by simply scanning to the reader on the kiosk and adding the rest of their concessions products by finding and selecting them from the screen menu. CINAMON GO kiosks also provide advertising possibilities on full screen when they are not in use.

Odeon Cinemas Group continue to explore innovative ways for guests to buy their cinema food and drinks. For example, through myODEON app, website and in-cinema kiosks, guests can order food and drinks when they want and how they want, providing a seamless journey through the cinema on arrival. Afterwards, Order & Collect option is available in more than 100 European cinemas across the group. Additionally, in order to satisfy guests' desire to enjoy their favourite cinema food in between cinema visits, Odeon has partnered with home delivery companies across five countries to offer a range of products to guests in their own homes.

Cinamon GO Kiosks,
Cinamon, Estonia.



Dine-in cinema
with Taste Towers,
Kinopolis, Germany.



Self-service
concessions,
Apollo Kino,
Estonia.



Green Cinemas

Innovation in cinema technology and spaces has also encouraged the development of more sustainable and energy-efficient venues, especially in these recent years marked by climate emergencies and energy crises. Cinema operators are convinced that greener business is essential, both from an ethical and legal perspective, and will support long-term economic growth.

There are cases of highly advanced projects across Europe, but awareness, public support and infrastructure development vary hugely from country to country. Investments in sustainability range from energy-efficient equipment and insulated buildings to switching to renewable energy sources, automation, conversion to laser projectors, waste management strategies, reusable packaging for food and beverage, greener transportation options for staff and suppliers, among other things.

Some cinema operators are also actively engaged in educating audiences on environmental issues by programming special film cycles on those themes or by encouraging greener mobility options to visit cinemas, such as public transportation or cycling.

The UK Cinema Association's annual conference in 2023 was entirely dedicated to sustainability in cinemas, with the overall theme "Greening the Big Screen experience". The conference highlighted how sustainability issues are increasingly important for the audience, particularly for Gen Zers, and how recycling and waste management are more and more regulated with new initiatives spreading, like the deposit return schemes. Speakers also agreed that renewable energies and the energy and cost savings derived by the transition from xenon to laser projection are key factors for being more energy efficient. Finally, sustainable cinema design, build and operation – with an innovative project looking at 'negative carbon' design featured during the conference – are relevant elements to consider for newly built venues.

"Greening the Big Screen Experience"
UKCA Conference 2023,
United Kingdom.



UNIC Technology Partners



OneCinema

OneCinema (previously known as Eikona) is a Theatre Management System and has been active for more than a decade. Leader in Germany, Benelux, and Switzerland, its reputation is built on top-tier software and reliability. In today's fast-evolving cinema industry, the role of cinema management systems has never been more crucial. Cinema operators, from independent theatres to large cinema chains, require sophisticated solutions to manage their operations efficiently and enhance the cinema-going experience. Advanced cinema management TMS suites provide data through intuitive dashboard interfaces and facilitate pre-emptive maintenance tasks and real-time notifications to staff. Cinema managers can now monitor operations, enhance operational reliability, and utilise modern marketing tools for both the screen and the foyer.

OneCinema shines greener powering off devices as soon as they're not needed, with seamless automation since 2017. Its robust system manages every aspect of technical cinema operations, scheduling from the Big Screen to lobby management and hardware control. OneCinema pioneers browser-based software and cloud systems, always providing modern software and peace of mind to the exhibition industry.

Sharp/NEC

Sharp/NEC is a leading name in Digital Cinema projection and has more than 45,000 Digital Cinema projectors installed worldwide. Together with the product, Sharp/NEC also offers a robust warranty and support service.

Sharp NEC Display Solutions is strongly committed to environmental protection and reducing its carbon footprint through innovation in its production, packaging and shipping processes, and in the meticulous selection of components.

Sharp/NEC is not just in the auditorium, their LCD and LED digital signage solutions also provide a unique visual experience throughout all stages of the customer journey.

Christie

For more than 60 years, Christie has captured the attention of audiences across the world with stunning images and inspiring sound. Christie strongly impacted the film industry with the launch of digital cinema projection, and again advancing the illumination standard from Xenon to RGB pure laser.

Christie continues to deliver the technology behind the magic, with new formats and capabilities that allow directors to tell their stories. With the widest range of DCI-compliant, energy-efficient RGB pure laser projectors with long-lasting light sources, Christie has engineered sustainability into its projectors to prepare exhibitors for the future of cinema. Christie also persists in the advancement of Xenon, offering a 4K projector capable of 120 fps playback and new longer brightness lamps.

Barco

Barco, founded in 1934, is focusing on cinema since the early 2000's with a commitment to creating a new cinematic standard. Today, laser projection is driving innovation as part of the cinema technology renewal wave. The advent of the laser delivers innovation potential for the theatrical experience. Laser projection by Barco is a leading standard in laser today and, since 2014, has catalysed the ability to do more in cinemas.

