

A TEASER TO

FILM FORWARD

An Operator's Guide
to Elevating Cinema Marketing



INTRODUCTION

Hi there! 🙌

It's great to have you.

Our mission is to give you the best possible solutions to make your workflows smoother and your teams faster paving the way to great results for the future of your cinema.

The DX Platform is the product of 25 years of love cinema and experience in the technology industry. We're so glad you have signed-up for our Early Access programme, and are helping us build the perfect solution for the cinema industry.



Tech Geeks, Movie Lovers, Nice People. We're a remote-first team of technology and cinema enthusiasts working from 10 countries

HOW YOUR MARKETING KIT CAN HELP YOU

Now that you're all set up, it's time to let your customers know and build your community of fans who want to visit your cinema.

We've created this Marketing Toolkit to help you:

- Be aware of trends affecting the cinema industry and impacting audiences now and in the future
- Understand the basics of effective marketing and social media
- Develop engaging content to attract customers

This kit contains insights, examples and helpful guidance on how to promote your cinema, build buzz for your film programme and events, and drive your ticket sales, even with limited resources.

"Marketing is key, and increasingly important in a digital world where audience attention is scarce. One of our core values at DX is to enable others to succeed. This ebook is our effort to contribute to your success with marketing."

MARTIN BERG CEO



WHAT'S IN THIS MARKETING KIT?

TABLE OF CONTENTS



PART ONE: Insights and trends

PART TWO: Five steps any cinema can take to win at marketing

PART THREE: Best practice case studies

PART FOUR: A guide to Canva, Chat GPT and making marketing assets

Let's Dive In!



PART ONE: INSIGHTS AND TRENDS

Marketing trends affecting the cinema industry and audience behaviour now, and into the future.

As a busy cinema owner, you probably don't have time to deep dive into marketing insights, but we've got you covered.

The first section of this toolkit is a digestible overview of the latest marketing trends and insights affecting the cinema industry and shaping the future, both for cinema owners and movie goers.

Why do these insights matter?

Because they impact consumer behaviour, which in turn can impact ticket sales and footfall. Understanding the current marketing landscape can help you prepare for future developments in the industry, to stay ahead of your competition.

1. AI - IT'S NOT JUST A SPIELBERG MOVIE...

Tools like [ChatGPT](#) can help with content development, research, idea generation, the simplification and automation of tasks and much more. However, AI remains controversial. For example, in the film industry it can support more cost-efficient and simplified film production, but it also threatens jobs and IP.

FURTHER READING

- DX blog: [Artificial Intelligence Unwrapped: The key things you need to know](#)
- DX blog: [Artificial Intelligence Unwrapped: Transforming the cinema industry](#)
- DIVE DEEPER: How cinemas can use AI to support their marketing

2. STREAMING - NETFLIX IS NOT YOUR BIGGEST COMPETITION

Cinemas are [recovering from the pandemic](#), streamers are [investing more in theatrical](#), but cash-strapped audiences are craving emotional, memory-building, and immersive experiences. ‘Popcorn and comfy seats’ are no longer enough to leave the house for. Cinemas can reposition their UVPs: a “calming escape” from the noise, an intimate “date night”, a “fully-immersive”, unifying experience.

FURTHER READING

- DX blog: [The serene value of cinema in our daily lives](#)
- DIVE DEEPER: How cinemas can refocus their marketing to respond to contemporary audience needs

Joe Russo, director of Avengers, believes AI will be able to [produce entire feature films in “two years”](#), with the possibility in the future for movie-goers to create different movies on the spot.

3. INFLUENCERS MATTER MORE THAN EVER

Word of mouth and user-generated content are some of the most valuable forms of marketing. Younger audiences especially trust their friends, peers, and influencers more than media and advertisers. Partnering with relevant influencers can help you tap into new audience and build trust.

FURTHER READING

- CASE STUDY: [FANBYTES x CINEWORLD influencer campaign](#)
- DEEPER DIVE: How can cinemas work with influencers?

