

Quvis Film Festival Benchmarking Study

11/30/12

Executive Summary

As actual celluloid becomes scarcer by the day, the trend seen in this Quvis survey of film festival organizers suggests that film festivals are embracing the change. The word “film” may no longer be relevant when it comes to film festivals. But with studios ceasing to produce celluloid in 2013, film is already dead; the only thing left is the final burial.

Film festivals sit at the forefront of the theater-going experience. This is where everyone from newly minted filmmakers to part-time editors to the world’s top directors come to showcase their work. In the festival world there is room for the young filmmaker showing off their final academic project all the way up through Brian DePalma and his latest magnum opus.

So if you’re looking for the pulse of what’s happening when it comes to film technology, this is the place to be.

Digital Rules the Submission Roost

Nearly all the films submitted to festivals for consideration come in some kind of digital format, whether that is a DVD, BluRay or a streaming service. In fact, most judges watch first round submissions on computers and laptops, only seeing them on the screen at the festival itself.

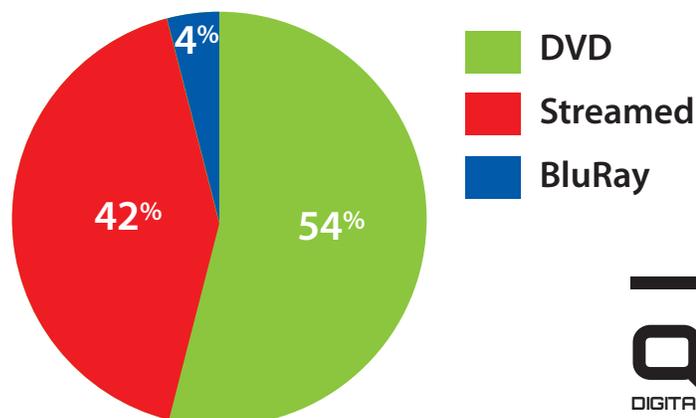
When asked to rank how common it is for filmmakers to submit in different formats, festival organizers pegged DVD as the most common submission format. That handily beat out a secured streaming service, but both BluRay and unsecured video stream were in the middle of the pack, both nearly tied. The most uncommon submission format was film.

This, of course, lines up with how festival organizers WANT to receive submissions. When asked for preference, 47% listed DVD as their preferred submission method while 31% listed a secured streaming service. BluRay is preferred by about 15% of those surveyed. Few ask for other formats as a judging medium.

Within larger festivals- 300+ submissions- there is a stronger preference for utilizing the convenience and potential cost savings with getting submissions through a streamed service. Most still prefer DVD submissions, but 42% of larger festivals prefer streamed submissions. This makes sense given the complexity and cost of distributing DVD’s among geographically diverse judges. Over time, we expect the preference for streamed submissions to grow.

What is your preferred format to receive submissions?

Includes only larger festivals with 300+ submissions

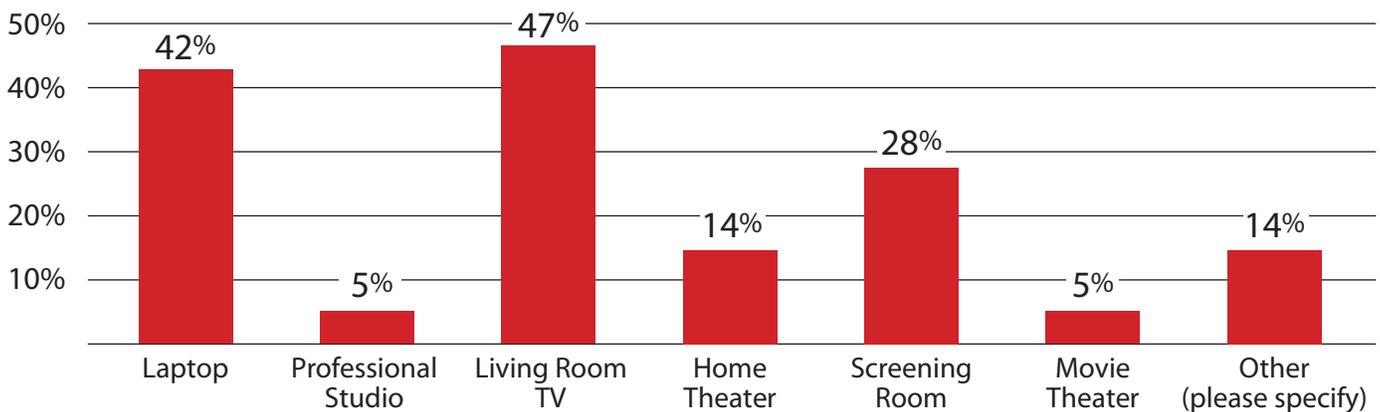


Where do Judges View Films?

As you'd expect, the medium affects both the viewing location and how festival judges view films. Each festival has its own viewing method, with one larger festival organizer noting that the judges meet once a week to look at films together. But on the whole judges tend to watch in places that are convenient for them. Being that judges view films over time, they have multiple places that they view each round.

When viewing first round submissions, convenience seems key with 89% of respondents viewing some submissions via laptop or home television. Only 33% of respondents seek the solitude of a screening room or professional studio to evaluate first round. Note tht judges often use multiple viewing methods, so many selected more than one choice.