Laser, combined with Barco's media server technology, comes with a range of innovative benefits: sustainability and efficiency enhancements; greater content playback flexibility; marketing advantages; improved presentation consistency and quality; serviceability and interoperability; as well as connectivity for predictive and remote service. In practice, this means savings of over 70% in terms of electricity and operations versus xenon projectors. Armed with laser as the foundation for a new generation of cinema-going, there is greater potential and ability to experiment with different formats (High Frame Rate, High Dynamic Range, Integrated IAB audio, etc.) and to deliver innovative commercial models that offer a sustainable outlook for exhibition.

Investments in sustainability range from energy-efficient equipment and insulated buildings to switching to renewable energy sources, automation, conversion to laser projectors, waste management strategies, reusable packaging for food and beverage, greener transportation options for staff and suppliers, among other things.



Energy efficiency projects,
Cinecittà Multiplexkino,
Germany.

Energy efficiency initiatives in cinemas

According to [a report on cinemas' carbon footprint](#) published by the CNC, HVAC (heating, ventilation, air conditioning) accounts for 70% of the cinemas' energy consumption, whereas server/sound/projection correspond to approximately 16%.

A number of cinemas across Europe are taking initiatives to monitor their energy consumption and to turn to greener energy sources, both for environmental and economic reasons.

Cinecittà Multiplexkino, the family-owned 23-screen cinema, hosting a bookshop, three restaurants and bar areas, the largest cinema by footprint area in Germany and the second by box office, has been at the forefront of innovation when it comes to reducing its energy consumption. It launched the process of measuring usage and implementing efficiencies more than a decade ago — including the construction of its own adjacent power plant. With the recent energy crisis, Cinecittà was able to reduce its energy consumption by a third, thanks to its renewed efforts on efficiency and thorough approach to building management systems. The management were also able to make important investments to increase the venue's sustainability. The next big project will be the conversion of the power plant from natural gas to renewables with solar panels on its roof, covering about 20% of total energy consumption and with building its own hydraulic power plant, aiming to open by 2025. The target is to generate 80% of the venue's power needs from water and sunlight.



Energy consumption monitoring, Helios Cinemas, Poland.



Carbon footprint reducing programme, Savoy Cinemas, United Kingdom.

Kinepolis has focused heavily on energy efficiency in recent years, thanks in part to the commissioning of tailor-made building management systems that continuously monitor energy consumption. As an example, it allowed Kinepolis Spain to reduce its electricity consumption in 2022 with 8 cinemas to its consumption of 2011, when it had only 3 cinemas. Thanks to an energy dashboard, local managers can monitor the daily energy consumption per screen and benchmark it to other screens. The building management systems also integrate Kinepolis' projection systems and ticketing system. That ensures, for example, that air-condition and ventilation are adjusted to the projection time.

Similarly, **Helios Cinemas** in Poland conducts daily analysis of electricity consumption on specified electrical circuits, especially in energy-intensive air-conditioning units, cinema projectors, light signage and concessions. This remote control and detailed real-time measurement allows immediate reaction in case of deviations in energy consumption. Helios' newest cinemas are also equipped with CO₂ sensors.

Savoy Cinemas, 6 sites in the Midlands in the UK, are strongly committed to reduce their carbon footprint through a comprehensive plan which has turned to be environmentally and economically sustainable, based on four target areas: buildings, culture, retail and suppliers. All Savoy sites have converted their screening rooms with laser projectors, with a 75% reduction of projection energy costs; LED is largely used for auditorium lighting, signage and billboards; HVAC is recycled with heat use and CO₂ sensors in auditoriums; automation is implemented in all venues to power on and off equipment when necessary; new buildings are completely insulated, whereas innovative solutions are being investigated for old buildings; water consumption is limited and rain harvesting systems are being considered; energy consumption is monitored with half-hourly meters to identify areas when energy use can be further reduced. Every employee needs to be engaged in sustainability practices for them to be effective. Two staff members have been appointed as Sustainability Director and Lead and thematic team workshops were organised with a consulting company. Retail practices includes switching to local food suppliers when possible and replacing single-use plastic packaging with reusable or recyclable alternatives. Finally, Savoy is working with film distributors and screen advertisers to analyse the carbon impact of what is projected on screen and is liaising with all other suppliers to mitigate their carbon emissions.

Sustainable cinema buildings

New projects to test and promote sustainable cinema buildings are spreading across Europe. At the UKCA Conference in 2023 InventaCinema presented a project of a low carbon modular cinema, suitable for newly built cinemas in smaller or rural towns. These low carbon venues can host up to five auditoriums, but also cafés and conference halls and can be easily relocated in another area. The buildings are on one floor, in order to be more accessible, and are constructed with an attention to natural material such as wood and straw boards.

