

## **PRESS RELEASE**

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### **Digital Camera, Photographic Camera, Film Statistics Announced**

Toronto, Ont. – Photography is still alive and well in the hearts of Canadian consumers, judging by the increase in the number of cameras and film sold in 1998. But digital camera sales skyrocketed last year, and will continue to boom this year. Here are the details, based on statistics released today by the Canadian Imaging Trade Association (CITA).

#### **DIGITAL CAMERAS**

There was rapid growth in the sale of digital products in 1998, with about 56,000 digital cameras purchased. That is a 78 percent increase over 1997 sales. Digital purchases were driven by commercial buyers, internet-savvy consumers and “prosumers.” (Prosumers are those who are not full-time professionals but who do some work for pay, using a mixture of consumer and professional equipment.)

While digital camera sales have experienced significant growth, these purchases appear to have had no effect on the sale of traditional photographic cameras. In fact, some retailers have experienced increased curiosity by consumers for all types of photo products.

Dealers who have embraced digital technology are reporting that sales of digital camera accessories and peripherals have reached a level not experienced by the photo market since the hey-day of the SLR, 15 to 20 years ago.

The current trend in digital cameras is toward better features at better prices. Prices are reaching a point where digital cameras will soon become a mass market product. For 1999, as prices continue to erode as fast as consumer interest increases, CITA forecasts sales growth of 50 percent over '98.

#### **PHOTOGRAPHIC CAMERAS**

There has been a gradual shift in both dealer and consumer demand in cameras. Overall, the Canadian market for photographic cameras grew 9 percent in 1998, compared to '97.

The biggest increase occurred in the sale of Advanced Photo System cameras – 24 percent over 1997. The Advanced Photo System (APS) was introduced four years ago by the worldwide photographic community to provide an easier-to-use film system. There seems little doubt Canadian consumers have become enamoured of the new film format.

Still leading in terms of overall consumer acceptance are 35 mm “point and shoot” cameras, with about 80 percent of the camera market.

At about 4 percent of the total camera market, single lens reflex (SLR) cameras saw sales increase a significant 14.5 percent over 1997. And '97 sales were 20 percent over '96, showing there is still strong interest in the more advanced side of photography.

#### **SINGLE-USE CAMERAS**

Inexpensive, available from a variety of outlets, these one-time-use cameras are returned intact to the photofinisher, dismantled, the film removed and processed, and the camera body parts recycled. They are great to use at the beach, where your regular camera might get wet or dirty; a lifesaver when you leave your camera at home; great for kids; and a delight for those who hate to load film into a camera.

So it's no wonder that, from 1994 to 1998, sales of single-use cameras have more than doubled.

In 1998, sales of single-use cameras grew 18 percent, with that same high growth rate predicted for '99.

Sales of single-use cameras with built-in flash now approach 60 percent of all this category's purchases.

Single-use cameras use both 35 mm and Advanced Photo System film, the latter a fairly new category enjoying success.

### **COLOUR NEGATIVE FILM**

Sales of 35 mm colour negative film (for making photographic prints) grew 1.3 percent in 1998, approaching 52 million rolls.

Sales of Advanced Photo System film almost doubled, year over year, showing exceptional growth and popularity among consumers.

Combined, this segment of the photographic market grew 3.7 percent in 1998.

Since 1993, film sales have grown 29 percent.

Almost half of all 35 mm film sold in Canada in 1998 were ISO 200 film speed. This is a dramatic rise in popularity; two years ago, ISO 200 films were at 33 percent of the market in Canada.

ISO 100 film has declined in popularity during the same period, dropping from 50 percent market share to 28 percent in 1998.

ISO 400 film has been exhibiting steady growth, now at about 25 percent of the market.

The most popular film length for Canadian consumers is the 24-exposure roll, at 85 percent of all 35 mm film sales.

### **COLOUR PAPER**

It is interesting to note that the consumption of colour photographic paper grew more than film sales in 1998 – 10 percent. This is the result of more consumers opting for a second set of prints, and as the Advanced Photo System, with its three print sizes, becomes more popular.

### **BINOCULARS**

They've been around forever and they're still popular. The Canadian binocular market grew by 16 percent in 1998. Compact models still dominate, with a 60 percent share of the market.

Continued participation and interest in outdoor activities, including bird watching, hiking, camping, and boating are driving the growth of the binocular market.

*Founded in 1955, the CANADIAN IMAGING TRADE ASSOCIATION is the association of manufacturers/importers and distributors of photographic/electronic imaging equipment and sensitized materials.*

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