

TikTok helps films thrive in theaters with younger audiences

Article

The news: TikTok is transforming film promotion by driving movie discovery and boosting box office success, according to a report from the platform’s marketing science team.

- The app’s users are 44% more likely than nonusers to visit a movie theater at least once a month.

- Nearly half of TikTok users discover new movies on the platform, and over a third purchase tickets after seeing a movie promoted on TikTok.
- 71% are motivated to see movies in theaters for the immersive experience, and 72% prefer watching movies in theaters with others.
- Paid campaigns on TikTok have proven successful across various genres, with trailers and sneak peeks playing a key role in influencing ticket purchases. Additionally, 62% of TikTok users report that a movie's actors heavily influence their decision to watch it in theaters, highlighting the importance of star talent in marketing.

Why it matters: The fall movie season remains a crucial period for the release of highly anticipated films like “**Beetlejuice Beetlejuice**,” “**Joker: Folie à Deux**,” and “**Gladiator II**.” The report suggests TikTok is a prime venue for promoting films, and its ability to create buzz could help the film industry continue to recover from its pandemic struggles.

- Campaigns have led to significant box office success, as seen with films like “**Twisters**” and “**Bad Boys: Ride or Die**.” These movies employed TikTok-first strategies, including high-impact media placements and creator collaborations, producing strong ROI.
- **The study suggests that TikTok's influence extends beyond the initial release**, with users continuing to engage with movie content after watching in theaters. “**Deadpool & Wolverine**” viewers recreated Deadpool's dance to NSYNC's “Bye Bye Bye” on the app, propelling the 24-year-old song into Spotify's global top 20.
- Fan-posted clips from the **Ryan Reynolds** film—including the return of fan-favorite characters—went viral on TikTok. With 60% of its opening weekend audience having been ages 18 to 34, this grassroots, meme-driven promotion demonstrates the power of social platforms in boosting films that appeal to younger moviegoers.

Our take: TikTok is working to prove its importance to the US economy as discussions about the app's future in the country continue.

While older adults increasingly opt out of theater experiences—58% of those 55 and older don't attend cinemas at all—younger audiences (18 to 34) remain enthusiastic about moviegoing. That aligns with TikTok's ability to engage and influence these demographics.

Types of Movie Screenings US Adults Attend in Cinemas, by Age, July 2024

% of respondents

	18-34	35-54	55+	Total
2D Cinema	36%	34%	18%	28%
IMAX	24%	27%	17%	22%
3D Cinema	33%	21%	8%	19%
Big screen events	17%	13%	8%	12%
4DX Cinema	14%	8%	1%	7%
Other	0%	1%	1%	1%
Don't know	5%	7%	7%	7%
I do not go to the cinema	21%	34%	58%	40%

Note: n=2,337

Source: YouGov as cited in company blog, Aug 8, 2024

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