The Portable Fundraiser – Research report

Crowdfunding documentary film

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Executive Summary

Background

The Scottish Documentary Institute's (SDI) fundraising tool, 'The Portable Fundraiser', is an online digital media player with a number of built-in features that allow for fundraising and increased audience engagement – something that current digital players do not offer. The project is a collaboration between SDI and Distrify that seeks to explore alternative ways of financing film through a crowdfunding mechanism built into the latter's digital media player.

The project was awarded £75,600 by the Digital R&D Fund for the Arts in Scotland in March 2013. *I Am Breathing* was released on the media player in June 2013. *Future My Love* was released on the media player in November 2013.

The Project

SDI and Distrify collaborated together on the project with a number of specific aims in mind. These were to develop a fundraising widget that could be universally embedded like a player, featured an easy-to-use sliding-scale interface, offered incentives to partners, worked on smartphones and could be flexibly customised in five different ways:

1. Supporters crowd-fund a new film project and receive instant digital rewards for their contribution, such as downloads of previous films.

2. Supporters 'pay forward' for other people to watch the film, and once these people have seen it, they are asked to 'return the favour' by paying for yet others to see it.

3. Supporters set their own price for a film, essentially by topping up a set minimum, with the sliding scale explaining what the chosen amount enables.

4. Viewers of the films are invited to top up their purchase with a sliding-scale charitable donation to a related cause, acknowledging that issue-driven documentaries often leave people deeply moved and motivated to help.

5. Supporters organise their own community screenings, with the sliding scale explaining how pricing depends on event type and audience size, enabling access to a downloadable high-resolution protected video file suitable for projection.

The project was led by Ben Kempas, Producer of Marketing and Distribution at SDI, and Peter Gerard, Andy and Stephen Green from Distrify.

I Am Breathing began using the Portable Fundraiser for bookings of community screenings from May 2013, and for donations combined with the film's online and DVD release from October. The launch event for pay-it-forward with *Future My Love* was in November 2013 at the International Documentary Film Festival Amsterdam (IDFA).

Results

The technology outcome of the project was a digital media player that possesses a number of different features which more mainstream digital media players do not offer. These include:

- Allowing customers to donate money to charitable causes within the player;

- Flexible pricing of films within the player;

- The option of earning affiliate revenue;

- Allowing customers to 'pay-it-forward' and gifting a viewing of the film to others;

- The option of organising their own screenings of films

Insights

Insights derived from the development of The Portable Fundraiser relate in particular to areas of Award & Development, Partnership, and Potential for Future Development. The key lessons learned from the project were:

- Effective communication between project partners is paramount, especially amidst changing or unexpected outcomes in the R&D process and when the technology is in the marketplace.

- Parameters of the relationship need to be defined clearly at the outset to ensure smooth project progress. Arts organisations may have a particular vision of what the technology is to be used for but this may need to be articulated strongly to the technology partner at the outset.

- Funders and project partners need to recognise that project costs will be higher when projects are to close commercialisation and when the project has high future commercial value.

- If project partners know each other well, it is easier to win funding and for partners to push each other during the project.

- Marketing is critical to the success of any new technology – reaching out to a range of interested parties can bring about fruitful collaborations and win-win agreements.

Future

Distrify are currently undertaking an analysis on which of the player's features are profitable or usable elsewhere. The intention is that these features will be used by documentary makers and filmmakers in Scotland and potentially beyond.

For SDI's part, the fundraising and audience engagement technology has proven to be a workable and reliable toolset that integrates well with other technologies they use. The expectation is that SDI will continue to use the Portable Fundraiser.

The success of the global impact of *I Am Breathing* and the gifting success of *Future My Love* indicate that there is potential in the technology to be adapted and used for a variety of different means in a number of different industries.

1. Background

The Scottish Documentary Institute's (SDI)[1] fundraising tool, 'The Portable Fundraiser', is an online digital media player with a number of built-in features that allow for fundraising and increased audience engagement – something that current digital players do not offer. The project is a collaboration between SDI and Distrify that seeks to explore alternative ways of financing film through a crowdfunding mechanism built into the latter's digital media player.

SDI was established in 2004 and is based in Edinburgh College of Art (which was integrated with the University of Edinburgh in 2011). SDI is a research centre dedicated to production and distribution of documentary films as well as to training in documentary making. Working alongside the research centre, SDI Productions Limited is majority publicly funded (63% in 2011/12) and so to reduce its reliance on public funding is interested in identifying new potential revenue streams and ways of increasing its audience reach.[2] The Director is Noe Mendelle and Head of Development is Sonja Henrici. The principal contact for the project was Ben Kempas, who is Producer of Marketing and Distribution, as well as a documentary filmmaker in his own right. Ben and Sonja had well-established personal and professional relationships with members of the Distrify team from working together on various documentaries and other projects in the past.