Depot Cinema is an independent 3-screen cinema in Lewes, UK, which was renovated in 2016 and opened in 2017. The new building meets the highest sustainability standards, powered only by renewable energies and putting a high priority on reducing the footprint and having the lower carbon impact. Depot was recognised at The Big Screen Awards 2022 for continued efforts to promote climate-conscious, sustainable practices in the cinema industry – specifically by demonstrating a clear strategy around creating a greener, low carbon workplace and promoting sustainable practices with employees, suppliers and customers. Their sustainable practices include regular monitoring of their emissions, carbon offsetting, choosing suppliers with the lowest possible footprint considering their locality and ethical



OUR FOOTPRINT ON THE EARTH

lewesdepot.org/climateactionfestival



Climate Action! Festival,
Depot Cinema,
United Kingdom.

HVAC (heating, ventilation, air conditioning) accounts for 70% of the cinemas' energy consumption, whereas server/sound/projection correspond to approximately 16%.

and environmental credentials, a waste management strategy focusing on reducing waste, prioritising reusable containers and recycling 82% of the produced waste, hosting and organising festivals and events to raise awareness on environmental issues, encouraging greener transportation options for staff and visitors.

Another example of a newly built cinema with a low carbon impact comes from France. The 5-screen **Véo Grand Central** in Colomiers, near Toulouse, was built in 2021 and is the first cinema in France receiving both the label for high environmental quality (based on its insulation and energy efficiency) and the certificate as bio-based building, combining a ratio of renewable materials like clay and wood with concrete and steel.

Waste management and cinema concessions

Relevant examples of waste management come from the Balkans with **Blitz CineStar**. It introduced significant changes in its daily operations, from encouraging paperless online ticket purchase and replacing plastic loyalty cards with digital membership, to gradually reducing plastic with more environment-friendly materials for its food packaging. In addition, instead of cardboard boxes, popcorn is now served in biodegradable paper bags which take less time to degrade and cause lower CO₂ emission during transportation. Sustainability is also implemented through programming with the Green Week at all its cinemas on the occasion of Earth Day, and its “Be in the green movie” communication campaign, designed to draw attention to the importance of the preservation of nature and the environment and motivate visitors to consider what they can do for the benefit of nature.

Odeon UK has recently launched a series of initiatives focused on recycling. The Project Re:Station intends to upcycle old sanitation stations used in the Covid period into recycling stations, by pairing them with some existing foyer bins, with improved signage. Initial results are promising with several trial sites improving their recycling percentage, some by a considerable amount. Along with the improved recycling, this has saved the stations from going into general waste and the cost of disposal being deferred with the extended life of the units. In addition, following the audience's demand to improve their recycling options, all Odeon UK venues have

clearly labelled recycling bins and added new glass and organic waste recycling capacity. A dedicated communication with videos using #showusyourbins and ‘TipTok’ social media trend has turned out to be successful and brought visitors onboard.

New solutions to reduce packaging waste are being tested by some operators across Europe, with reusable containers such as at family-run 90-year-old **Central Filmtheater** in Ludwigsburg in the south-west of Germany, providing reusable containers for popcorn, nachos and candies which are conveniently washed in-house with a specialised solution for hard plastic containers.

Similarly, **Kinopolis** is offering soft drinks exclusively in reusable cups in all its cinemas since November 2021. These are made of 100% reusable polypropylene, are dishwasher-safe and BPA-free. By switching to reusable cups, the amount of waste has been reduced by 65 tons of disposable cups and a further five tons of packaging waste. All plastic straws have been replaced with equivalent made from natural fibres. In addition, popcorn and nacho packaging is produced exclusively from recycled resources. 80% of their consumers are in favour of this new practice, which turned out to be also economically viable, since Kinopolis found a way of reducing the price per cup to now be lower than for disposable cups.

Sustainability in cinema concessions also comes also from the choice of food and drinks available for sale. The French association **“Mieux Manger au Ciné”** (translated as “Better Bites at the Cinema”) was launched in 2020, collaborating with cinemas, cultural venues, and individuals from the cinematic, artistic, and culinary realms to reimagine food offerings. Developed by the food agency Alimentation Générale and the cinema operator Haut et Court, the association has launched various actions. First, they organise an annual national innovation contest that invites entrepreneurs to propose new and healthier products, with selected items then showcased on an online platform for discovery and direct ordering. Products include for example organic crisps, flavoured nuts, artisanal ice creams, dried fruits, lemonades and kombuchas. Secondly, the association regularly communicates with cinema groups and independent cinemas to promote new healthier offerings, emphasising effective marketing to introduce these products to the public. Special events are organised to combine food and culture, such as screenings, food markets, and conferences, that enhance conviviality and enrich the overall cinematic experience.

A sustainable choice of the products on offer at the cinema kiosk was taken also by **Scala Filmtheater** in Warendorf, Germany, which sources its corn for popcorn directly from a farm in the region that relies on regenerative agriculture, by purchasing in bulk and collecting the merchandise on-site.

