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Virtual Film Festival Inventory: Adapting to New Realities

This new research project assesses how film festivals are adapting to the new reality of virtual events. The end result is to create an inventory of how a wide variety of virtual and remote festivals function, how they mirror or expand on traditional festival events (like director Q&A), how they approach pricing, engage with audiences and protect the business aspects of film festivals such as exclusivity and the need to limit audiences before going into wider distribution.

The research includes a range of festivals, from prestige events such as the Sundance and Cannes film festivals, which have ample resources to transform their events however also must create the best possible artistic environments and maintain the highest protection for the film's commercial value. It also includes niche festivals with dedicated and specific audiences, which may benefit more from creative approaches to audience-building. Because festivals are making last minute decisions on whether to hold virtual/hybrid or in-person events, we are creating a schedule month by month. The next few online events are mapped out in the project description.

Research is currently in progress and will continue through AY 22-23. The final results will be drafted into an article for publication by December 2023.