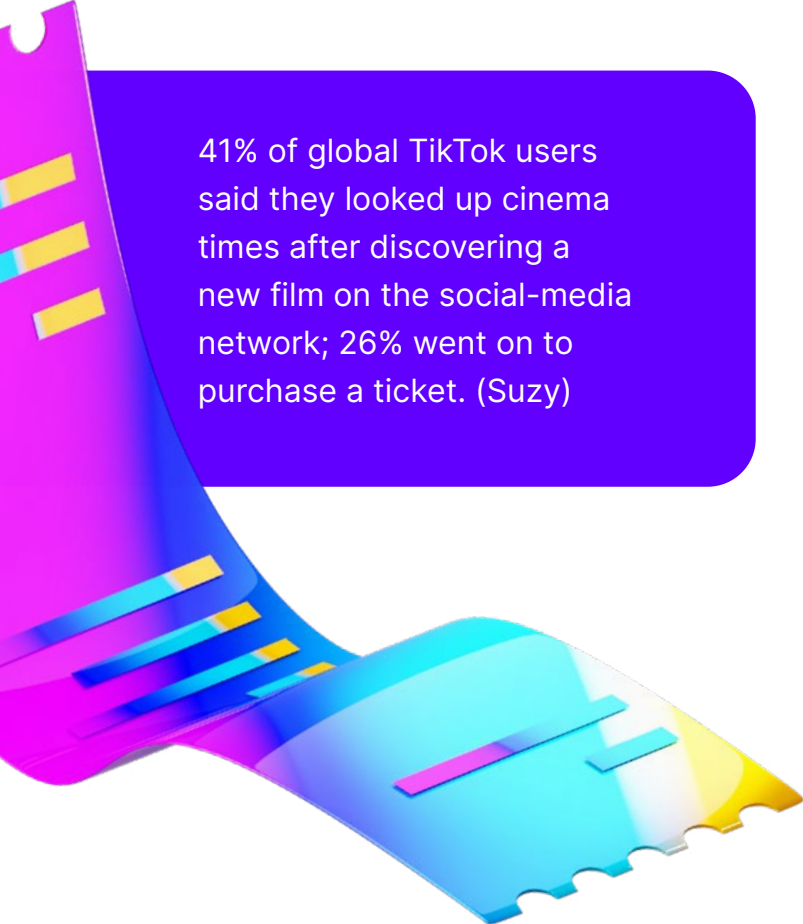
Influencer marketing was worth \$7.36 billion in 2021 and is expected to reach the value of \$ 69.92 billion by 2029 (Data Bridge Market Research)

4. TIKTOK CONTINUES TO ROCK

TikTok is the [fastest growing social platform](#) with 834.3 million active monthly users! People of all ages use it to build communities, learn, and share, with [50% of users in the 25-45 age group](#) (not just teens!). It is becoming a powerful search engine, and recently partnered with IMDb for enhanced movie and TV-related content. It is currently trialing an [in-app movie-ticket sales tool](#) in 2023.

FURTHER READING

- DEEPER DIVE: Why is TikTok so powerful and how are cinemas using it?



41% of global TikTok users said they looked up cinema times after discovering a new film on the social-media network; 26% went on to purchase a ticket. (Suzy)

5. IMMERSIVE EXPERIENCES: CREATE MULTIPLE TOUCHPOINTS FOR AUDIENCES

Brands are using [immersive experience tactics](#) to engage audiences creatively. This includes gamification, using social media to interact with followers, or working with influencers. Immersive marketing can be small-scale, like having a movie-themed photo wall in your lobby to encourage user-generated photos, or a film-themed Spotify playlist you can email your cinema members.

FURTHER READING:

- DEEPER DIVE: How cinemas can create more immersive touchpoints

6. NO ONE WANTS TO BE SOLD TO, THEY WANT TO FEEL SEEN AND HEARD

In an age dominated by social media and content-led campaigns, traditional marketing is losing impact. Modern audiences crave connection and belonging. Brands are shifting [to prioritize community-building](#), humanizing their tone of voice, and tapping into emotional, nostalgic or conversation-based interactions to engage customers authentically and stand out from the competition.

