

An Examination of the Evolutionary Trajectories and Strategic Transformations in Film and Television Promotion Methods

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Abstract. This scholarly investigation systematically examines the evolution of film and television promotion methods and strategies, aiming to compile and analyze the historical and contemporary approaches within the cinematic industry. The study elucidates the developmental pathways from traditional media reliance to the current digital-centric strategies, emphasizing the pivotal role of technological advancements. It scrutinizes the impact of social media, personalized marketing, and the burgeoning influence of streaming platforms on audience engagement and content distribution. The research further explores the prospective integration of artificial intelligence (AI), the proliferation of streaming platforms, and the potential of blockchain technology in revolutionizing film promotion and distribution. The conclusions drawn from this analysis underscore the significance of these technological shifts, offering insights into the future trajectories of the industry. This study provides a comprehensive understanding of the paradigmatic shift in marketing techniques, broadening the reach of film promotion to more realms and offering strategic implications for stakeholders.

Keywords: Film promotion evolution; Digital marketing strategies; Artificial intelligence; Streaming platforms; Blockchain technology.

1. Introduction

Similar to classic drama, primitive storytelling, folk tale, or medieval morality plays, movies could be interpreted as a means by which individuals apprehend their selves, their social status, and the gravity of their group. This also means how individuals orientate themselves inside of any particular position. Movies are not a fixed pattern of meaning that is received by a passive mind. On the contrary, the lessons or understanding gained from movies depends on what background an individual belongs in. By offering escapism (a habitual section of the human brain that specifically processes imaginative activity and entertainment as an evacuation from reality or daily routine), they contribute to psychological well-being and inspire personal and collective growth. Films impact the formation of identity, language, and consumer behavior, and drive viewers to technological advancements, making them a vital force in both cultural and economic spheres. As vehicles of artistic expression, films shape societal norms, inspire unprecedented change, and cultivate communal bonds. Additionally, they facilitate technological innovation and economic growth, making them integral to both individual identity formation and collective cultural discourse.

Wang et al. employed a review of the trade press and interviews to synthesize discoveries on the film industry's shift to streaming during the pandemic, COVID-19 [1]. It examines trends in the market, such as increased viewership and launches of new platforms, proffering a wide range of Southeast Asia's Dynamic media ecosystem. Through utilizing methodologies such as examining industry trends and synthesizing findings, the essay analyzed the significant impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on Southeast Asia's film distribution, culminating in the shift towards video streaming platforms as increased cinemas are closed. The essay examines the increase in the number of online viewers, the introduction of new streaming services, and the problem of adapting to digital distribution reflecting the region's unique media ecosystem and its relationship with global platforms.

Colbjornsen used the examination method that studied a combination of theoretical and empirical methods [2]. Theoretically, he uses network theory to analyze power relations within streaming networks. Empirically, it leverages a wide range of primary and secondary sources, including



financial reports, investor information, and corporate documents, to understand the operations and strategies of streaming services such as Spotify, Apple Music, Netflix, and Kindle Unlimited. The study looks at how human and non-human actors are interconnected in content, data, and financial flows, as well as the dynamics of control and access within these networks. Colbjørnsen's article "The Streaming Network" examines the structure and power dynamics of the digital media streaming industry. Use case studies like Spotify, Apple Music, Netflix, and Kindle Unlimited to illustrate the relationship and flow between content, users, and technology. The analysis highlights the strategic role of streaming providers and device manufacturers, focusing on the asymmetric power between content creators and users compared to streaming device platforms and manufacturers.

Cunningham et al. discussed the evolution of online film distribution, its impact on traditional business models, and the emergence of new industry players [3]. It examines the transformation of the film industry through digital distribution, the challenges faced by current cinematographers, and the opportunities for independent and international cinema using a variety of case studies and market analysis. The two most important aspects of the article's survey methodology are ongoing online research and website review for on-demand movie streaming, using keywords, and trade publications to identify industry trends and business models. In addition, the research involved a historical analysis of the evolution of online distribution since 1997, providing insights into the growth of the industry and the emergence of new players such as Apple iTunes and Amazon VOD.

