

The governance of innovation in the Film and Television industry: a case study of London, UK

Professor Andy Pratt

Professor of Culture, Media and Economy
Director, Culture, Media and Creative Industries

Email andy.pratt@kcl.ac.uk

Tel +44 (0)20 7848 1595

Culture, Media and Creative Industries

King's College London

5C Chesham Building, Strand Campus

London, WC2R 2LS

This pre-print paper is copyright of the author, but it is free to be used for research purposes as long as it is properly attributed. Permissions for multiple reproductions should be addressed to the author. This paper is intended to circulate work that readers might not otherwise be able to access. If your institution does subscribe to the journal, please access it via that link.

Please cite as Pratt, A. C. and G. Gornostaeva (2009). The governance of innovation in the Film and Television industry: a case study of London, UK. Creativity, innovation and the cultural economy. A. C. Pratt and P. Jeffcutt. London, Routledge: 119-136.

ISBN 978-0-415-41975-8

IMPORTANT: When referring to this paper, please check the page numbers in the journal published version and cite these.

Pratt, A. C. and G. Gornostaeva (2009). The governance of innovation in the Film and Television industry: a case study of London, UK. Creativity, innovation and the cultural economy. A. C. Pratt and P. Jeffcutt. London, Routledge: 119-136.
ISBN 978-0-415-41975-8

The governance of innovation in the Film and Television industry: a case study of London, UK

A.C.Pratt and G.Gornostaeva

The focus of this chapter is innovation and creativity in the film and television industries in London. One might expect to observe, in the case of film and television industries which encompass some of the most socially and organisationally embedded organisations that have embraced digitisation, a clearer case of the impact of digitisation in on innovation. However, it is also good to adopt a cautious approach to the role of technology or the necessity of organisational and/or technological convergence that may follow.

It is possible to make a film, or a TV programme, on a laptop or a mobile phone; but, such practices are marginal. Where they are adopted their use is commonly strategic, in order to achieve other organisational aims such as simple cost reduction or novelty. The film and television industries are ‘poster children’ for digitisation and innovation; the question is, whether such changes are superficial, in the sense of new delivery systems for the same old production model, or, a substantial transformation of the process. Complex regulatory structures and market structures mean that innovation is a more organic and systemic process rather than the ‘big bang’ that is it commonly represented as. In this chapter we argue for the need to account for the complex inter-relationship of technologies, organisation and regulation. Moreover, that the roles of technology (digitization), organisation (the fragmented small firms), and governance (deregulation) cannot be generalised and will be resolved, necessarily, in particular spaces and times resulting in unique locational outcomes.

If one examines the UK FTV at a macro-scale considerable success of both TV sales and film production (receipts) can be identified both relative to the size of the UK economy, and by comparison with other economies (Dcms, 1999). How do we begin to understand this relative success? One answer might be innovation or improved competitiveness (Porter, 1998); however, arguably such ‘catch alls’ disguise as much as they reveal (Pratt, 1996, in press). This chapter approaches the problem by shifting

analytic attention to the micro-scale and to organisational concerns in order to explore ways in which similar technologies or innovations may produce quite different industry outcomes in terms of practice. The chapter is structured around this argument; we begin by prefacing this with a discussion of innovation and creativity and next elaborating how this is worked through in the case of the film and television industries.

Innovation and Creativity

In order to sidestep some of the problems associated with technological reductionism, or economic reductionism we have sought to take a radical position. This chapter treats innovation and creativity as ‘effects’, or emergent properties, rather than externalities or inputs (see for example the discussion of (Hodgson, 1993). Our concern here is to explore systemic effects situated within networks of activities. Additionally, we are less concerned with the semantics of innovation versus creativity, for our purposes we elide the terms; we view them both in a socialised manner and seek to frame them in a broader process of transformation.

More generally, we can more usefully consider what might be termed the ‘governance’ of the film and television industries: a notion that incorporates organisation and regulation in relation to particular industries and technologies (Pratt, 1997; Pratt, 2005, 2006a). In the field of television we can note the shifts of ownership and control from public to private, to regulation of content, and regulation of monopolies. The point being that these products, processes and concepts are inter-related. The concept of innovation that we want to propose has four parts: technology, regulation, organisation, (regulation and markets are considered in particular relationship to individual industries and their particular markets) and situatedness in time/space (location).

First, technology; this seeks to highlight the range of possible technologies. The emergent empirical forms of action, organisation and output are deemed creative or innovative relative to past products, and against competing products in the market. Second, the relationship between (and within) market and state is the field of regulation. A critical point here is the degree to which power relations are skewed to

difference is the technical quality of the product and require higher technical and artistic skills. The recording medium for film, was film, and for television, similar, although different, as was the recording (the domestic photograph), where as TV on tape has first allowed the quality of image found on a hard drive. Consequently, data files can be transported, and edited and re-edited, with little regard down to the selection and ordering of images to convey a message. Technology may be used in deliberative processes are more or less the same.

Film

Digitisation has actually had relatively little potential to use cheaper recording media, and lighting. This has reduced costs and the technology has generally been grafted on to