FURTHER READING

- CASE STUDY: [How ODEON switched up its marketing approach](#)
- DEEPER DIVE: How to promote your cinema without “hard selling”



[Read about Chipotle x Roblox's immersive marketing campaign BURRITO BUILDER](#)

7. COMMUNITY HAS NEVER BEEN MORE IMPORTANT

Post-pandemic audiences crave social connection. Cinemas aren't just for movies anymore: They're becoming community hubs fostering belonging, shared experience and space to network and play. Even [the big chains are bringing "indie cinema" vibes](#): hosting Q&As and workshops, streaming arts content and e-sports, upgrading their food and beverage offer, and opening their doors to community partnerships.

FURTHER READING

- DX Blog: [How a small cinema grew from 1500 to 8000 ticket sales a year by embracing community](#)
- DX Blog: [Move aside multiplexes, independent cinemas are where its at](#)

8. FANDOMS: THE POWER OF A FANBASE

Fan communities are highly influential groups. Fans go beyond casual viewers: Collecting merchandise, discussing films, creating fanart, fanfiction, cosplay, and more. Studios recognize fandom's power, adapting fanfiction and even basing marketing decisions [in response to fan influence](#). Engaging existing fan communities is a smart strategy to leverage an already interested and active audience and generate buzz.

FURTHER READING

- DX Blog: [Fanfiction, the untapped marketing opportunity for cinema](#)
- DEEPER DIVE: How to leverage fan communities in your marketing

9. GEN Z - THE BIGGEST PURCHASING POWER OF TOMORROW

Gen Z holds [an estimated \\$360 billion purchasing power](#), yet brands struggle to reach them with marketing, or understand Gen Z cultures. Authenticity, inclusivity and collaboration is key. Gen Z, born in the digital age and natural content creators, expect marketing to speak their language and to be include in campaign development, they understand their power to shape a brand's success. As a generation that curates their life and builds their worlds online, they overwhelmingly trust their peers and online community over brand marketing that tries to assume what they like.

FURTHER READING

- DX Blog: [How to meet Gen Z where they are](#)
- CASE STUDY: [The Gen Z brand whisperers](#)

10. SUSTAINABILITY: WORTH SHOUTING ABOUT

[Sustainability matters to modern consumers](#) when it comes to spending money. Reducing waste: through supply chains, implementing carbon footprint reduction steps, and working towards [UN sustainability goals](#) are important long-term aims for any cinema. Also vital are the small, day to day steps that affect change. It is vital to communicate your sustainability efforts to engage customers and address their concerns.

FURTHER READING

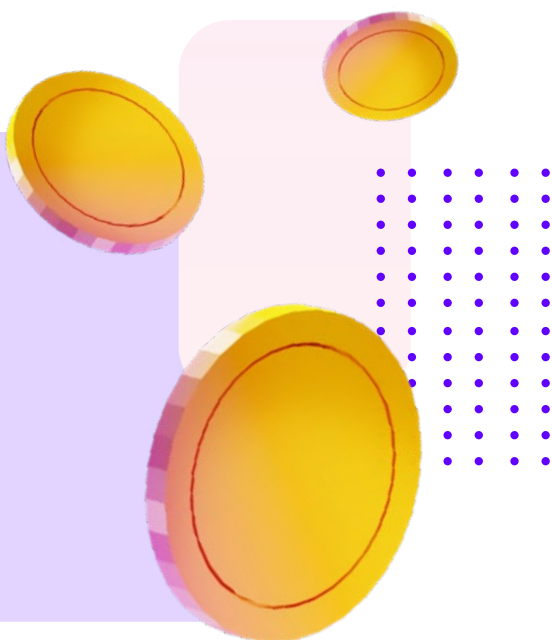
- CASE STUDY: [Lewes Depot, UK and their award-winning sustainability efforts](#)
- DEEPER DIVE: What steps cinemas can take to improve their sustainability

11. DATA DRIVEN DECISIONS: MORE EFFECTIVE MARKETING

Accessing the multiple streams of data cinemas accumulate, and being able to analyse and act upon them to improve marketing strategies and cost-savings can help you stay ahead of the game. Data enables you to make more informed decisions, enhance the cinema experience, improve operational efficiency, and utilize loyalty data effectively. It also supports more targeted marketing and programming, strategic decision-making for optimal footfall, and customer satisfaction.