Serna offers a detailed examination of the early landscape of film distribution in Scotland, with a focus on the diversity of regional trade and the shift from traveling exhibitions to fixed-site exhibition practices [4]. It explores how distribution methods have influenced the social experience of cinema, highlighting the tension between local and global forces in the evolution of the industry. The study uses geographic databases and digital mapping techniques to analyze the spatial dynamics of film distribution, revealing the interconnectedness of local and global business practices. This methodological approach provides insight into the social roles of cinema and the experiences of audiences, contributing to a nuanced understanding of the institutionalization of the film industry and the struggle for control within the emerging film market.

2. Film-TV Marketing Transformation

2.1. Transformation Development

2.1.1. Traditional media era (pre-digital)

In the traditional media era, where digital equipment is not yet developed and utilized as an appliance for distributing media or films. Publicity was largely dependent on traditional media such as newspapers, printed sheets, magazines, radio, and television commercials. These traditional media played a major role in prompting new films and shows.

2.1.2. A digital shift-transformation

During the late 1990s to 2000s, a significant shift has underwent, where films and television production began establishing actual websites, a place where fans and people who were interested could view trailers, behind-the-scenes footage, and actor bios. Forums established online and early social media platforms such as MySpace and Blogs have started leveraging fans to engage. Another major distributors are fan clubs, they moved to online forums, blogs, and websites directing to specific shows or movies. The establishment of digital forums promoted cyberspace where fans all around the world can exchange opinions, discuss, and share content in favor of. Online fan clubs became vibrant communities where discussions extended beyond the official narratives.

2.1.3. Social media explosion

The rise of social media platforms starting in the 2010s enabled copious amounts of fan interactions and the ability to transmit viral content faster. Features like Hashtag campaigns, live chats with stars, and content that are user-generated help engage viewers [5]. "Pew Research reports have documented

in great detail how the rise of social media has affected such things as work, politics, and political deliberation, communications patterns around the globe, as well as the way people get and share information about health, civic life, news consumption, communities, teenage life, parenting, dating and even people's level of stress."

2.1.4. The rise of data-driven and personalized marketing

Personalization, a short-term term for personalized marketing, is the action of designing and allocating personalized content to customers by analyzing customer preferences. The definition of the word "personalization," according to the Oxford Dictionary, is "the action of designing or producing something that meets someone's individual requirement." Products and Content that are personalized according to customer preference can have a significant reduction in customer fatigue and time in making choices and selecting content [6]. "Personalization is a strategy to gain a competitive advantage, encompassing learning, matching, and delivering products and services to customers. Customers benefit from personalization as it reduces disorientation by focusing on the options that meet their requirements." Furthermore, social media algorithms revolutionized fan engagement by directing content to individual preferences, making sure the latest updates, trailers, and behind-the-scenes moments reach target audiences. These algorithms amplified organic fan interaction, enabling studios to strategically push content while creating a sense of exclusivity. Direct interaction between fans and creators, through platforms like Twitter, Instagram, and TikTok, fostered deeper emotional connections. This real-time engagement not only cultivated a loyal fan base but also empowered fans to become brand advocates, creating viral moments and driving cultural conversation around films and shows with unparalleled intensity and precision.

2.1.5. Influence of streaming services

Streaming platforms adapt their own recommendation algorithms to prompt content, often using personalization strategies. These streaming platforms like Netflix, Amazon Prime, and Disney+ promote algorithms to curate content specifically tailored to individual viewer preferences. This approach that orientates customers replaces traditional mass marketing by pinpointing specific demographics based on costumed viewing habits, ensuring every content is allocated correctly. Publicity campaigns are now often localized, with trailers, posters, and ads designed for specific regions to appeal to global audiences. Streaming platforms like Netflix, Amazon Prime, and Disney+ promote algorithms

2.2. Influence Factor of Transformation

The methodology of film promotion has undergone a significant change throughout the years. The change is driven by several factors including audience behavior, shifts in marketing strategies, and technology improvements.