Development of the Portable Fundraiser evolved from SDI's audience engagement and distribution initiative called Virtuous Circle, supported by Creative Scotland, evaluating many new tools and strategies and identifying a gap in tools available for fundraising.

Distrify are a film/technology company started in 2011 and comprised of twin brothers Andy and Stephen Green and Peter Gerard, an American filmmaker and programmer. They are active in the development of new technologies for the film industry and have a proprietary digital media player that forms the basis of their core technological offering. Through their digital media player they provide video streaming, via pay-per-view, as a service to different types of film rights-holders or video-creators ranging from large distributors to cinemas to first time filmmakers.

Via the Digital R&D Fund for the Arts in Scotland, SDI worked with Distrify to develop a digital fundraising tool that could be universally embedded on the web like a video player, but had the ability to raise funds for and increase awareness of documentary films. Crowdfunding is garnering increasing interest within the documentary community as it allows filmmakers to access alternate forms of financing and wider audiences. Kickstarter, the largest crowdfunding platform on the web, reported in

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1 http://www.scottishdocinstitute.com
2 Scottish Documenary Institute, 'Digital R&D Fund for the Arts in Scotland Application', February 2013.

January 2013 that it had raised over $100m from 891,979 backers for 8,567 films. Of these figures, $42.64m went to documentaries funding 2,394 films. These figures demonstrate clear potential for raising documentary finance. Of the films financed this way, five documentaries were shortlisted for Oscars in 2013.[3]

The project came about through a desire on the part of the tech partner Distrify to investigate how their existing technology might be used for crowdfunding films. Having been a grant-holder in the first round of the Digital R&D Fund for the Arts in Scotland awards, they were aware that a second round of funding for projects was coming up in February 2013. With their first round award Distrify worked on their digital media player with the Glasgow Film Theatre and Edinburgh Filmhouse. Through that project they realised that the player could potentially be developed further. Internal company discussions ensued around the possibility of working with SDI given the strong pre-existing relationships between the two organisations.

The relationship between the two organisations had existed for several years, largely through personal relationships between Peter Gerard and Andy Green of Distrify with Sonja Henrici and Ben Kempas of SDI from a filmmaking perspective. Peter of Distrify also knew Ben from a project called 'The DWord' – an international network of documentary makers for which Peter had been a web developer.[4] Stephen Green, the Chief Legal Officer at Distrify, then approached Ben of SDI and suggested that they put a project together for the second round of the Digital R&D Fund for the Arts in Scotland based around developing Distrify's media player into a fundraising tool.[5]

SDI's Ben Kempas had, for a number of years, been considering the idea of a widget that would make crowdfunding embeddable across the web, using affiliates and a sliding scale to choose the amount, but had not had the opportunity to establish it.[6] Ben had also attended Nesta's Digital Advisory Day in November 2012. He had posted his proposal on the group's whiteboard to explore the full scope of potential technological partners, but no other companies responded to his proposal. Consequently, the two organisations decided to work together on the project application to the Digital R&D Fund with a view towards establishing the commercial potential of the player as a new means of funding films. The project was conceived of and led by Ben and Stephen Green with technical expertise provided by Peter Gerard and Andy Green.

The project was awarded £75,600 by the Digital R&D Fund for the Arts in Scotland in March 2013.[7] *I Am Breathing* started using the Portable Fundraiser for community screenings from May 2013, and for donations combined with the film's online and DVD release from October. *Future My Love* was released on the media player in November 2013.

2. The project

SDI and Distrify collaborated on the project with a number of specific aims in mind. These were to develop a fundraising widget that could be universally embedded like a player, featured an easy-to-use sliding-scale interface, offered incentives to partners, worked on smartphones and could be flexibly customised in five different ways:

1. Supporters crowd-fund a new film project and receive instant digital rewards for their

3 http://documentary.net/crowdfunding-works-best-for-documentary-films/
4 Interview with Stephen Green, Distrify, October 2013.
5 Interview with Stephen Green, Distrify, October 2013.
6 Interview with Ben Kempas, SDI, October 2013.
7 http://www.nesta.org.uk/news/national-theatre-scotland-open-eyes-and-ears-new-audiences-after-innovation-award

contribution, such as downloads of previous films.

2. Supporters 'pay forward' for other people to watch the film, and once these people have seen it, they are asked to 'return the favour' by paying for yet others to see it.