FURTHER READING

- DX Blog: [How cinema managers can harness data to transform and grow their business.](#)





PART TWO: 5 STEPS ANY CINEMA CAN TAKE TO OPTIMISE THEIR MARKETING

Let's optimise your marketing!

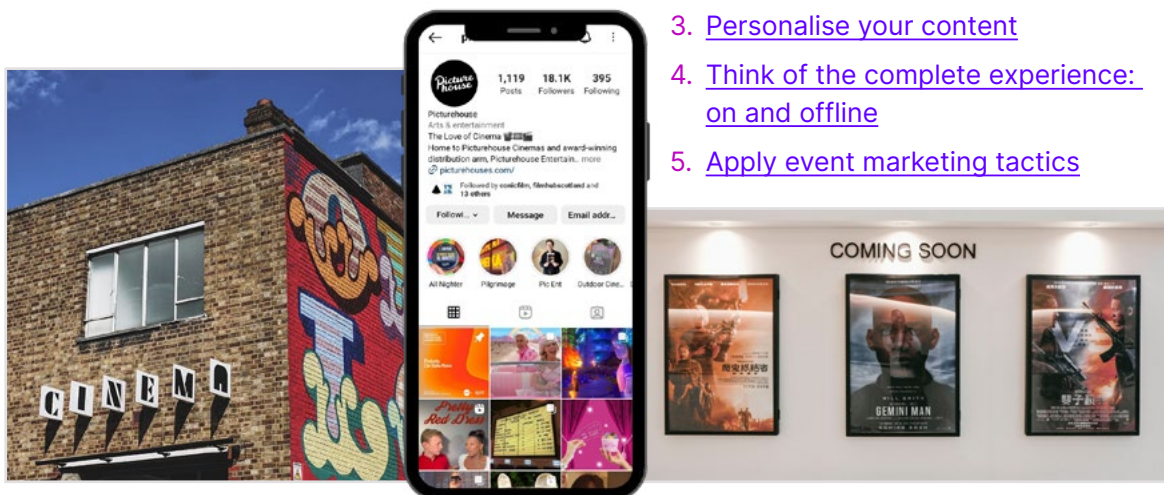
We understand that as a cinema owner or manager, your time and resources are limited. You might not have a marketing or social media person in your team, or you have to juggle the responsibility amongst each other.

The following easy-to-apply tips can help you bring some direction, consistency and strategy to your cinema marketing without exhausting yourself or your team.

Even small steps can have a big impact, and save you time! That's why we focus on the basic recommendations in this short teaser. Our full book contains recommendations for basic, intermediate, and advanced cinema marketing teams.

Our five steps are:

1. [Have a consistent visual identity](#)
2. [Be present on social media](#)
3. [Personalise your content](#)
4. [Think of the complete experience: on and offline](#)
5. [Apply event marketing tactics](#)



PART TWO:

5 STEPS ANY CINEMA CAN TAKE TO OPTIMISE THEIR MARKETING

1. HAVE A CONSISTENT VISUAL IDENTITY

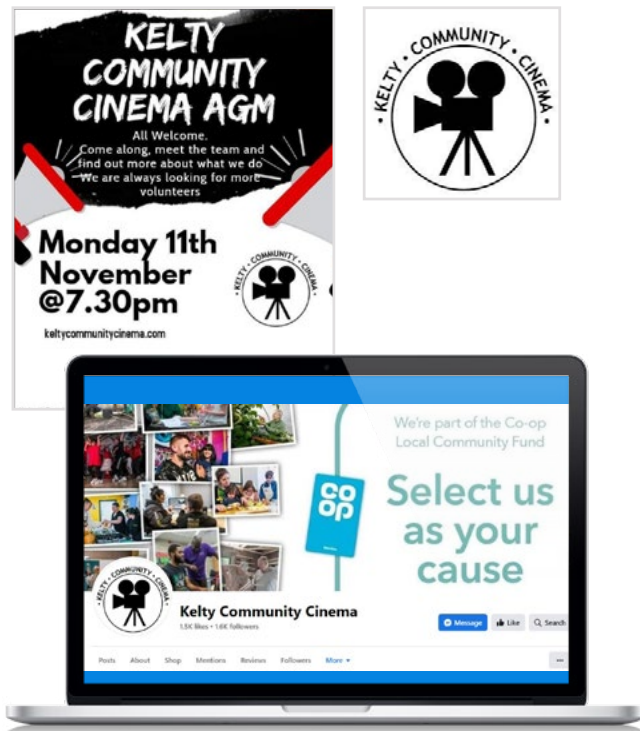
A consistent look and feel across all your public-facing platforms will strengthen your brand, look professional and create recognition.