2.2.1. Technological advancements

Firstly, as technology advanced, with the burgeon of the internet and social media, traditional methods of transmission and promotion (e.g. TV commercials, prints, advertisements, and billboards) began to initiate. "Until recently, the conventional rules for distributing feature films were largely set around analog technologies with business models based on rigid window systems and exclusivity. However, recent advances in digital technologies are changing the way audiences consume media, putting pressure on traditional models for releasing films." The introduction of digital platforms (e.g. Netflix, Instagram, WeChat) altered the way people consume content, resulting in innovative forms of publicity that leverage online tools and techniques [1].

2.2.2. Audience behavior shifts

Furthermore, the appetite of audiences for more selective and interactive media escalates. In earlier times, audiences relied heavily on mass media such as TV, radio, and print for entertainment news. However, with the rise of the internet, viewers now actively seek out trailers, reviews, and behind-the-scenes content on demand. "Until recently, the conventional rules for distributing feature films

were largely set around analog technologies with business models based on rigid window systems and exclusivity [7]. However, recent advances in digital technologies are changing the way audiences consume media, putting pressure on traditional models for releasing films.”

This transformation has prompted studios to concentrate on more personalized, direct, and immersive engagement strategies.

2.2.3. Marketing strategy evolution

In addition, publicity has transferred from objective communication to two-way and multi-way interactions. This transformation has allowed for more organic and popular marketing, creating a methodology in which user-generated content and fan participation play key roles.

2.2.4. Social media’s role

Social Media platforms like X, Twitter, Instagram, and TikTok have prompted unprecedented real-time engagement. This will allow studios to acquire information on specific demographics, search for campaigns and create viral moments. This real-time engagement strategy has revolutionized the budget of marketing allocated and distributed and how activities are tracked.

3. Innovative Strategies for Film and Television Promotion

3.1. Interactive Marketing and Gamification

3.1.1. Interactive marketing

Interactive marketing is characterized by two-way communication, mutual influence, customer responsiveness, and real-time engagement. It focuses on creating value and profit through tracking down active customer participation and interaction using algorithms. "While the term interactive marketing often has diverse definitions and usages among marketing professionals and practitioners, it is defined here as the bi-directional value creation and mutual-influence marketing process through active customer connection, engagement, participation, and interaction." Traditional marketing is often not directional and inconvenient with brands broadcasting their messages to customers [8]. Interactive marketing, on the contrary, uses interaction where consumers can respond to brand messages, and surveys, providing feedback or experience reflection and even initiating dialogues. Brands that engage in interactive marketing can react faster to customers requires help building trust and loyalty. Through interactions, consumers take an active role, they're not just passive recipients of information but are invited to participate in the brand's narrative.

3.1.2. Gamification

“Gamification has been defined as a process of enhancing services with (motivational) affordances in order to invoke gameful experiences and further behavioral outcomes” When defining gamification, it generally plays a role similar to a game [9]. Its essence is to allow marketing to become more engaging and interactive, the basic logic is to challenge consumers' natural desires to accept challenges and be willing to games to receive rewards, common examples of gamification are pop-up game puzzles, spin-to-win games, and full-blown video games.

Between 2013 to 2015, Lionsgate Studio designed an immersive online experience game that allowed fans and readers to feel like they were actually a part of the story's world. Lionsgate Studios designed an immersive online experience To promote The Hunger Games franchise that allowed fans to feel like they were part of the story's world. They created the fictional Capitol (the central government in the Hunger Games universe) and launched a website called Capitol.pn that mimicked official state propaganda. The campaign was designed to engage fans as if they were citizens of Panem (the dystopian world in the series).

3.2. Non-Fungible Tokens and Blockchains

Non-Fungible Tokens: NFT (Non-Fungible Tokens) is a unique digital asset that represents ownership or proof of authenticity of a specific item—typically art, collectibles, music, or other digital content—on the blockchain. Unlike cryptocurrencies like Bitcoin, which are fungible (meaning each unit is identical), NFTs are non-fungible, meaning each token is distinct and cannot be exchanged one-to-one with another NFT.