3. Supporters set their own price for a film, essentially by topping up a set minimum, with the sliding scale explaining what the chosen amount enables.

4. Customers looking to watch the film are invited to top up their purchase with a sliding-scale charitable donation to a related cause, acknowledging that issue-driven documentaries often leave people deeply moved and motivated to help.

5. Supporters organise their own community screenings, with the sliding scale explaining how pricing depends on event type and audience size, enabling access to a downloadable high-resolution protected video file suitable for projection.

Before the official application was made in February 2013, SDI and Distrify held a brainstorming session between Ben Kempas and Stephen Green which resulted in early drawings of the player and various iterations of how it could be presented. These drawings then led to the questions for the technology development. Key points were how the various integrated features required for fundraising could be developed or integrated with Distrify's existing player system and made embeddable across the web. These features included video streaming, downloads, order processing, payment procedures (including flexible pricing models), and donations. From these early discussions, the project moved towards piggybacking on the existing Distrify player, allowing for the development work to focus on new features that were being added according to the needs of the project, rather than the creation of an entirely new technology/player.[8] These early discussions were crucial in the development of the fundraising tool as they set the technical path as well as established the common interest in making the technology usable between the two partners.

At the Digital R&D Fund for the Arts in Scotland First Call Collaboration Day in Edinburgh in January 2013, Stephen Green enquired about the possibility of Distrify applying for a second round with a different arts partner and project. When it was confirmed that Distrify's participation in the first round would not preclude them from being considered, the project partners finalised the project proposal and SDI submitted it in February 2013. As part of the project proposal, two SDI produced films were identified as the testing ground for the project: *I Am Breathing*[9] (originally premiered in November 2012 at the International Documentary Film Festival Amsterdam (IDFA)[10]), a film about a man dying from Motor Neurone Disease (MND), and *Future My Love* (originally premiered at the Edinburgh Film Festival in June 2012)[11], a film which explores economic and personal relationships, focusing on ideas for a world without money.[12]

I Am Breathing was to be released in June 2013 in order to test the player's features. The features to be tested included allowing donations, sharing through embedding and social media, and hosting your own screening to raise awareness of MND, whereby a digital or physical copy of the film would be made available for a screening fee dependent on audience size. *Future My Love* was originally scheduled for August 2013 to test the 'pay-it-forward' model of gifting the film to others, which is novel to the world of documentary filmmaking and distribution. Both films would be released using different features of the fundraising tool in order to test the commercial viability of the technology and the feasibility of the various features discussed in the development talks between the partners.

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8 Interview with Ben Kempas, SDI, October 2013.
9 http://www.iambreathing.com
10 http://www.idfa.nl/industry/tags/project.aspx?id=a24457ed-2cd0-4265-9812-0df6a5edb121
11 http://www.edfilmfest.org.uk/films/2012/future-my-love
12 http://www.futuremylove.com

I Am Breathing was launched on 21 June 2013 with the 'Global Screening Day' using the digital media player – an idea marketed by SDI through outreach coordinators Rebecca Day and Demelza Kooij who contacted 1072 people at MND and healthcare organisations and more than 4,500 documentary professionals, asking them to host screenings.[13] The film was partnered with the Motor Neurone Disease Association (MNDA) which has been the recipient of 50% of all donations, with the remainder going towards the *I Am Breathing* campaign. The event was marketed through relationships established by SDI's outreach team, using campaigning software and social media, as well as through an MNDA billboard campaign and mainstream UK media coverage facilitated by a publicist.[14]

Directly following a UK theatrical release, the launch event (a whisky reception) for pay-it-forward distribution of *Future My Love* on 23 November 2013 at the International Documentary Film Festival (IDFA) in Amsterdam was run jointly with Distrify. At this event the pay-it-forward feature of the digital player was presented for the first time to the industry. One notably creative aspect to the launch was that it required attendees to hand over an entry 'fee': their business cards. This mode of collecting contracts meant that SDI and Distrify were able to follow up with industry people and to give them an initial invitation to watch the film for free using the digital media player. The hope was that these contacts would return that favour and pay it forward for others to see the film, thus starting the ball rolling in terms of getting people to 'pay it forward' and gift the film on. In the first few weeks after the film's launch, 750 people saw the film for free, (of which 400 were gifted by SDI and Distrify) helping build awareness of the player and the concept, as well as of the work that SDI and Distrify were doing.[15]

