

## Microsoft and Sundance Institute Award HDi Grant to Bring Leading Interactive Capabilities to Independent Films

**Grant gives 2007 Sundance Film Festival Grand Jury Prize Winner 'Manda Bala' resources to develop interactivity using Microsoft HDi and publish to HD DVD and other digital delivery scenarios.**

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PARK CITY, Utah, Jan. 20 /PRNewswire-FirstCall/ -- Today at the 2008 Sundance Film Festival, Microsoft Corp., together with Sundance Institute presented the Microsoft HDi Grant to director Jason Kohn and producer Jared Goldman for their 2007 Sundance Film Festival Grand Jury Prize-winning documentary "Manda Bala (Send a Bullet)." Worth an estimated \$100,000, the grant provides Kohn and Goldman with resources to author "Manda Bala" in pristine high definition and develop immersive interactive experiences using Microsoft's industry-leading HDi technology. HDi technology enables filmmakers to complement their work with features such as picture-in-picture director's commentary and character biographies that enhance the home viewing experience. The grant also includes support for production of the finished product on HD DVD along with other digital delivery scenarios.

"We put several years into making 'Manda Bala,' and this grant lets us explore the digital canvas of HD DVD and HDi and express the work we've done in entirely new ways," Kohn said. "Considering all the extra footage we have to work with and the award-winning capabilities of HDi on HD DVD, Jared and I are excited to get started."

HDi is Microsoft's implementation of the advanced interactive layer in the HD DVD format. The technology has provided the foundation for HD DVD's leadership in interactivity by taking advantage of mandatory features in every HD DVD player (for example, a secondary video decoder, persistent storage and an Internet connection) to enable in-movie experiences such as picture-in-picture director's commentary, and Web-enabled features that allow fans to discuss the movie during playback and enable a director or producer to provide new content downloads in the future. Based on Web standards, HDi easily and efficiently extends the benefits of Web connectivity to the movie-watching experience and can be applied to both optical and digitally distributed scenarios.

"We've always believed that the creative community behind filmmaking would best define how HDi should be used, and this grant is meant to put the technology in the hands of the people who will explore its full potential," said Jordi Ribas, general manager of the HD DVD Group at Microsoft. "Sundance Institute has long been an important part of Microsoft's history with digital media technologies, and we look forward to continuing to work together to advance the spirit of independent film."

## Microsoft Continues Support of Independent Films

The HDi Grant further extends Microsoft's support of independent films, which also includes the 1,000 HD DVD Indies Project announced earlier this year with Amazon.com Inc.'s CreateSpace. Due to its heritage in DVD, as well as the inherent authoring and disc replication efficiencies over other optical formats, HD DVD can scale to support the independent film community in a cost-effective way. The 1,000 HD DVD Indies Project was designed to provide independent filmmakers with free access to HD DVD authoring and on-demand replication. A number of Sundance films are already taking part in this program, including the acclaimed comedy from David Wain, "The Ten" (City Lights Home Entertainment); "Manda Bala" (City Lights Home Entertainment); "We Are the Strange;" and the Sundance Channel original series "Big Ideas for a Small Planet."

In addition, on Jan. 18, 2008, Microsoft began offering digital rentals of Sundance Film Festival short films on Xbox 360 for 160 Microsoft Points, which can be purchased at retail or online. The Video Store on Xbox LIVE is the leading provider of high-definition on-demand content, with the most hours of high-definition content available, offering movies for video on demand and TV shows and music videos for electronic sell-through. More information about content being offered on Xbox LIVE Marketplace is available at <http://www.xbox.com/en-US/live/marketplace/moviestv>.

More information about Microsoft's support of independent film and how HDi is transforming the way movies are made and experienced is available at the Microsoft House at the 2008 Sundance Film Festival (301 Main St. in Park City). More information about Microsoft HDi and HD DVD can also be found at <http://www.thisishddvd.com>.

## About the Sundance Film Festival

Sundance Film Festival is the premier showcase for U.S. and international independent film. Held each January in Park City, Salt Lake City, Ogden, and Sundance, Utah, the Festival is a core program of Sundance Institute, a nonprofit cultural organization founded by Robert Redford in 1981. Presenting dramatic and documentary feature-length films in nine distinct categories and approximately 80 short films each year, the Sundance Film Festival has introduced American audiences to some of the most innovative films of the past two decades. Since 1984, the Festival program has evolved to include music, art, and dialogue. Beyond the streets of Park City, the official website of the Sundance Film Festival, <http://www.sundance.org/festival> shares the Festival experience with a global audience with short films, filmmaker interviews, videos, podcasts, photos, news stories, and more.

## About Microsoft

Founded in 1975, Microsoft is the worldwide leader in software, services and solutions that help people and businesses realize their full potential.