

For decades, Vancouver has been known as “Hollywood North,” a major hub for film and television production in Canada and beyond. But ask industry insiders today, and you’ll hear a more nuanced story: Vancouver’s entertainment industry has grown far beyond just traditional film and TV. The city now boasts a diverse, interconnected ecosystem [AR projects vancouver](#) that includes video games, animation, streaming content, interactive media, and cutting-edge digital workflows such as virtual production and real-time visualization. This blog post dives into how Vancouver’s entertainment landscape has broadened, the technologies fueling this expansion, and why this evolution matters for BC’s creative economy.

The Digitization of Film and TV Workflows

Technology has always been a driving force in entertainment, but the past decade has seen an unprecedented digitization of production workflows. From script to screen, digital tools are now embedded in every phase:

- **Pre-production:** Storyboarding, concept art, and location scouting often start digitally, using sophisticated 3D modeling and collaborative platforms.
- **Production:** On-set cameras increasingly feed into digital pipelines, with many productions incorporating virtual elements in real-time.
- **Post-production:** Editing, visual effects (VFX), color grading, and sound design are heavily computer-driven, with cloud storage enabling collaboration across geographies.

This shift means that Vancouver’s screen industries no longer fit neatly into “film” or “TV” boxes. Instead, the industry is now a broad digital creative ecosystem that includes key components like VFX, animation, and interactive media, which are all tightly integrated with traditional filming.

Virtual Production and Real-Time Visualization: Game Changers for Vancouver

Two technologies stand out as particularly transformative for Vancouver’s entertainment sector: virtual production and real-time visualization.

What Is Virtual Production?

Virtual production combines physical filmmaking with live digital environments. Using large LED walls and game-engine technology, filmmakers can create immersive backgrounds that respond in real time to camera angles and movements. This reduces the need for location shoots and green-screen compositing, streamlining workflow and cutting costs.

What Is Real-Time Visualization?

Real-time visualization leverages powerful graphic engines—similar to those used in video game development—to allow creators to see digital scenes and effects live, as they are being designed and adjusted. Instead of waiting days for a render, directors and VFX teams get immediate feedback, accelerating creative decisions and collaboration.

Both technologies have been embraced by Vancouver’s studios:

- **Virtual production stages:** Vancouver now hosts multiple state-of-the-art virtual production facilities, attracting big-budget streaming projects.

- **Game engines in film:** The use of engines like Unreal Engine and Unity for real-time visualization has become standard in many local studios, integrating film, TV, and gaming workflows.

This convergence enhances Vancouver's competitiveness and reputation as a modern entertainment center.

VFX and Animation: Vancouver's Competitive Advantages

Beyond virtual production, VFX and animation remain pillars of Vancouver's entertainment ecosystem and are core competitive advantages that extend well past traditional film roles.

- **Visual Effects (VFX):** Vancouver is home to some of the world's top VFX studios, working on blockbuster films, high-profile streaming projects, and immersive content. Specialized talent pools and tax incentives make it a magnet for VFX-heavy productions.
- **Animation:** Animation studios in Vancouver produce a wide range of content—from children's television series to adult animation and pre-rendered CG sequences for video games. Vancouver's animation community is tightly linked to both film and game sectors, sharing talent and technology.

Importantly, these sectors are not siloed from each other. Innovations in animation feed into virtual production and video game development, while VFX skills translate easily between film, TV, and interactive media projects.



Interactive Digital Media: A Major BC Creative Industry

While film and TV receive much of the spotlight, interactive media is a powerhouse sector in British Columbia's creative industries. This includes video games, VR/AR experiences, mobile apps, and digital storytelling platforms.

Key points include:

- **Video Games:** Vancouver is a major center for game development, with studios ranging from indie developers to global giants. Many game makers collaborate with animation and VFX professionals, blurring industry lines.
- **Streaming Content:** The rise of streaming platforms has boosted demand for diverse content types and formats, including interactive storytelling and gaming tie-ins. Vancouver studios often produce streaming-exclusive animation and hybrid projects.
- **Cross-Industry Collaboration:** Interactive media companies increasingly work hand-in-hand with film and TV producers, combining expertise in storytelling, digital effects, and real-time technology.

This interconnectivity reflects a broader trend: entertainment in Vancouver is an ecosystem, not a set of isolated industries.

What Does This Mean for Vancouver's Entertainment Future?

Vancouver's evolving entertainment sector presents significant opportunities and challenges:

1. **Workforce Development:** There is a growing need for multidisciplinary talent proficient in virtual production, game engines, animation, and VFX, as well as traditional film skills. Education and training programs are adapting to equip creatives with these hybrid skills.
2. **Infrastructure Investment:** Continued investment in virtual production stages, high-performance computing, and collaborative digital pipelines will be critical to sustaining growth.
3. **Economic Impact:** As the ecosystem grows, it generates more diverse jobs—from animators and game designers to engineers and producers—contributing broadly to BC's economy.
4. **Creative Innovation:** Having access to multiple platforms and media types empowers Vancouver creators to pioneer new forms of storytelling and audience engagement.

Conclusion

So, is it true that Vancouver entertainment is broader than film now? Absolutely. Today's entertainment world in Vancouver transcends traditional film and TV categories, expanding to include video games, animation, streaming content, interactive media, virtual production, and real-time visualization technologies. This digitized, interconnected creative ecosystem is one of BC's most dynamic cultural and economic assets.



Understanding this broader landscape—and the technological innovations driving it—is essential for anyone interested in how Vancouver continues to shape the future of global entertainment.

If you want to keep up with Vancouver's evolving entertainment scene, stay tuned to this blog for more insights into the people, studios, and technologies moving the industry forward.