Can't afford a professional designer? We recommend free tools like Canva, Design Wizard or Adobe Express. Each of these have Pro versions you can upgrade to if you wish.

CHECKLIST:

☐ Create a logo

This doesn't have to be a complex piece of design, just a clearly recognisable visual, and/or easy-to-read if it contains the name of your cinema.



Example: [Kelty Community Cinema](#) in Ireland has a simple black and white logo which it uses for their social media channels and in Canva to make simple flyers and posters.

2. BE PRESENT ON SOCIAL MEDIA

Social media is an unavoidable tool in the 21st century marketing kit. Successful, engaging social media that supports your other marketing efforts doesn't need to involve being online every day. The important factors are: being consistent, posting content that is useful or engaging for your audience, maximising your post reach using available resources on each app.

CHECKLIST:

☐ Be on at least one social media channel:

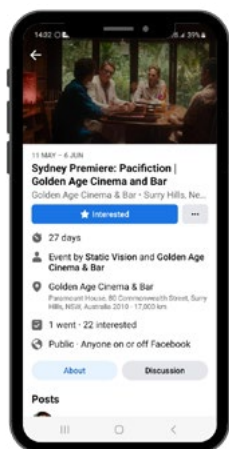
We recommend Facebook or Instagram as they have the most established audiences for cinemas

☐ Have a complete profile on your chosen channel:

- ☐ Website link / booking link
- ☐ Phone number
- ☐ Profile picture / logo
- ☐ Basic description including location

☐ Have a basic content plan:

- ☐ Set a weekly reminder to update basic content:
 - ☐ Your upcoming film programme
 - ☐ Any special events
 - ☐ Important news
 - ☐ Use relevant hashtags and location tag (where relevant)



Example: [Golden Age Cinema & Bar](#) in Sydney uses Facebook to promote events and communicate with its audience

3. PERSONALISE YOUR CONTENT

You don't have to rely only on distributor's marketing assets to promote your film programmes. Whilst useful, you can also personalise them, make them location specific, or even create your own (within brand guidelines!) to complement or enhance what is sent to you. You can use tools like location tags, stickers or basic graphics to make your assets relevant to your local audience.

CHECKLIST:

- ☐ Apply your logo to visual assets like social media content so people understand where they can see the film
- ☐ Where relevant and possible, use personalisation elements in your visual assets, e.g. mention location, cinema name, etc when creation captions or imagery
- ☐ Try using the Facebook events option to promote special screenings, events or big occasions at your cinema.



Example: [Queen's Theatre Belfast](#) personalises movie assets with their logo and fonts for social media, using Canva

4. CONSIDER THE ENTIRE EXPERIENCE, ONLINE AND OFF

Marketing for your cinema starts when a customer begins to think about seeing a film. There are many possible touchpoints for your audience to interact with your venue, from the consideration phase to after their visit. It's important that your customers have a positive experience throughout the booking journey and whenever they encounter your marketing touchpoints, online and off.