Blockchains: A blockchain is a decentralized digital ledger that records transactions across a network of computers (nodes) in a way that makes it secure, transparent, and nearly impossible to alter. Blockchains enable peer-to-peer transactions without the need for a central authority (such as a bank or government).

3.3. AI-Generated Trailers

AI-generated trailers fasten the process of establishing promotional content, revolutionizing movie releases. Studios can analyze hours of footage from films to pinpoint exciting visuals, key moments, and impactful sequences that will attract audiences by using the help of artificial intelligence. Adoption of AI also significantly shortens the time of trailer production when compared to time-consuming traditional editing [10]. AI can also suggest appropriate music, narration, and transitions based on successful trailer templates. Which speeds up the creation process while maintaining quality.

A notable example is the collaboration between IBM Watson and 20th Century Fox for the 2016 film *Morgan*. Watson experimented and analyzed hundreds of horror titles, and selected a key scene for the final trailer. AI created an action-packed trailer for specific groups and directed content for corresponding groups with specific tastes where some focused on visual effects and others focused on romance. This targeting approach can improve engagement by adapting content to the preferences of divergent viewers.

In addition, AI furnishes insights that are 3 data-based and helps studios optimize trends, emotional tone, and genre analysis. For example, AI can highlight the tension of horror films” [8]. ScriptBook uses these techniques to process input (film screenplays) and generate a unique output (analytics about the features of the screenplay, its commercial viability across different facets, and a final recommendation to greenlight or reject), reducing what might have taken days or weeks of research and deliberation as well as a fair amount of uncertainty and risk-taking down to a matter of minutes” This approach not only increase the efficiency of creating trailers but also reduce costs. On the contrary, AI-generated trailers lack the creative intuition of human editors and appear to be largely based on past data rather than innovation. Despite these challenges, AI is expected to play an increasingly large role in movie marketing as the technology continues to advance.

4. Insights and Prospects

In the realm of film promotion, significant transformations have taken place in recent years, influenced by factors such as technological advancements, evolving consumer behaviors, and the emergence of the methodology of digital distribution driven by innovated algorithms in platforms. Interpreting current trends and predicting future development is essential for stakeholders within the film industry. This process includes anticipating producers, distributors, and exhibitors. As traditional ways of film promotion fade away, and new methods adapt to new demands, both challenges and opportunities are reshaping the industry's future.

4.1. Challenges in the Evolving Landscape

Despite these promising developments, several challenges persist in the evolving film distribution landscape. The rise of streaming platforms has raised concerns regarding the decline of traditional theatrical releases. Many industry experts argue that cinemas may struggle to remain viable in a world increasingly driven by on-demand consumption. Ongoing debates question whether the cinematic

experience can coexist with the convenience of home viewing. Moreover, the reliance on data and algorithms may lead to content homogenization, where only highly marketable and predictable films receive widespread promotion, potentially stifling creative risks and diversity in filmmaking.

Furthermore, the increasing fragmentation of the streaming market poses another significant challenge. As more platforms enter the market, competition for exclusive content and audience attention intensifies. Consumers face the burden of managing multiple subscriptions, which may lead to market saturation and subscription fatigue. Consequently, filmmakers and distributors must navigate a complex ecosystem of competing platforms, each with unique licensing agreements and revenue-sharing models, complicating distribution strategies and potentially limiting their ability to reach diverse audiences.

4.2. Insights into Current Trend

One of the most notable developments in film distribution is the ascendance of streaming platforms. Services such as Netflix, Amazon Prime, Disney+, and HBO Max have increasingly shifted focus from traditional theatrical releases to direct-to-consumer models. The COVID-19 pandemic catalyzed this transition, prompting studios to explore alternative distribution strategies in response to cinema closures. This shift has democratized film distribution, providing independent filmmakers with greater access to global audiences and circumventing barriers historically imposed by major studios and cinema chains. As a result, the traditional distribution paradigm is being redefined, with direct engagement between filmmakers and audiences becoming increasingly feasible.

