

Introduction: The CRTC has made a major update to how “Canadian content” is defined across both traditional broadcasters and online streaming platforms. This marks the first step in a broader regulatory framework that will reshape certification, spending obligations, and partnerships with global players. Members should be aware of immediate changes and prepare for upcoming decisions.

This definition recognizes a wider range of creators and helps support Canadian creative industries. The CRTC is also giving traditional broadcasters and online streaming services flexibility to invest in and promote Canadian content, while ensuring that Canadians maintain meaningful control and benefit from their work.

Current Status: Changes came into effect November 18, 2025

Key Updates

- **New definition mandate:** Canadian content rules now apply equally to broadcasters and streamers.
- **Revamped points system:** Expanded recognition of creative roles (showrunners, costume/makeup/hair, VFX directors, etc.).
- **Human creative leadership:** Key roles must be filled by individuals, not AI.
- Canadian participation requirements increased for foreign productions.
- Foreign-owned productions must include a Canadian company with a minimum ownership stake. Must treat Canadian companies as genuine partners.
- **Next phase (Part 2):** Spending obligations will cover news and independent production.
- Streamers must show Canadian creative leadership, spending, and ownership/decision-making.
- Expect updated metrics and review processes to verify compliance.
- Buyers in the digital advertising sector might benefit from tracking how platforms certify Canadian programs.
- New criteria favour Canadian-led, in-Canada spending models – benefiting digital-first creators in Canada.
- **Strategic Signal:** Members should audit content portfolios – Canadian roles, spending, and ownership structures.

Suggested Actions

- Highlight Canadian-led content in campaigns and partner with Canadian streamers and creators who meet certification criteria.
- Monitor upcoming CRTC decisions on spending and news obligations.

- Align media buys with certified Canadian programming, this can be seen as an opportunity to strengthen your Canadian content strategy.

IAB Canada will continue to monitor CRTC developments closely, provide updates, and support members in adapting strategies to meet new Canadian content requirements. If you wish to read more about CRTC 2025-29, please click the following [link](#).

If you would like to discuss this further or any other topics, please reach out to us at policy@iabcanada.com.