Coca-Cola

Coca-Cola is a total beverage company operating in more than 200 countries. They constantly transform their portfolio, from reducing added sugar in their drinks to new product innovation. They seek to positively impact people’s lives, communities and the planet through water replenishment, packaging recycling, sustainable sourcing practices and carbon emissions reductions across their value chain.

In many European markets, Coca-Cola Freestyle is available, offering more than 100 sparkling and still beverage choices. This revolutionary product delivery method is helping the company respond to people’s evolving tastes and introduce them to new products and options.

Coca-Cola recognises their responsibility to help solve complex plastic waste challenges facing the planet and society. In 2018, they launched an ambitious strategy called World Without Waste to drive systemic change through a circular economy for packaging through package design and collection and partnering with others. And in 2022, they announced an industry-leading goal to have at least 25% of their beverage volume worldwide sold in refillable/returnable glass or plastic bottles or in fountain dispensers with reusable packaging by 2030.

Through industry forums including the UNIC/Coca-Cola Circular Economy Retail Group and CineEurope, Coca-Cola has showcased and promoted new packaging design, recycling and supporting reusable packaging with the one objective of demonstrating circular economy systems.





Anteo Rai Cinema Spazio
Realtà Virtuale, Anteo Palazzo
del Cinema, Italy.

Virtual Reality as an immersive media has technologically matured to a degree that it is able to reach new and wide audiences. It has the potential to play a central role for future generations in the way they can experience audiovisual artistic works. Virtual Reality has been tested by cinemas and although it won't strongly impact the core business of film screening, there are successful examples of venues integrating this technology to attract specific target audiences, especially teenagers.

Nu:Reality in the Netherlands has created an innovative model for bringing artistic VR to audiences. After a pilot initiative in 2023 at three of the largest arthouse cinemas in the Netherlands, a second edition has come up in March 2024, now including seven cinemas. Nu:Reality creates a permanent home for cinematic VR in cinemas by making it a part of the cinema programming, infrastructure and experience. Nu:Reality created VR-Hubs, consisting of two Interactive VR stations for personalised exploration and a VR cinema that shows 360° VR film in a cinema setting. The Interactive hubs can receive two visitors at a time and the 360° VR screenings have a maximum of 25 visitors per screening. The pilot included marketing solutions, two thematic programmes on socially relevant issues, training of staff, research and education. After six months of weekly dedicated programming in three cinemas, Nu:Reality achieved 622 Interactive experiences and 360° VR screenings and over 3,000 visitors. The second edition of Nu:Reality continues in seven cinemas in the Netherlands, with three new VR programmes.

Anteo Palazzo del Cinema launched “Anteo Rai Cinema Spazio Realtà Virtuale” in 2023, the first cinema in Italy equipped with virtual reality within their premises. It is also the first and only paid VR cinema with regular programming all year round in the country. An area on the third floor of Anteo Palazzo del Cinema is permanently dedicated to the VR Experience with 20 seats rotating to 360° and equipped with headsets. The VR programming, in collaboration with Rai Cinema, includes short films covering a range of current issues such as environmental protection, socially relevant themes, and important cultural content of the national heritage. In the future, the programming calendar will also include meetings with guests and special activities.

Augmented Reality, Virtual Reality and Artificial Intelligence in cinemas

While the potential impact of Artificial Intelligence on filmmaking is evident, from scriptwriting and casting to VFX and distribution, its role in cinema exhibition is still limited. As reported in the DX study “Film Forward”, generative AI like Chat GPT, at its basic level, can be a very useful tool to help cinemas streamline and save time on every day, admin-heavy or tedious tasks. It can help idea generation and support creative writing and content development, as well as helping edit, proof-read, refine and improve marketing copy. For small cinema businesses, or teams where resources are limited, generative AI can help complete tasks that might otherwise have to be outsourced, saving time and money. Practical examples of how Chat GPT or similar tools can support cinema marketing activities include ideating social media content ideas, generating relevant hashtags for social media posts, creating captivating social media post captions, writing copy for websites, attention-grabbing newsletter hooks and content, crafting a relevant newsletter calendar.

Lillehammer Kino in Norway has decided to integrate ChatGPT into their marketing process to test AI for email marketing. In her initial tests, the exhibitor was amazed at how quickly ChatGPT could create content and can see how it could save her time while planning her marketing initiatives.

New immersive technologies are currently experimented in cinemas across the world, from chains opening cinemas in the Metaverse for the first time, like South Korea’s CJ CGV or groups using NFT (Non-fungible tokens) in their loyalty programmes or reward schemes, such as CGR in France and Cinemark in the US. While the use of these technologies is still limited in the cinema industry, it will surely be a trend to monitor in the upcoming years.

Virtual Reality Screening,
Nu:Reality, Netherlands.