3. Results

From the arts partner's perspective, the project was designed to expand its reach and audience in terms of funding the making of documentaries. The online digital media player that allows accepting donations, organising screenings (or have viewers organise them) or paying for others to view a film was the key medium of that expansion. From the technology partner's perspective the project was intended to provide a platform for their digital media player and to demonstrate its applicability and ability to address a variety of different needs within the film-making and distribution worlds. Crowdfunding applications at present are static portals that do not allow for interaction at the point of contact – they accept donations but do not allow for any further interaction. As a result, the technology developed in this project gave both partners the opportunity to collect data on audiences and to harness the power of crowdfunding to distribute and advertise films in new ways. Its wider relevance to the arts industry is also important. The player offers:

- a new way of distributing documentaries and films more generally;

- wider applicability to other forms of cultural production – crowdfunding can be used for music or anything else that can be presented with the help of a video;

- features that allow producers to see geographical reach of their outputs and how they are shared/promoted.

The principle of internet crowdfunding/crowdsourcing is that monies are collected from the crowd to pay for products or services and awareness of such products and services is increased. Based on this

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13 Interview with Ben Kempas, SDI, October 2013.
14 Interview with Ben Kempas, SDI, October 2013.
15 http://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/ben-kempas/future-my-love_b_4695314.html

principle, the fundraising tool was conceptualised as a way of helping fund and market documentary films for which funding is often difficult to come by.[16] It was put into operation with the launch of the films *I Am Breathing* and *Future My Love* with the former attracting significant global attention.

As part of the project, a variety of fundraising and audience development features targeted at the documentary industry have been developed and launched online through the digital media player. These are:

- an easy-to-use sliding-scale user interface which allows for a number of different sub-features so consumers

    - can pick a price they want to pay for a film

    - choose how many copies of a film they'd like to give to others

    - can donate money to the filmmaker/distributor/third-party cause via the player

- a tool to offer instant digital rewards (e.g. video downloads) for crowdfunding contributions inclusion of the newly developed features (with the exception of donations) in affiliate marketing payments to those sharing the film with others

- automated handling of community screenings allowing people to host their own public screening of films using streaming, downloaded or physical copies of films

According to Ben Kempas, each of the above features are new to the documentary film industry and offer the potential for a change in the way documentary makers can fund their work and engage with audiences.[17] Below are screenshots showing how each of these different features works for the audiences of the two films.

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16 http://www.bbc.co.uk/filmnetwork/filmmaking/guide/before-you-start/funding
17 http://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/ben-kempas/future-my-love_b_4695314.html