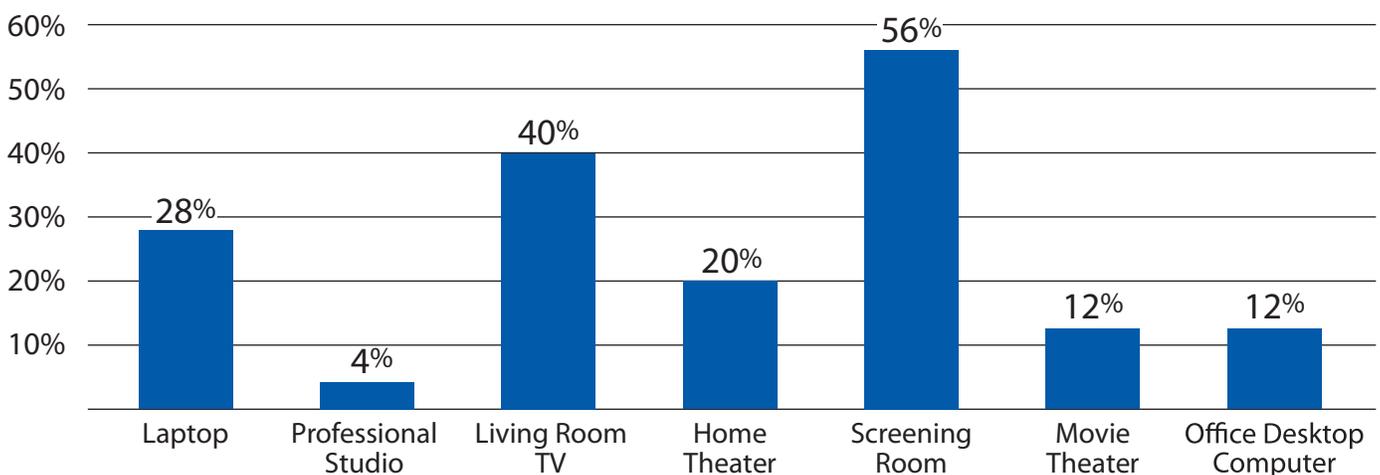
Where do you review your first round films? Includes all respondents (Does not sum up to 100% as respondents could select more than one choice)



Things begin to change in final round viewing - especially when segmenting the larger versus smaller festivals.

Among all festivals, about 30% report watching final round on a laptop or computer. Most commonly mentioned for final judging was the home TV or home theater with 67% saying they view there. But among larger festivals, more judges flock to a screening room with 56% seeking to replicate the theater environment for final evaluation.

Where do you review your final round films? Includes festivals with 300+ submissions (Does not sum up to 100% as respondents could select more than one choice)



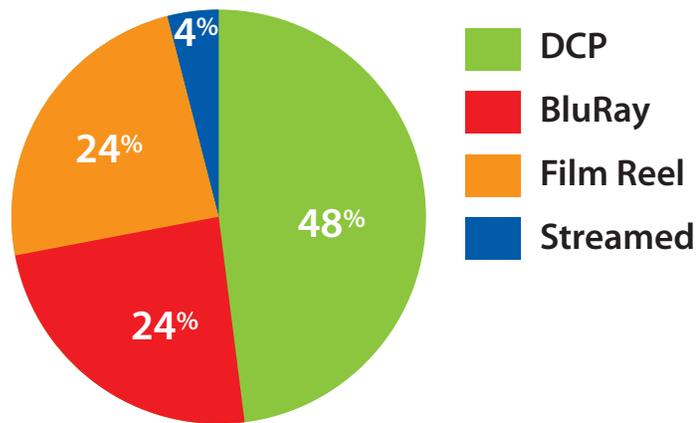
While the trend toward digital submissions has been coming for some time, the big shift is happening at the display level. When asked for the format that provides viewers with the best theatrical experience, nearly 35% of the festival organizers surveyed singled out DCP as tops. Another 30% said BluRay could do the job while 23% picked film as the top choice.

This is another area that divides larger from smaller festivals, with 48% of larger festivals reporting that DCP provides the best viewing experience for the audience. And the second choice among larger festivals? Well, this is where it gets a little sticky. It's a tie between BluRay and celluloid.

So here's the question: what happens with these festivals when film disappears?

What format provides the audience with the best viewing experience?

Includes festivals with 300+ submissions



How much of a feature-length film are judges watching? Less than half, 42.5%, say that they watch a whole feature-length film on the first viewing, but the rest, 57%, watch only as much as the first hour.

That judging may be all you get since 68% of the judges only see a film once or twice, the rest watch the final films three more times.

What's the Final Product?

Watching a film on the living room couch is very different from seeing it in a theater. While digital distribution is favored for both, it's clear that DCP rules the roost when a movie moves from judging to exhibition to the festival audience.

Who took part?

These answers didn't come from just anyone, they came from festival organizers representing tens of thousands of films. In total 56 festival organizers took the survey, half of which receive more than 300 submissions, many run festivals that get more than 1000 submissions annually.

Meaning, these participants represent the judging and viewing of tens of thousands of films annually.

Survey Background

- 56 film festival organizers took the survey.
- Over two-thirds of the film festival organizers are located in the US, with one-third located in Canada, Luxembourg, South Korea, South Africa, and the UK.
- Over 80% of the film festival organizers who took the survey are associated with well-established film festivals, having existed for 10 or more years.
- Over 50% of the film festivals receive more than 300 submissions, with 27% receiving over 1000 submissions