An AI-powered cinema software could predict who is coming to the cinema, and when, deliver customised offers for each visitor and automatically generate targeted, relevant marketing and sales activations. That same predictive data analysis would also be able to plan staffing and stock accordingly.



Cinemas are increasingly innovative in diversifying their offering also from a content perspective. This approach involves curating cinema programming with dedicated film cycles and activities designed to cater to all audience groups.

Innovation in content



YogaBio,
Nordisk Film Biografer,
Denmark.



Babybio,
Nordisk Film Biografer,
Denmark.

Beyond film screenings, cinema auditoriums are used for a broad range of events.

Examples of such diversification include children's screenings, parents and toddlers shows, broadcasts of football matches or sporting events, participation in and viewing of e-sports, special live events for occasions like Oscar nights or national award ceremonies, and cycles targeting specific demographics, such as matinées for seniors featuring coffee and cake. Beyond film screenings, cinema auditoriums are used for a broad range of events, including live music concerts, quiz nights, poetry slams, stand-up comedy shows, art or photo exhibi-

tions, creative workshops, and book clubs. Private hires present another avenue for cinemas to maximise attendance while meeting the specific needs of target groups, such as professional conferences or university lectures, influencer-hosted events, and jukebox screenings where visitors choose their film in advance and promote the screenings among their friends. This diversification underscores cinemas' adaptability and commitment to providing a multifaceted entertainment experience for their audiences.

Event cinema

Cinemas often feature other arts and cultural activities in their screenings. Event Cinema screenings, chiefly of theatre, opera, and ballet, are now a well-established part of the programme of a wide variety of venues.

The Event Cinema Association, a non-profit organisation that supports and promotes event cinema on behalf of the industry and its members, which include exhibitors, distributors and vendors, defines event cinema (also called alternative content) as the use of cinemas to screen a varied range of live and/or pre-recorded entertainment. These releases are typically categorised as content that is not a feature film and does not have a traditional theatrical window. This is an evolving area that now incorporates content such as: sport, opera, concerts, musicals, ballet, one-off TV specials, current affairs, art gallery exhibitions and live gaming. Event cinema is increasingly defined by its methodology of release rather than by the content. Typically, this is a ‘one or two night only’ release strategy, often accompanied by encore screenings. Nonetheless, titles which have performed well and continue to be in demand, will have a longer run in cinemas.

Music content can also drive cinema admissions as clearly proven by the *Taylor Swift: The Eras Tour* concert phenomenon in the US and in Europe in 2023, which achieved the highest ever box office takings for an event cinema release in the UK and Ireland for example. Events around music album releases, live opera concerts or pop culture biopics can attract audience groups that wouldn’t necessarily be regular cinema-goers. The UK and Ireland saw other event cinema titles dominating the charts in 2023, besides *The Eras Tour*. The theatre production *A Little Life*, Royal Opera House shows and K-Pop phenomena ranked in top positions in the weekly charts.

In Germany the cinema **Weltspiegel Mettmann** is specialised in presenting alternative content, offering live opera shows, concerts and art exhibitions on a weekly basis.

Vue International’s event cinema programme has seen record breaking performances in the last five years including by *Taylor Swift: The Eras Tour*. Vue has also developed new ways to engage its customers who came together to share an accessible experience with fellow fans, by providing limited edition, collectable and reusable branded cups for Taylor Swift.

Taylor Swift:
The Eras Tour
event screening,
Vue International,
United Kingdom.



***Taylor Swift: The Eras Tour* achieved the highest ever box office takings for an event cinema release in the UK and Ireland.**

UGC also programmes seasons of opera shows, both live and recorded, from the most famous opera houses in the world. Customers in their French and Belgian cinemas can decide to buy the whole season’s subscription or single tickets.

According to Generation Media, a leading independent media planning and buying specialist for children, young people and family brands, videogames are among the content most watched by children and teenagers on social media. The most common shared experience for this age group seems to be gaming, since nine in ten children are playing videogames. Also the number of adult gamers playing has increased by 40% year-on-year. This trend has an impact also on cinemas, with more operators testing gaming and e-sports events in their venues.

Cinegaming is a German project where visitors can play their favourite videogames on the Big Screen, by booking their preferred time slot and cinema and bringing their own console, games and friends to play with. It’s available in over 20 cinemas across the country, including UCI and Cineplex multiplexes, among others.

Blitz CineStar’s new multiplex in Prishtina, Kosovo, has included a gaming hall in its premises. Modern technology enables the transformation of the cinema hall into a gaming battlefield with an emphasis on the experience of playing on a large screen, top-notch surround sound, and the fastest network. The capacity of the auditorium is 182 seats with 10 special gaming seats. The VIP row allows for easy connection of consoles and controllers. The gaming hall can be rented for gaming events and competitions, as well as for private events and birthday parties.

Opera screenings,
UGC, France.



