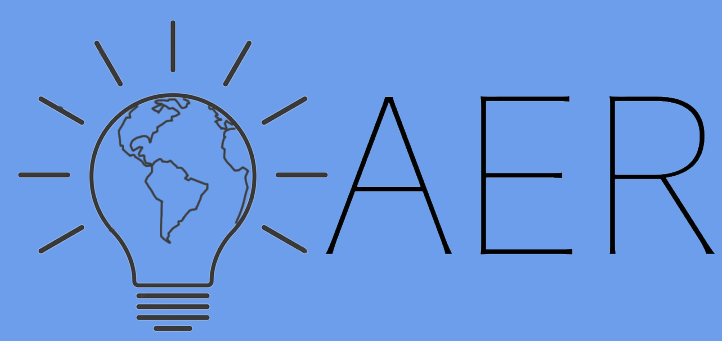




How Social Media Has Changed How Films Are Marketed and Consumed

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INTRODUCTION

Social media continually changes how films are marketed and consumed, forever transforming the film and TV industry in a fast-paced, interactive manner. Social media platforms have created new direct opportunities for studios and distributors to interact with their audiences, helped them reach global audiences, and enabled the development of new marketing strategies to promote their movies. Social media is meaningful because their marketing can make or break a film's success, and I want to understand how it all works.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGIES

Survey method and sample

- Convenience sampling of voluntary online respondents with varied ages, genders, and social media use levels

Survey design and purpose

- Multiple choice questions, rating scales, and short response that covered movie discovery methods, social media use, and film marketing opinions
- To examine how social media influences movie discovery and viewing choices

Secondary data / meta-analysis

- Collected secondary data from Cinema United on film attendance and industry trends
- Compared Cinema United's statistics with my survey results to analyze differences in movie watching behavior and social media influence
- Also reviewed Sago's study "*The Influence of Social Media Message Sources on Millennial Generation Consumers*" which found that content type matters more than who posts it which supports my analysis of how social media effects movie related decisions

DISCUSSION, ANALYSIS, AND EVALUATION

- **Responses:** 98 collected, 83 used after removing unreliable answers
- **Sample:** People of different ages, genders, and locations

Social media exposure:

- Most participants see movie-related content often or very often

Movie discovery:

- Majority find new movies through social media
- Others still use streaming platforms, trailers, or recommendations from friends/family

Influence on decisions:

- Most participants have watched a movie because it was trending on social media
- TikTok, Instagram, and YouTube are the most influential platforms

Type of content that influences viewers:

- Trailers, short clips, and reaction videos
- These help people preview movies before deciding to watch

Viewing preferences:

- Most people prefer to wait for streaming rather than go to theaters
- Only a smaller group prefers watching in theaters