Player features for I Am Breathing

Figure 1: Rental option for film

Figure 2: Flexible pricing model for renting film, donation and screening film options
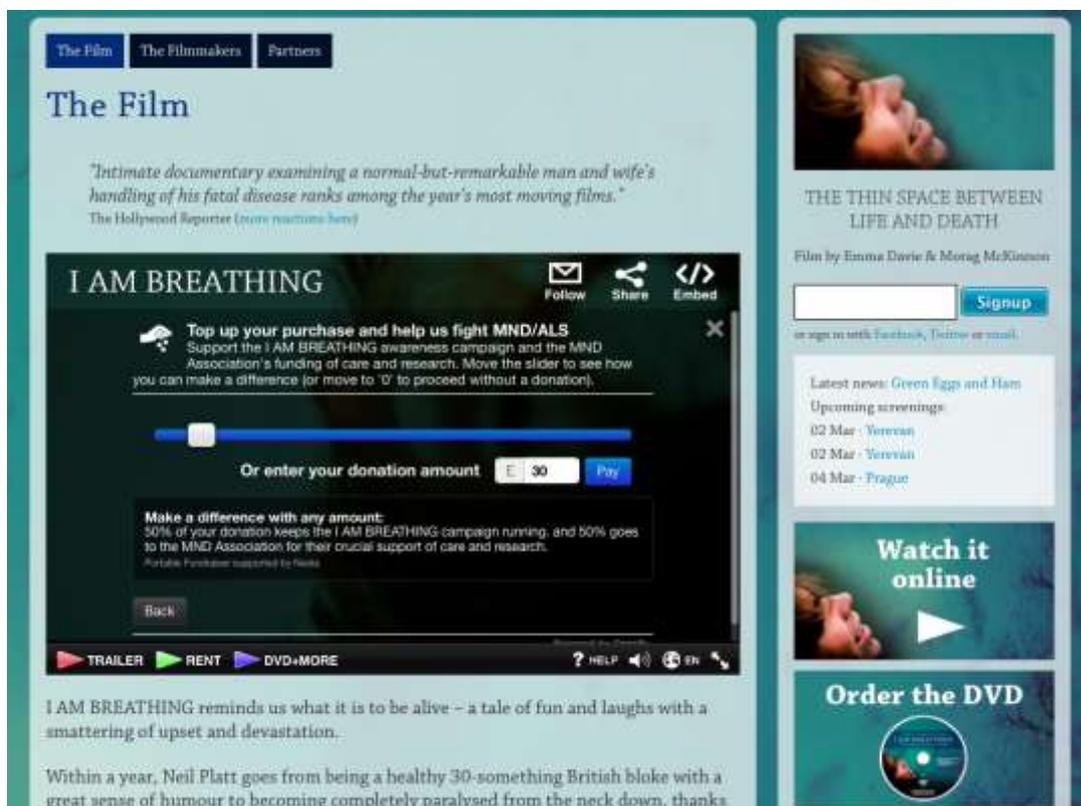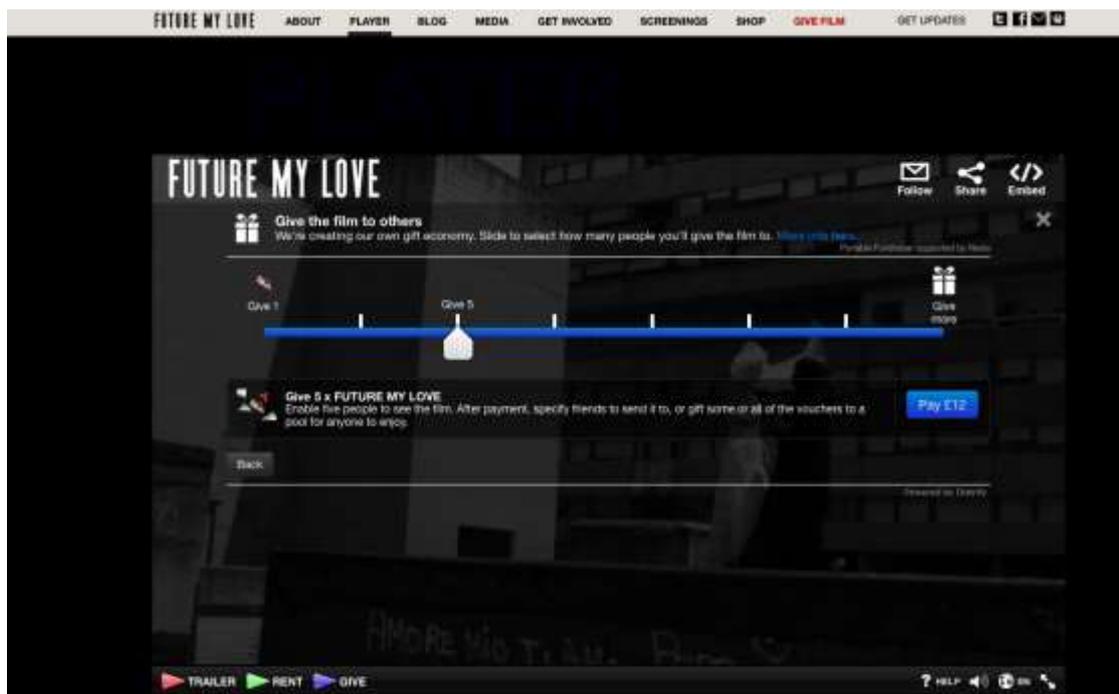
Figure 3: Organise your own screening option

Figure 4: Slider feature for donation

Player features for Future My Love

Figures 5 & 6 Pay-it-forward (gifting) of films for others to watch for free

I Am Breathing in particular achieved greater audience reach through its worldwide coverage, evidenced by the statistics showing that it had been screened more than 270 times in 43 countries by the end of August 2013. By March 2014 it had reached 337 screenings across 45 countries, with more screenings planned.

Figure 7: I Am Breathing Global Screenings (as of March 2014)

The Motor Neurone Disease Association became one of the key partners for outreach work for the film after being contacted about its existence and planned release by Ben Kempas of SDI. This resulted in them attracting sponsored advertising space across London Underground and Network Rail totalling around 200 billboard posters advertising the film around the country.[18] As a result of the creative tacks taken towards building awareness of the project, *I Am Breathing* has had more than 300 screenings worldwide, half of which took place on the Global Screening Day alone.[19]

In terms of other numeric data for the films, Table 1 gives an indicator of the numbers of player loads (people clicking on to the player) and previews watched (clicking play on the player). These numbers are an indicative measure of the audience reach that SDI's films have achieved through the player.