Gaming session
in cinemas,
Blitz Cinestar,
Kosovo.



Gofilex

The Gofilex e-delivery network is the largest worldwide cinema feature delivery network, spanning 7,000+ cinemas in over 110 countries. Using the Gofilex network, releasing a film to cinemas is now done by simply pressing a button. The Gofilex network also streams live events into cinemas (without satellites), making them run smoothly, and preparing cinemas for the future.

Cinio, Gofilex’s new platform, merges e-delivery and streaming into a new experience. Cinemas can access all content in Gofilex’s network, from anywhere; and content producers and rights-holders are able to get their content into cinemas across the world.



Curated programming for specific audiences

Developing a curated cinema programming targeting diverse audience groups and the local community can be a challenging task for exhibitors, but shows their commitment to serve all target groups and to act as cultural operators.

The Polish group **Helios** has focused on themed cycles such as “Nocne Maratony Filmowe,” (Film Night Marathons) which, beyond just a film marathon, is an opportunity for night owls and cinephiles to indulge in a unique cinematic atmosphere. Helios also hosts “Kina Konesera” (Cinema Connoisseur) with niche, thought-provoking narratives, often winning awards at film festivals. “Kino Kobiet” tailors cinematic experiences for a female audience, preceded by engaging pre-show activities. The “Helios na Scenie” project extends beyond traditional films, offering access to global concerts and art exhibitions on the Big Screen. “Helios Sport” features films about sport and sportsmen, sport matches and world tournaments, and “Helios Anime” addresses Japanese anime fan club, whereas “Cinema for Kids” offers children screenings during weekends.

Odeon UK & Ireland has developed a comprehensive approach to help their visitors find content they want to see, creating the brand “Open for all”. The programming teams showcase a range of films within each sub brand – for example, “Silvers” is for over 60s, where that age group can enjoy a cup of tea and a catch up with friends, at early-bird showtimes. “Newbies” is a cycle addressed to new parents, with low light and softer sound for newborns. “Kids” targets content for the youngest with reduced prices, and “Event cinema” allows guests to fully immerse themselves in the best live events on the Big Screen. “Spotlight” is a curated programme to highlight hidden gems, independent and arthouse films and to encourage people to take a chance on a film they might not have otherwise spotted. Another personal touch in content offering is brought by the secret cinema initiative “Screen Unseen”, where visitors can watch highly anticipated films in pre-view, but without knowing which film they are going to see until the cinema lights go down. Clues are shared in advance on social media to create anticipation. Film can be of any genre except horror, for which another dedicated cycles “Scream Unseen” has been developed.

Film night marathon,
Helios Cinemas,
Poland.



Children screening cycle,
Helios Cinemas,
Poland.





Dog-friendly screening,
Picturehouse,
United Kingdom.

Nordisk has also implemented a dedicated cycle for new parents with babies, called BabyBio, with the lights dimmed in the auditorium for babies to take a nap or rest in the parents' arms during the film, the possibility to store the baby carriage in the lobby and the cinema staff caring for newborns during the film if needed. Another creative and trendy initiative organised by Nordisk is YogaBio, where visitors can bring their yoga mat to the cinema and enjoy an hour of yoga in the lobby before the film with a fresh fruit bowl and a hot beverage.

Blitz CineStar regularly organise a series of film-themed events that include additional benefits to customers such as partner gifts, cosplay events, live performances, etc. These include: "Cine & Wine" – with wine tasting

before film screening, "Cine Lady" – ladies' nights with special gifts, "Très Chic" – film premieres in boutique cinemas with gifts to visitors, "CineFan" – with previews of popular action franchises, "CineHero" – with super-hero films, "Cinema Book Club" – literary panels before premieres of films adapted from books, "CineQuizz" – at the cinema bars, "Boutique Experience" – at boutique auditoriums with drinks at the bar prior to screenings and premium seating.

Kino Aero is among the most event-driven cinemas in the Czech Republic, since most of their screenings have introductions with guests or are part of special programming cycles. Their curated film cycles include "Legends in Aero" with cult screenings with Q&As with film critics, "Blind Screenings" where you never

know what films you will see, "Masters of Animation" with cult animated films and Japanese anime, "Pop culture Milestones" featuring popular cult films followed by discussions and event screenings of Rocky Horror Picture Show, complemented with dressed-up actors on stage and among the viewers. Kino Aero also proposes expat-friendly screenings of Czech films with English subtitles called "Some Like It Czech", similarly to the other Czech cinema Art Kino in Brno.

The need for screening of local or international films with subtitles in English is felt especially in European capitals welcoming a large number of non-native speakers, who would not be able to enjoy a film night without these inclusive options targeted to them, such as at **Cinéma Galeries** in Brussels.