CHECKLIST:

- ☐ You have a consistent visual identity
- ☐ Your ticket booking system is easy to use (online and in-person) - run regular test bookings to ensure your system is working:
 - ☐ On your website:
 - ☐ Ticket booking is easy to find on your website, large and visible
 - ☐ There are few steps to purchase, the process does not require many hurdles
 - ☐ Different ticket options are clearly displayed and easy to read
 - ☐ Over the phone:
 - ☐ Your booking phone number is listed on public websites and on any printed posters / flyers / brochures
 - ☐ Your booking line is responsive during open hours, or has an automated booking system that works
- ☐ Your film programme is kept up to date (online and in any printed materials / signs you might display)
- ☐ Your website and booking link are clearly displayed on all your printed materials, social media channels, in your email marketing
- ☐ Your Google Business Listing is up to date and correct:
 - ☐ Name, telephone number and website
 - ☐ Address and location pin
 - ☐ Good quality pictures

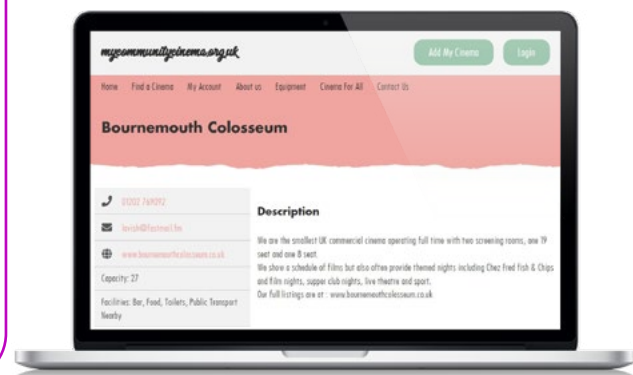
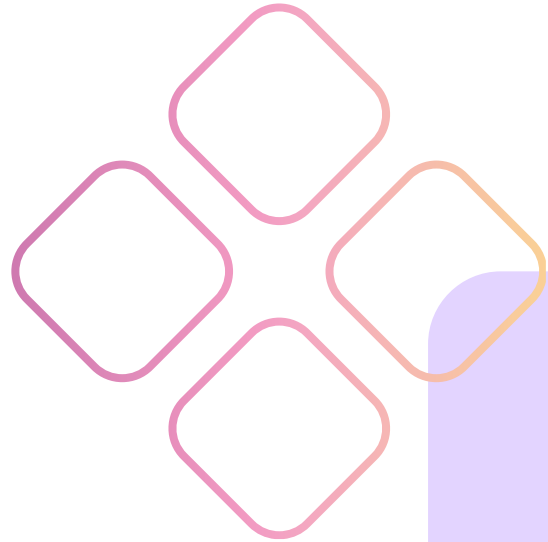
5. APPLY EVENT MARKETING TACTICS

In order to compete with streamers and the sofa, as well as other entertainment choices available to customers in your area, it is important to create reasons to visit that offer audiences something a bit more than a simple movie screening.

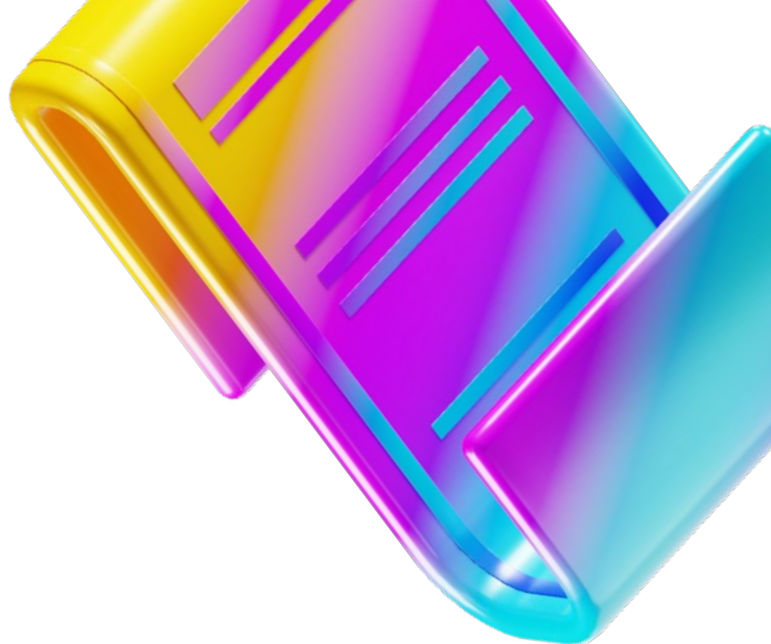
Building anticipation and buzz, adding event tactics to create excitement around coming to the cinema, will help you stand out from the competition, providing something audiences just can't get at home.