I Am Breathing		Future My Love	
Player Loads	138389	Player Loads	87552
Previews	28256	Previews	25267

Table 1: Film loads/preview/conversion statistics from Distrify player

The conversion rates for both films from previews were significantly higher than the industry average.[20] Further, the launch event of *Future My Love* resulted in international news coverage of the film and the concept of 'paying it forward' in Screen International, the International Documentary Film Festival Amsterdam Daily and Indiewire[21], demonstrating the player was achieving its aim of both furthering potential audience reach and having the potential for making an intervention in industry practices and trends.

In terms of the performance of each film through the player, Tables 2 and 3 provide information on player loads (how many times the player was loaded up online and on what site), the number of sales and the gross sales in GBP.

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18 Interview with Ben Kempas, SDI, October 2013.
19 Interview with Ben Kempas, SDI, January 2014.
20 Interview with Ben Kempas, SDI, January 2014.
21 http://www.futuremylove.com/tags/news

Distrify Data from 1 May 2013 to 11 March 2014

I Am Breathing //Film Source	Player Loads	No. of Sales
Iambreathingfilm.com	43476	377
Iambreathing.com	11232	287
Distrify Direct/Facebook App	8294	108
Scottishdocinstitute.com	8563	36
dailymail.co.uk	22173	n/a
guardian.co.uk/guardian.com	7640	n/a
mndassociation.org	1300	n/a
Other sources	16809	541
TOTAL	119487	1349

Table 2: Sampled audience data from Distrify players: *I Am Breathing*

Distrify Data from 20 November 2013 to 11 March 2014

Future my Love // Film Source	Player Loads	No. of Sales
futuremylove.com	15887	165
Distrify Direct or Facebook app	4420	38
thevenusproject.com	2560	21
glasgowfilm.org (GFT Player)	663	6
Other sources	3819	2
TOTAL	29358	232

Table 3: Sampled audience data from Distrify players: *Future My Love.*

The figures outlined are based on the Distrify website player only, but provide an interesting breakdown of both the audience reach and the amounts of monies generated per film released on the player. For both films at least five figure audiences were reached, albeit with relatively modest amounts of sales and gross earnings. Although the amounts earned and converted are relatively low, that the films reached the numbers they did shows that there is potential for the player to act as a catalyst for marketing of films as well as another way of raising revenue. When the gross amounts raised from all versions of the player (i.e. from all players hosted on the web) are considered then we see an emergent picture of increased revenue generation in both films' cases:

Player Feature	Amount
Community screenings	£6,176.38
Video on demand total incl. top-up donations	£3,153.72
DVD incl. top-up donations	£3,471.01
Solo donations through player	£438.98
Total*	**£13,240.09**

* not counting donations through the website and some screening fees not arranged through the player

Table 4: *I Am Breathing* gross revenues from 1 May 2013 to 5 February 2014 (VOD from October, DVD from November)

Feature	Amount
Pay-it-forward	£556.77
Streaming rental	£260.68
DVD through player only	£123.05
Total*	***£940.50***

* not counting DVD sales through website and screening fees

Table 5: *Future My Love* gross revenues from 20 November 2013 to 5 February 2014 (DVD from mid-December)

4. Insights

Award & Development

The project was the largest recipient of funding within the second call of the Digital R&D Fund for the Arts in Scotland, which is partly reflected in the technology's proximity to market and commercialisation potential. Distrify's player had already been developed further through the first Digital R&D Fund for the Arts in Scotland Call and was operating in the marketplace. However, to develop the tools required for the fundraising features required developer time, and Distrify did not have the spare capacity to provide this time without accessing external funding.

Given the ubiquity of online digital media players, one of the main questions the project had was: why not just use mainstream YouTube or Vimeo players to put up the documentary previews and direct them to a dedicated site? The answer emerged from a discussion of what the Distrify player does, but also what it can do. SDI and Distrify identified and developed the 'value added' functionality of the player prior to submitting the application to the Digital R&D Fund in February 2013, with SDI pushing for the sliding scale feature to be a core part of the player's features.