Kinepolis introduced its CINE K concept in France back in 2014 with great success. In 2022 and 2023 CINE K was launched in all its European territories. CINE K is a 'cinema-in-cinema' concept that enables Kinepolis to highlight quality films and arthouse titles that need a bit more time and word-of-mouth to attract their audience. By showing them in a more intimate setting, in a smaller auditorium and with a monthly programming, the artistic importance of these films is highlighted to a wide audience. In nearly all European Kinepolis cinemas, one or two screens are devoted to CINE K.

Picturehouse is running dog-friendly screenings. Every month or so, well-behaved dogs and their friendly owners are welcome at a select film screening, usually taking place on Sunday morning. It's a great way for dog owners to enjoy cinema without having to leave their pet at home and to meet fellow dog-owning film fans. The cinemas always have snacks and water ready, and ensure all dogs sit on a blanketed seat to avoid any hairs or mess. After the event, the room is thoroughly cleaned, making sure those furry cinephiles leave no trace behind. To further cater to cinema-loving pooches, the volume is dipped, as the team know they have superhero hearing powers. It's an original initiative offered at cinemas – the ideal way to capture a growing audience of dog lovers.

A film offer for each age group

Innovation also occurs in education, with efforts focused on imparting the appreciation of films on the Big Screen to younger audiences. Children today are born into a digital age, granting them instant access to screens at any time and place. Consequently, it becomes imperative to instil in them, from a very early age, the unparalleled experience of watching a film with superior picture and sound quality on a large screen, free from external distractions. Numerous cinemas across Europe are dedicated to their role as film educators, actively guiding their youngest audience through the cinematic experience by developing customised activities and programmes.

Kinodvor is a municipal arthouse cinema in the centre of Ljubljana, Slovenia, offering a dedicated programme for every age group and need. “First Timers” is aimed at children aged 2–3 and offers laid-back screenings of carefully selected 45-minute-long films with quiet audio and a cosy atmosphere. “Kinobalon” is Kinodvor’s award-winning educational programme for children of

all ages with the goal of introducing the next generation of cinephiles to the magic of cinema. “Kinodvor’s School Programme” provides a variety of films, talks and workshops for around 20,000 pupils at all school levels. “Kinotrip” offers a space for teenage film lovers to curate a unique film festival and events created by the youth for the youth. “Kino-babies” is addressed to parents with new-borns, while “Babysitting” screenings consists of two separate simultaneous films for parents and their children. “Rendez-vous with Coffee and Talk” is a morning programme for seniors, with a screening followed by a coffee and talk in the foyer.

Picturehouse Cinemas has developed an affordable family screenings programme, such as Toddler Time and Kids’ Club, in order to try to reduce barriers to attending the cinema for people on low income. Young audiences are also catered for via U25, a free scheme for 16–25-year-olds which offers cheaper tickets during the week days. Alongside this, in 2023 Picturehouse launched a Fresh Takes review scheme, inviting those aged 16–25 to apply for the chance to review films for

the Picturehouse website – often including early access to a film screening. All reviews are published on the Picturehouse blog, often giving these young reviewers their first opportunity to be published, and the best review each month receives a Picturehouse Membership to enjoy. In addition, Silver Screen is a free-to-join club for the over-60s, who can enjoy discounted tickets and a free tea or coffee in selected shows.

Kinobalon
programme,
Kinodvor,
Slovenia.





Schermi e Lavagne
children programme,
Cineteca di Bologna,
Italy.

In Italy, **Cineteca di Bologna** is at the forefront in offering a comprehensive film literacy programme from toddlers to university students thanks to their educational department “Schermi e Lavagne” (Screens and Blackboards). The programme includes screenings, workshops, courses, meetings and contests for all school levels and families. From workshops to create an animation or a short film, to courses on filmmaking and young ambassadors programme for young cinephiles, the education programme is very diverse and constantly evolving.

“**La Petite Lanterne**”, is a young audience initiative available in a large number of venues across Switzerland, offering a cinema initiation activity for 4–6 year-olds in the company of their parents. It takes a child-friendly approach to the cinema, helping them to get to grips with the Big Screen with complete confidence. This very first introduction to the cinema includes six screenings spread over two years, with each

screening focusing on a different theme, such as the music in films, the diversity of the cinema world, understanding emotions or the different film techniques. Children can then extend their discovery of cinema at home by visiting the website with their parents, where they will find games and activities to do on their own or as a family relating to the themes of the six screenings.

“**Quiet, Camera, Action! or Youth Film Code**”, launched by three arthouse cinemas in Poland and supported by Europa Cinemas’ Collaborate to Innovate scheme, is an ambitious project that aims to revolutionise film education for teenagers aged 14–19. By combining film screenings, thematic workshops, and classic learning programmes, the project introduces a new form of film education. Participants not only analyse and interpret films but also explore various professions in filmmaking and engage with European cinema. The inclusion of video podcasts, featuring dedicated interviews conducted by a film critic, adds an interactive dimension to the project. Participants are given the opportunity to collaborate on their own productions, and the outcomes, including reports and analyses, are shared on social media. The extensive material developed during the project is made available in English on a dedicated platform, allowing partner cinemas across Europe to access and implement innovative methods of engaging with young audiences.