CHECKLIST:

- ☐ Create Facebook events or use free local listings sites to announce film seasons, film previews, film premieres or other events in your cinema ahead of time to build awareness
- ☐ Create an element of surprise with a monthly “secret movie” - audiences buy a reduced cost ticket and only discover the movie once they are in the cinema
- ☐ Consider ticket upgrades or packages designed for different audience groups:
 - ☐ A family snack box + family ticket
 - ☐ Date Night package that includes a welcome cocktail / mocktail, popcorn + ticket



Example: [Bournemouth Colosseum community cinema](http://bournemouthcolosseum.org.uk) only has 19 seats, but runs workshops alongside films, plus a partnership with a local Fish & Chip shop to offer “Fish supper screenings”.



PART THREE: BEST PRACTICE CASE STUDIES

The following case studies showcase our marketing recommendations and insights in action, by both current DX clients and cinemas around the world. For a more in-depth breakdown of each case study, simply click through to read more.



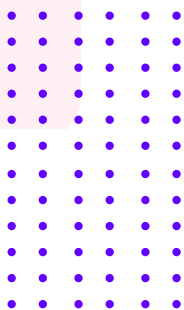
LILLEHAMMER KINO, NORWAY: Using event marketing tactics to sell out a rom-com:

- 50% tickets sold a month ahead
- Top ten ranking in ticket sales in Norway



ÅS KINO, NORWAY: Using integrated tech solutions and community building to drive sales

- 250% attendance increase in four years
- Staff freed up to focus on business development and growth





VILLAGE THEATRE LOS ANGELES, USA: Using influencer marketing to create buzz for a family film

- Pre-opening spike in film interest through key blogs and viral social media content
- \$100 million opening weekend



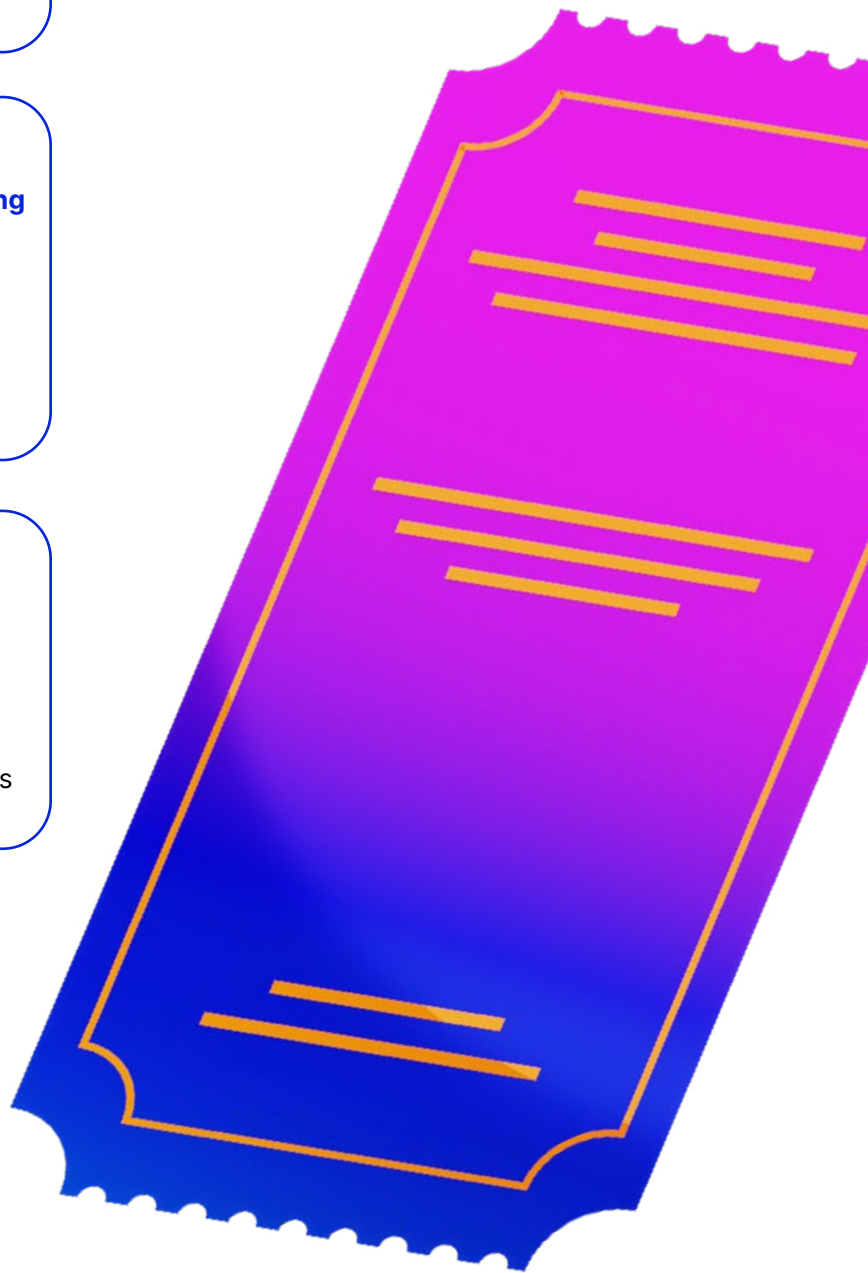
METROGRAPH, NEW YORK, USA: Surviving the pandemic through creative, quick thinking