The idea of a digital portable fundraiser then came into play through its ability to sit within the existing Distrify player, taking it beyond a simple media player into video-on-demand and marketing functionality. Thus, wherever people come across a preview or trailer they would learn that they can host a screening of the film themselves, using the player they viewed the trailer in to pay the screening fee and access a downloadable file suitable for projection. Furthermore, functions such as the list of screenings, upcoming screenings, and screenings nearby are built in. This feature is important for SDI as the moment viewers give their email address to learn about screenings near them, they sign up to SDI updates, providing SDI with critical audience data which is otherwise unavailable. As a result, Ben Kempas indicated that 'several thousands of people subscribed to updates about the films, and around a quarter of them came directly through the player's built-in signup feature'. SDI did previously not have access to such data and would not have been able to access it using the aforementioned mainstream players. The Distrify player allows SDI to be able to keep engaging people that had seen the trailers or full films, offering them the ability to understand and connect to their audience more effectively.[22]

Development & Partnership

One of the key features in the fundraiser is the slider. After selecting the product, users can choose how much they wish to donate on top of the price they have agreed to pay. As they move the slider, additional information displayed about the effect of the suggested donation. The slider was a point of discussion between SDI and Distrify as the former strongly insisted on its inclusion in the player's

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22 Interview with Ben Kempas, SDI, October 2013.

features. As a result, Distrify are now happy with the slider and indicated that they are glad that strong leadership was shown by Ben Kempas and SDI in requesting the implementation of the technology.[23]

A further feature of the project was the framing of the Nesta contract that was signed with the arts partner (SDI). This resulted in the development of a client-supplier style relationship between SDI and Distrify due to the nature of the contractual arrangements. Since Distrify were not a signatory to the contract they were paid by SDI as a supplier would be paid by a client. Thus, whenever any modifications to the technology's intended use or deployment, or changes in the scheduling occurred, it meant that Distrify had to seek permission from SDI. The long-standing relationships between the two organisations meant that any issues which arose were dealt with relatively quickly through continual collaboration on the technology and its development[24], and that the original aims of the project as set out in the application were all met.

In terms of what they would have done differently, both partners identified that tasks and areas of responsibility could have been detailed more clearly in their original agreement.

Potential for Further Development

Although the results of the SDI/Distrify player are relatively modest compared with more established film distribution models, the conversion numbers and income generation are better than the industry average for video on demand, and the player's performance in terms of achieving global reach indicates that there is clear potential for its further development and use in film more generally (and other art forms potentially). The player's unique features have demonstrated a clear ability to engage customers across a variety of national contexts and increased the audience reach of SDI markedly. With the right film, partnership and marketing, SDI were able to push *I Am Breathing* to a global audience and raise revenue for and awareness of both MND and their work as promoters of documentary film making. The sharing aspect is also important as the player actively promotes (and rewards through affiliate marketing payments) people who share films – a development that in the past was previously unthinkable due to entrenched views of the film industry and the negative connotations with sharing films and music online as evidenced in the UK by the Digital Economy Act 2010 and the strong industry lobbying that preceded its implementation.[25] Furthermore, the new player offers independent documentary makers the opportunity to potentially fund and reach a global audience with their work without having to find a major distributor.

Lessons Learned:

- Effective communication between project partners is paramount, especially amidst changing or unexpected outcomes in the R&D process and when the technology is in the marketplace.

- Parameters of the relationship need to be defined clearly at the outset to ensure smooth project progress. Arts organisations may have a particular vision of what the technology is to be used for but this may need to be articulated strongly to the technology partner at the outset.

- Funders and project partners need to recognise that project costs will be higher when projects are to close commercialisation and when the project has high future commercial value.

- If project partners know each other well, it is easier to win funding and for partners to push each other during the project.

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23 Interview with Stephen Green, Distrify, January 2014.
24 Interview with Stephen Green, Distrify, October 2013.
25 http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/24/contents & http://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/music/news/the-net-closes-in-on-internet-piracy-1772820.html

- Marketing is critical to the success of any new technology – reaching out to a range of interested parties can bring about fruitful collaborations and win-win agreements.

5. Future

Distrify are currently undertaking an analysis on which of the player's features are profitable or usable elsewhere with the intention they will be used by documentary makers and filmmakers in Scotland and potentially beyond.[26] Originally there was money assigned to developing Digital Rights Management technology, but with agreement from Nesta this has been reassigned instead to develop a connection between Distrify and SDI's campaigning software, syncing records of people and screenings and better understanding their audiences. As part of this there is development of an Application Programming Interface (API) that allows for fully automated connection of the Portable Fundraiser to client relationship management systems to manage audience relationships. SDI and Distrify have been in contact with NationBuilder (a campaigning software developer) resulting in Distrify becoming an official app partner of NationBuilder, meaning everybody who chooses to use the player (including its use as Portable Fundraiser) and NationBuilder platforms can make that direct connection between the systems.

For SDI's part, the fundraising and audience engagement technology has proven to be a workable and reliable toolset that integrates well into the environment of other technologies that it uses so there is the expectation that they will continue to use it.[27] There is a clear direction of travel for the technology in terms of its use in documentary production, funding and marketing, but also potentially for use in the film and music industries too. The success of the global impact of *I Am Breathing* and the gifting success of *Future My Love* indicate that there is potential in the technology to be adapted and used for a variety of different means in a number of different industries.