DATA AND FINIDNGS

Figure 1

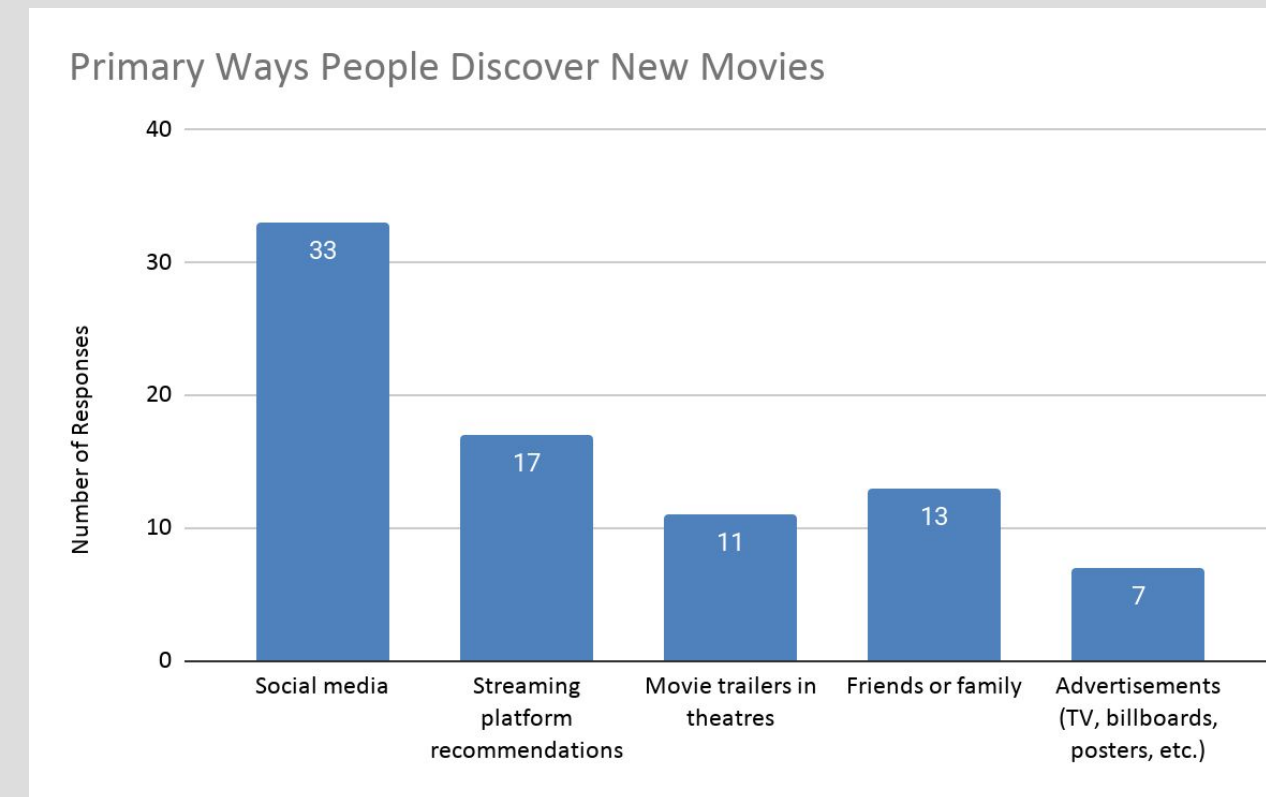


Figure 1 shows where respondents from my survey data usually discover new movies. Social media is the most common source, followed by streaming platform recommendations and friends or family. Traditional advertising methods and theatre trailers are less frequently used. These results suggest that digital platforms, especially social media, play a major role in how audiences are exposed to new films.

