

PRESS RELEASE

June, 2001

Picture-taking continues to grow in popularity

Toronto, Ontario - Digital camera sales soared in 2000, but purchases of photographic cameras also increased significantly, confounding the notion that digital would replace photo, at least in the short term. Data released today by the Canadian Image Trade Association (CITA) shows continued strong growth in sales of photographic cameras for consumer use, and a resulting healthy increase in film purchases.

DIGITAL CAMERAS

Worldwide, the focus has been on the remarkable acceptance of digital cameras. Canada is no exception. In 2000, a total of 235,000 digital cameras were sold here. That is an incredible 134 percent rise over '99 sales. In 1999, digital camera sales rose about 80 percent over previous year totals; in '98 they rose 78 percent. The growth trend is obvious.

Digital camera sales represented 13 percent of all camera sales in Canada in 2000, up from the 6 percent of 1999.

In the past, the majority of digital cameras were purchased by professional, commercial and industrial users, with the consumer market represented by what are known as "early adopters." For the non-consumer, digital cameras continue to represent a strong value proposition, improving workflow and reducing costs in many applications.

But in the second half of 2000, consumer demand for digital cameras ramped up significantly. This shift in demand will accelerate in 2001. It will be helped along by lower camera costs, increased consumer awareness and the wider availability of consumer digital imaging output services.

Although an economic slowdown will have an effect on the emerging digital camera market, the Canadian Imaging Trade Assoc. is forecasting an approximately 70 percent growth in digital camera sales in Canada this year. (For those keeping track, last year CITA forecast a 100 percent growth in sales of digital cameras in 2000, a forecast which was exceeded, as noted above.)

PHOTOGRAPHIC CAMERAS

Canada enjoyed another year of growth in photographic camera sales.

Consumer 35 mm SLR (single lens reflex) sales rose almost 11 percent, continuing a strong comeback which began in 1997. In '97, the industry was surprised by a 20 percent growth in SLR sales. In '98, we saw 14.5 percent growth in the category, with '99 coming in at 9 percent.

Obviously, there still is strong interest in the more advanced side of photography. SLRs are generally known for their ability to accept interchangeable lenses and provide extensive exposure capabilities.

Sales of "point and shoot" cameras (35 mm and Advanced Photo System) grew respectably. Showing the best sales performance were the more expensive, longer zoom length models.

Point and shoot models range from the very simple to the remarkably sophisticated, some as well-featured as many SLRs, but without the capability of changing lenses.

The Canadian Imaging Trade Assoc. is forecasting similar prospects for sales this year.

SINGLE-USE CAMERAS

Inexpensive, available almost everywhere, 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 a regular camera might get wet or dirty; can save the day when someone leaves the camera at home; are great for kids; and are a delight for those who hate to load film into a camera.

And their results are remarkable.

Which is why a staggering total of 5.1 million of these cameras were purchased in Canada in 2000. That's a 5 percent increase over '99.

More than 64 percent of them featured built-in flash. This sub-category has grown 26 percent during the past two years.

Single-use cameras using APS film, and therefore smaller than their 35 mm cousins, continue to grow in popularity.

From 1993 to 1999, sales of single-use cameras more than tripled.

COLOUR NEGATIVE FILM

To make photographic prints, you need to use film, and Canadians did just that in 2000, purchasing more than 50 million rolls of colour negative film -- contributing to 10 percent growth over the past two years. For 35 mm colour negative film, it has been a 5 percent growth in that period.

More than 5.6 million rolls of Advanced Photo System (APS) film were purchased last year, for a 27 percent increase over '99. APS film sales have more than doubled since 1998.

More than half of all 35 mm films purchased were ISO 200, with ISO 400 films exhibiting 14 percent growth and continuing to surpass ISO 100 film sales. ISO 400 films accounted for nearly one-third of all 35 mm film sales.

More than 90 percent of all 35 mm film sales in 2000 were 24-exposure rolls

PROFESSIONAL FILM

Reflecting a weakening demand for professional photography in the latter part of the year as the economy softened, combined with increased digital camera use, professional film sales, for the most part, declined.

Overall, professional colour negative film sales softened, sheet film most significantly. In the medium-format sector (120 and 220 formats), 220 roll sales declined 16 percent in 2000, with 120 roll film sales down 8 percent, both compared to 1999 sales.

Showing a trend to increased usage of 35 mm cameras in the professional sector, professional 35 mm colour negative roll sales rose 2 percent in 2000, building on an 11 percent increase in '99.

Professional colour reversal (slide) sheet film sales also declined, down 5 percent over '99 figures. This is a continuing trend, with '98 sales down 9 percent and '99 sales down 8 percent. While 120 slide film sales declined 6 percent in 2000, they had enjoyed a 19 percent growth in '99.

Professional 35 mm colour reversal (slide) film sales rose 2 percent last year, also building on a 19 percent gain in '99.

Overall, professional 35 mm film sales rose, but all other professional film formats declined in 2000.

BINOCULARS

It was another good year for binocular sales in 2000, as Canadians continued their outdoor pursuits, from bird watching, hiking and camping, to eco-travel, boating and stadium sports.

Overall, binocular sales increased 11 percent last year. The compact binocular market, which accounted for 75 percent of all binocular sales, grew 16 percent in 2000.

Founded in 1955, the Canadian Imaging Trade Association is the association of manufacturers/importers and distributors of photographic/electronic imaging equipment and sensitized materials.

For further information:

Dori Gospodaric, General Manager
Canadian Imaging Trade Association
145 Upper Canada Dr.
Toronto, ON, M2P 1S9
(416) 226-2750
fax (416) 226-3347
email: cita@idirect.com