- Retained audience loyalty through 12 months of closure
- New revenue streams created through lockdown



CINEWORLD, UK: Harnessing Gen-Z To create bolder social media marketing

- 5.9 million likes, 300,000 followers and 35 million views in first year of TikTok
- Industry recognition at Screen Daily awards





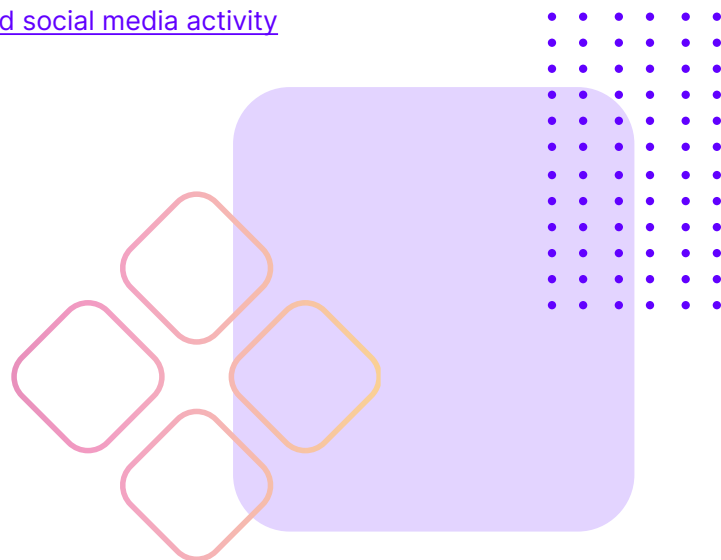
PART FOUR – A GUIDE TO USING CANVA AND CHATGPT, AND MAKING SIMPLE MARKETING ASSETS

As a busy cinema owner, we understand the time and resource pressures you can be under when it comes to managing both your business, and your marketing.

Thankfully there is a wide range of time-saving tools available to help support your marketing and content creation activities, two of the most common free tools being **Canva** (for designing visually appealing marketing and social media assets), and **ChatGPT** (for supporting copywriting, idea generation and other writing-based tasks).

For this section, we invite you to view the full guide. Click below to access step-by-step guides on both Canva and ChatGPT, including examples and practical applications, to support your day-to-day marketing activities.

- [Creating basic social media assets using canva](#)
- [Using chatgpt to support marketing and social media activity](#)



We hope this teaser has peaked your attention.

For access to the full guide, [click here](#).

dx.tech