Cine Embajadores in Madrid launched an initiative targeted to the 16–30-year-olds called European Passport, with the goal of promoting European films to young audiences. The project consists of creating a kind of European passport for young people where they commit to watch a film from each and every EU country within 2024. The cinema puts a stamp of the related territory in the passport as the visitor watches a film of that nationality. At the completion of the mission the visitor will get a reward, such as cinema tickets or a giveaway for a weekend in a European City, among others.

Numerous cinemas across Europe are dedicated to their role as film educators, actively guiding their youngest audience through the cinematic experience by developing customised activities and programmes.

Innovative collaboration between cinemas and streaming platforms

Experimental collaborations between cinemas and VOD platforms have recently emerged, introducing innovative business models and revenue streams that prove beneficial for both partners. Some operators have embraced this coexistence with streaming platforms, exploring ventures such as launching their own streaming services or engaging in partnerships with “virtual cinema” platforms.

Picl is a Dutch TVOD platform that creates synergies with arthouse cinemas. It currently collaborates with 39 cinemas in the Netherlands and 5 in Belgium. Film lovers who cannot go to the cinema can watch a film online, on the Picl page of their local cinema, by renting the film at a similar price to the cinema ticket. The revenue will then be split between the partner cinema and the platform.

Some exhibition companies have launched their own TVOD independent platform, which offers connected and complementary programming than the one on the Big Screen. This is particularly effective where the cinema also operates as a distributor, such as MioCinema in Italy, launched by the arthouse circuit Circuito Cinema and the distributor Lucky Red, Cineplexx VOD Club, launched by the Austrian circuit Cineplexx, MyLum in Belgium launched by the Flemish exhibition and distribution company Lumière and Curzon Home Cinema in the UK developed by the independent cinema group and distributor Curzon.

Partnerships between cinema operators and streaming platforms allow them to mutualise revenues, such as the one between Vue and Sky Cinema, offering the broadcast customers the chance to snap up two free Vue cinema tickets every month, getting access to the latest releases at no extra cost.

MUBI, the independent VOD platform playing selected, curated titles accompanied by film reviews and additional editorial content, has shown its support to cine-

mas not only by operating as a theatrical distributor in some European territories, but also with MUBI Go. With this option, MUBI premium subscribers in the UK, Ireland and Germany get a free cinema ticket per week to watch a newly released film selected by MUBI curators. The cinema ticket can be redeemed at any partner venue showing the film selection.

MUBI Go mobile app, United Kingdom & Ireland.



Picl VOD platform, Netherlands.



Conclusion

Cinemas stand at the forefront of innovation, demonstrating a resilience that has enabled them to thrive in the face of evolving entertainment landscapes. Cinemas are dynamic hubs of creativity, embodying a commitment to enhancing the audience experience. They are not just places to watch films, but spaces that actively engage with diverse communities, fostering a sense of belonging and shared experiences. Cinemas are committed to support the communities where they are located with a growing number of initiatives centred around accessibility, inclusion and sustainability.

In their pursuit of excellence, cinemas continue to leverage cutting-edge technology to deliver a premium cinematic experience. From state-of-the-art projection systems to immersive sound technologies, cinemas ensure that their audiences are enveloped in an unparalleled experience.

And by offering a carefully curated selection of films, events, and experiences for all age groups and target audiences, cinemas make sure to appeal to a broad spectrum of cinema-goers.

**We look
forward to
seeing you at
the cinema!**

UNIC

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Operator members

- Apollo Kino**
Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania
- Blitz Cinestar**
Croatia, Kosovo, Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina
- Cinamon**
Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania
- Pathé Cinémas**
Belgium, France, the Netherlands,
Switzerland, Tunisia
- Cinemax**
Czechia, Romania, Slovakia
- Cavea Cinemas**
Georgia
- Cineplex**
Germany
- Cineplexx**
Albania, Austria, Bosnia and Herzegovina,
Croatia, Greece, Italy, Kosovo, North Macedonia,
Montenegro, Romania, Serbia, Slovenia
- Cineworld and Cinema City International**
Israel, Hungary, Poland, Czechia, Romania,
Bulgaria, Slovakia, United Kingdom, United States
- Kinepolis Group**
Belgium, Canada, France, Luxembourg,
the Netherlands, Poland, Spain, Switzerland,
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- Kinopolis**
Germany
- Kino Arena**
Bulgaria
- Movies@Cinemas**
Ireland
- Multiplex**
Ukraine (Pilot period)
- Nordisk Film Biografer**
Denmark, Norway, Sweden
- Cinemas NOS**
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Kingdom
- Yelmo Cines (Cinépolis Group)**
Spain