

## The Independent Cinema Alliance Fact Sheet

### What is the Independent Cinema Alliance?

The ICA is a non-profit alliance of independent cinema owners dedicated to advocacy and education on behalf of independents. It was organized by a group of independents in early 2018 and is currently directed by a steering committee who volunteer their time to manage the organization. Ultimately, the ICA will be governed by a Board of Directors elected by the membership. The ICA also wholly owns a buying organization called the Cinema Buying Alliance, which will soon take over the functions and benefits currently associated with NATO's Cinema Buying Group program.

### Who Can Be a Member of the Independent Cinema Alliance?

Any "independent exhibitor" may join the ICA. An "independent exhibitor" is basically what you would expect, as more specifically defined for legal reasons as follows: (1) a company engaged in the operation of at least one cinema or drive-in for the exhibition of motion pictures for public entertainment; (2) not publicly owned or owned by a studio, a film distributor or other major content supplier; (3) operating no more than 500 screens; (4) not owned in whole or in part by a national or regional cinema circuit having a theatrical revenue share of more than 2%. In most cases, but certainly not all, the independent exhibitor is the only cinema operator in a given market and an individual actively involved in the day-to-day operation of the business. "Independents" for purposes of ICA membership are essentially *not* circuits and not the top eight exhibitors who gain automatic membership on NATO's executive board of directors.

### What is the Mission of the ICA?

The Independent Cinema Alliance promotes the preservation and prosperity of independent cinemas as an essential part of a healthy motion picture industry.

Toward that end, the ICA commits to: (1) advocating with studios and other content providers specifically on behalf of independents; (2) developing educational and best-practices programs that help independents navigate a challenging industry; and (3) building a robust buying program that helps independents compete on a more level playing field.

### Why Should I Join the ICA? Doesn't NATO Do the Same Thing for Me?

NATO capably represents the entire exhibition business. It advocates on behalf of all cinema owners, but only the ICA can advocate on behalf of independent exhibitors on issues unique to them. While the ICA's goals and NATO's goals complement one another, the ICA serves the needs of a narrower member profile, the independent cinema owner.

Moreover, the Cinema Buying Group will no longer be a NATO program. So the only way to participate in a buying program that reduces your costs on everything from concessions to janitorial supplies to bulbs is to join the ICA.

And finally, ICA and NATO membership is *not* "either-or." It's "both-and." Do both, because *both* will serve you well. But join the ICA because it's where you will gain the most immediate benefit as an independent exhibitor. Go to [www.CinemaAlliance.org](http://www.CinemaAlliance.org).

### **Why Can't NATO Advocate for Independents with the Studios While ICA Can?**

NATO's mission is to promote the interests of cinema owners and operators of all sizes. Because it represents the entire industry it cannot focus on the unique concerns of each member class. Moreover, because it represents almost the entire domestic exhibition industry, it is difficult from an antitrust perspective for NATO to advocate on behalf of one segment of the industry.

The ICA, as the gathering place for independents, will never represent more than independents, and will never constitute more than a minor percentage of total box office revenue. Its advocacy on behalf of independents will therefore not raise the antitrust red flags that NATO's advocacy might.

### **What Are Some of the Studio Issues That the ICA Will Address?**

The ICA has already had meetings with each major studio with more scheduled in the coming weeks. The main issues on the table are shrinking windows, mandatory minimum runs, unaffordable aggregate terms, limited availabilities and PVOD. Although entrenched studio sales policies are difficult to change, early ICA studio meetings have been encouraging. All studios, with one exception, recognize and support our specific advocacy on behalf of independents, and express interest in working with us.

### **Why Should I Join the ICA?**

- (1) Why not? (Seriously.)
- (2) You will be part of an organization that, for the first time in our industry's history, capably advocates *exclusively* on behalf of independents.
- (3) It's free, for now, and if you don't like it when dues kick in, you can leave.
- (4) You will get automatic access to the Cinema Buying Alliance, the buying group for independents that will take the place of the soon-to-be-discontinued Cinema Buying Group, and that promises to bring even more cost-cutting deals to members.
- (5) You will be on our mailing list and receive every newsletter that informs you of developments and opportunities relevant to independents.
- (6) As soon as the ICA adopts Bylaws (which we anticipate doing soon), we will hold elections to fill out the Board of Directors. Members will each have a vote in electing ICA Directors. So join now and make your voice heard on ICA governance.
- (7) You will be part of something larger than yourself that gives all of us a fighting chance, a way to be the smaller player proudly.

Go to the ICA website at <http://www.CinemaAlliance.org/> and follow the prompts to join.

### **If I Join the ICA Should I Drop My NATO Membership?**

Absolutely not! The ICA and NATO share many goals, and every independent exhibitor has much to gain from both ICA and NATO membership.

### **How Much Does ICA Membership Cost?**

There is no cost to join the ICA currently. Membership is free. The ICA will eventually assess dues but only when its buying and other programs are fully established and offering measurable value to the membership. While membership is free, the ICA will gratefully accept donations from any member who chooses to make a voluntary contribution. (Until we assess dues, we have expenses but no revenue.)

Go to the ICA website at [http://www.CinemaAlliance.org/](http://www.CinemaAlliance.org) and follow the prompts to join.

### **Is the ICA Going to Take Over My Film Buying and Booking?**

No! The ICA does not have an interest in film buying and booking for its members. That's the purview of the individual owners and their film buying services. The ICA will communicate issues to the studios that concern exhibitors and their film buyers and will advocate for mutual resolutions of these issues, but it will not represent individual exhibitors as their film buyer or booker.

### **If I'm a CBG Member Now, Am I Automatically a Member of the ICA or the CBA?**

No, you must register separately to become an ICA member, but membership is free. So there's no reason why you wouldn't. Note that the current CBG will soon cease to exist as a NATO program. You will need to join us so that you have access to a buying program that cuts your costs.

See our website and learn how to join. It's easy, free and valuable! <http://www.CinemaAlliance.org>

### **If I Join the ICA, Do I Get a Free CBA Membership?**

Yes. One of the perks of being an ICA member is that you will also be a Cinema Buying Alliance participant and can take advantage of CBA programs as they are rolled out. There is no reason not to do this!

It is also possible (if you wish) to be a CBA participant and *not* an ICA member, but the solo-CBA membership cost in that event will be higher.

### **If I Have Questions About the ICA, Who Do I Contact?**

You can send an email inquiry to the ICA general mailbox at [taskforce@CinemaAlliance.org](mailto:taskforce@CinemaAlliance.org) or you can contact the Initial Directors, Bill Campbell (307-752-1016), Byron Berkley (903-746-3708), or Gina DiSanto (717-215-9856).

Additional members of the ICA "Steering Committee" – the independents who have volunteered their time and energy to the interim guidance of the ICA – include Jeff Benson, Rich Daughtridge, Donald Fox, Randy Hester, Chris Johnson, Jeff Logan, Mark O'Meara, Joe Paletta, Mike Rembusch, George Rouman, John Vincent, and David Wright. These generous independents can also field questions you might have.

### **How Do I Become an ICA Member?**

Becoming a member is a very simple process. Go to the ICA website at [www.CinemaAlliance.org](http://www.CinemaAlliance.org) and follow the prompts to join. Membership is free, the application form is easily completed and, once done, your membership will be confirmed quickly. Welcome!