6. Further resources

Further project information

More information on the past, current and future activities of SDI is available from the SDI website http://www.scottishdocinstitute.com where links to the films are also available, and a list of its current partners.

More about the Virtuous Circle initiative to evaluate new tools and strategies for audience engagement and distribution are discussed in posts on the SDI blog: http://blog.scottishdocinstitute.com/tags/virtuous_circle

Distrify's company website is available at https://distrify.com where examples of the company's player and different uses for it are located.

Both SDI and Distrify are active on social media sites including Twitter: https://twitter.com/distrify & https://twitter.com/ScottishDocInst; and Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/Distrify &

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26 Interview with Stephen Green, Distrify, October 2013.
27 Interview with Ben Kempas, SDI, January 2014.

https://www.facebook.com/ScottishDocumentaryInstitute where they publicise the player and news related to it.

Global Screening Day for I AM BREATHING description: www.iambreathing.com/global and map of all screenings so far: www.iambreathing.com/previous

Ben Kempas's website: http://www.benkempas.com/

Tools and guidance

Anyone interested in learning more about documentary filmmaking and related issues can visit SDI's website (above) for more information.

For anyone interested in Distrify's media player, their website (above) contains information, pricing, other clients and different uses for it for filmmakers and distributors alike.

Portable Fundraiser examples:

- Portable Fundraiser used for community screenings, with video explaining purpose and tech: www.iambreathing.com/book

- Portable Fundraiser used for donation top-ups, with video explaining purpose and tech: www.iambreathing.com/why_donate

- Portable Fundraiser used for pay-it-forward, with video explaining purpose and tech: www.futuremylove.com/forward

- Portable Fundraiser used for crowdfunding with instant rewards (currently a mock-up): www.pabloswinter.com/donkeyote

- Portable Fundraiser used for pay-it-forward by Oscar-nominated documentary THE SQUARE: www.thesquarefilm.com/givefilm

- Portable Fundraiser used for goal-driven fundraiser by The D-Word documentary community: www.d-word.com/page/15for15

Media coverage of Portable Fundraiser:

- www.hollywoodreporter.com/news/online-movie-service-distrify-aims-569906

- www.screendaily.com/news/vod-service-to-boost-i-am-breathing-rollout/5057480.article

- www.cineuropa.org/nw.aspx?t=newsdetail&l=en&did=240138

- www.idfa.nl/industry/daily/2013/news/spreading-the-love.aspx

- www.screendaily.com/news/digital/distrify-sdi-launch-film-gifting-scheme/5064034.article

- www.indiewire.com/article/5-daily-tech-stories-that-filmmakers-and-film-fans-must-read-top-indies-in-itunes-hal-hartleys-kickstarter-reward-and-more

- www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/ben-kempas/future-my-love_b_4695314.html

Further reading

http://thedfg.org - the Documentary Filmmakers Group is the national UK organisation for documentary

http://britdoc.org - the Britdoc Foundation's mission is to support filmmakers, broker new partnerships, build new business models, share new knowledge and develop new audiences globally.

The British Film Institute has a wealth of information for documentary makers including statistics and research reports, as well as sources of potential funding. This information is available via http://www.bfi.org.uk/film-industry/documentary-production-funding and http://www.bfi.org.uk/education-research/film-industry-statistics-research/reports

For a box office history of documentary movies since 1995 (including distributor information, market share, and total gross), go to http://www.the-numbers.com/market/genre/Documentary

Other examples

The technology partner Distrify are also part of the First Call Digital R&D Fund for the Arts in Scotland's project with the Glasgow Film Theatre/Edinburgh Filmhouse looking at the possibility of using Distrify's technology to encourage distribution of films to other viewers and the ability to earn money from legal social network sharing of films. Further information on this project is available via http://www.filmhousecinema.com/player and http://www.glasgowfilm.org/player

Indiegogo is fundraising platform for a variety of mediums - http://www.indiegogo.com/ with particular example of Donor, http://www.indiegogo.com/projects/donor-a-short-film-fundraiser

Raindrops over Rwanda: a 22 minute film, whose producer, Explore.org donated $1 for every Facebook like of the post containing the short documentary to raise donations for the Rwanda Memorial center: http://www.csmonitor.com/World/Making-a-difference/Change-Agent/2011/0718/Rwanda-documentary-film-premieres-online-to-raise-money-for-genocide-memorial-video