Moreover, the increased role of data analytics in film distribution represents a critical insight. Digital platforms facilitate the collection and analysis of vast amounts of user data, encompassing viewing habits, preferences, and engagement metrics. This data-driven approach enables more precise audience targeting, optimizing marketing strategies and release schedules. By personalizing marketing content and adjusting distribution based on real-time analytics, distributors can allocate resources more effectively, enhancing audience engagement. This paradigm shift empowers studios to make informed, data-driven decisions regarding their marketing and distribution efforts, potentially leading to higher rates of audience retention and satisfaction.

4.3. Future Prospects

Allocating our sight ahead, artificial intelligence technology is increasingly playing a pivotal role in film distribution. AI can automate various processes within the distribution pipeline, these process includes the generation of trailers and promotion content. "The vigorous advancement of AI technology has provided new solutions for dealing with the problems of the traditional advertising industry." Using, AI, advertisers could collect mass amounts of user data and preferences in social media.

By analyzing audience preferences and predicting consumer demands, AI has the capability of generating more accurate and personalized content recommendations, thereby enhancing viewer engagement [11]. Moreover, the application of AI could facilitate marketing efforts, reduce production costs, and proffer greater creative flexibility. This integration of technology is very likely to yield significant efficiencies in the film market.

The adaption of blockchain technology demonstrates considerable potential. Blockchain's characteristics of decentralized and transparent nature can address longstanding challenges, such as combating digital piracy, and constructing equivalent revenue distribution." Blockchain serves as an immutable ledger that allows transactions to take place in a decentralized manner. Blockchain-based applications are springing up, covering numerous fields including financial services, reputation systems Internet of Things (IoT), and so on" [12]. Implementation of smart contracts- self-executing could automate royalty payments, promoting an equitable distribution model that could bolster trust. Allowing the existence of a sustainable system for content creators to survive.

Another promising prospect is the globalization of film distribution. The expansion of internet access and mobile technology in emerging markets fostered a burgeoning demand for localized content. Streaming services are heavily investing in original content tailored to non-Western audiences. This contributes to the internationalization of cinema. This trend presents filmmakers with opportunities to diversify their revenue streams by accessing previously untapped global markets. Additionally, the rise of cross-border collaborations and international co-productions may further drive globalization, as content producers cater to increasingly diverse audiences and preferences.

5. Conclusion

This paper has undertaken an extensive exploration of the evolution history of film promotion, examining the change from traditional media to the current film promotion landscape. It has reviewed the impact of technological achievements on the methods of film promotion. Analyzing the shift from passive broadcasting to interactive, data-driven strategies. The study has also dived into the use of social media, personalized marketing, and the influence of streaming platforms. Furthermore, it has anticipated future developments, predicting the future trajectories of the film industries, such as artificial intelligence, non-fungible tokens, and gamification.

Examination of film promotion methods has revealed a significant change. Utilization of social media has facilitated engagement rates with audiences, providing the creation of development of brand advocates and viral moments. Studios distribute content to individual viewer preferences by using personalization strategies driven by data analytics, enhancing engagement and satisfaction. These strategies have the potential outcomes of increased retention and more effective marketing campaigns.

Looking ahead, the integration of advanced technologies has made the film industry more effective. Artificial intelligence has played its role in optimizing various aspects of film promotion, varying from content creation to audience targeting. Moreover, streaming platforms will continue to construct the distribution landscape, offering direct-to-consumer models, and challenging traditional theatrical releases. Blockchain technology could revolutionize revenue distribution and combat piracy, fostering a sustainable industry ecosystem. In conclusion, the future of film promotion will become more effective and innovative, with revolutionary technologies such as AI, streaming platforms, and blockchain technology at the very frontier of this transformation, the industry will pursue a more consummate prospect. The convergence of technology and creativity will likely redefine the film industry, offering new opportunities for growth and global expansion.

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