Figure 3

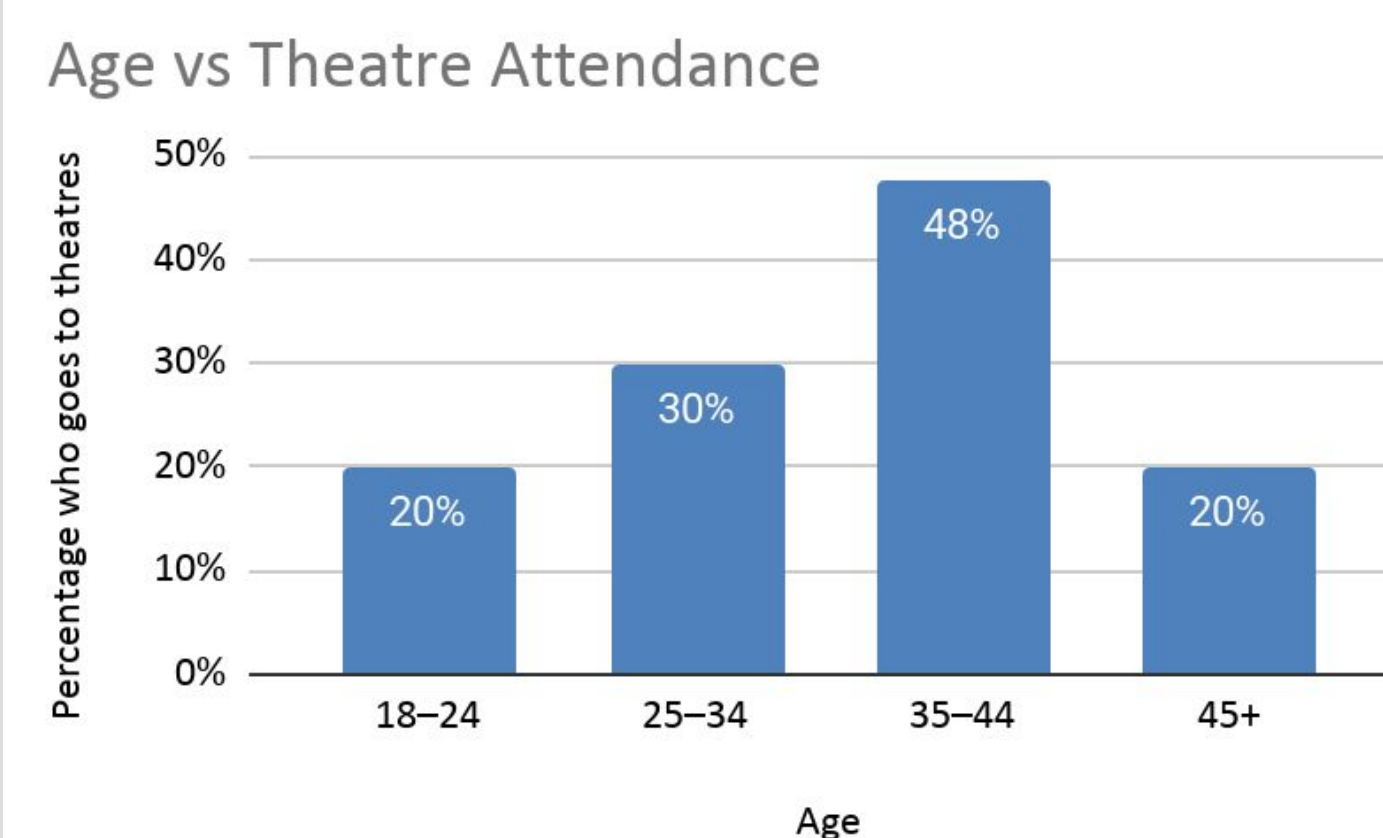


Figure 4

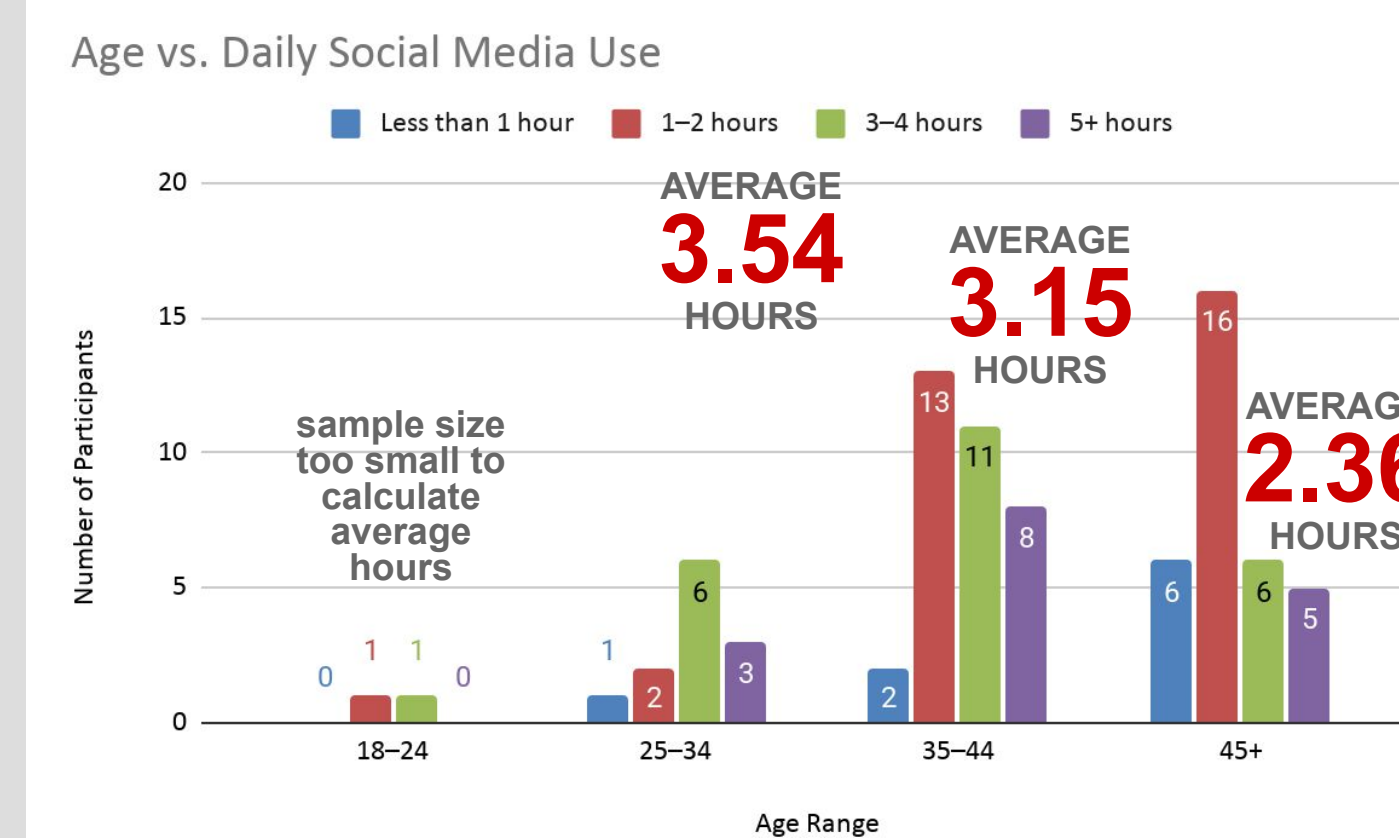


Figure 2

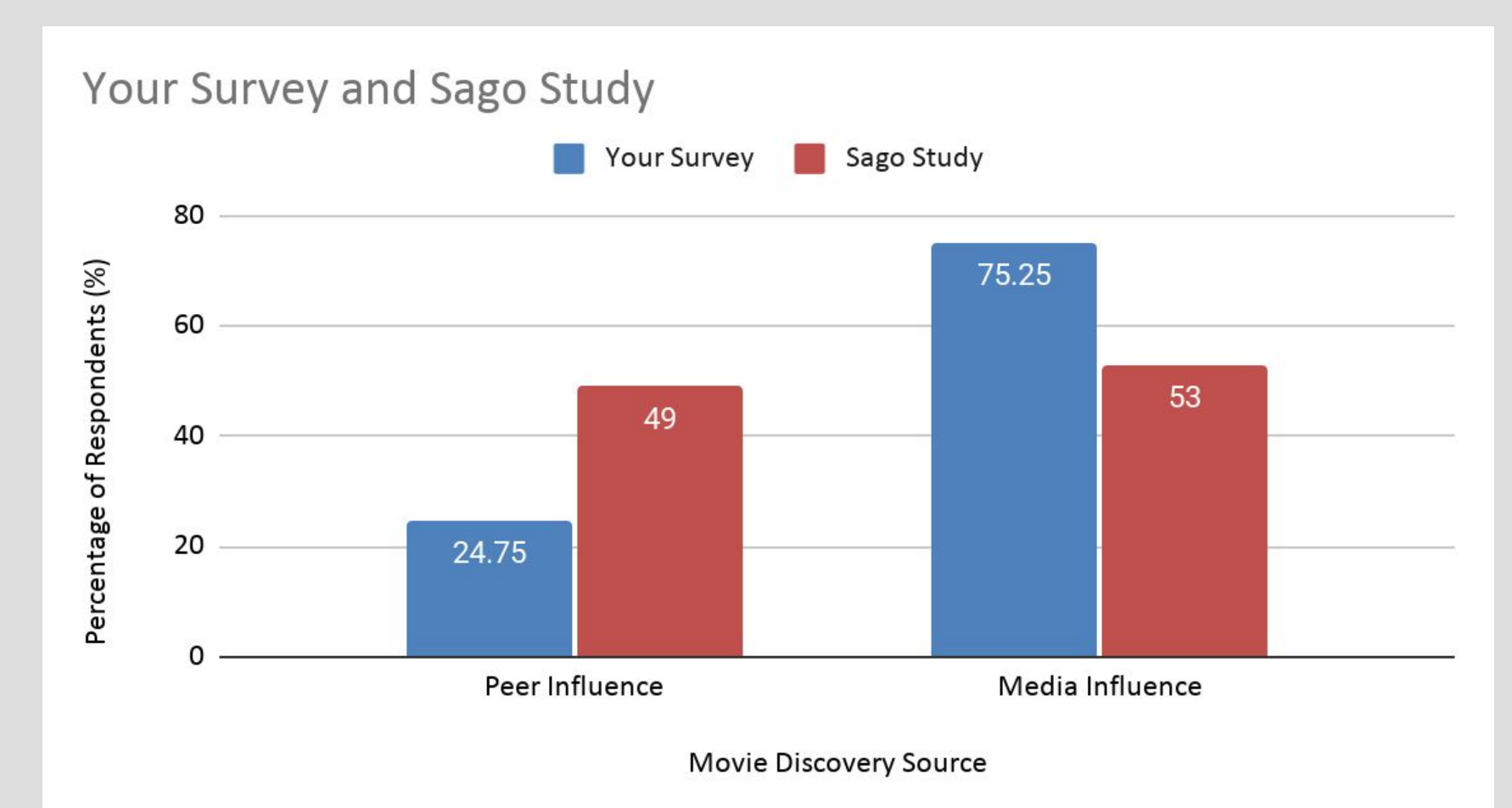


Figure 2 compares my survey results with an external source on how people discover new movies. The results show that social media is the most common way people discover films, followed by friends or family and trailers in theatres. Traditional ads are used less option. This supports the idea that digital and social media marketing are not more important than traditional advertising for promoting movies.

Figure 3 shows that younger audiences attend movie theatres less often than older groups, and overall theatre attendance in my survey was lower than Cinema United's national data. This suggests that streaming and social media is changing viewing habits.

Figure 4 suggests that older participants most commonly spend 1-2 hours per day on social media, while younger users were more likely to spend longer periods online.

CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS, AND NEXT STEPS

Conclusions:

The results of this study show that social media plays a significant role in how audiences discover and decide to watch movies. Most participants reported frequently seeing movie-related content and finding new films through platforms like TikTok, Instagram, and YouTube. Many also said they have watched a movie because it was trending online, showing the strong influence of social media. Additionally, the data suggests a shift in viewing habits, as most participants prefer to wait for movies to be released on streaming rather than going to theaters.

Implications:

These findings suggest that film studios and marketers should prioritize social media in their marketing strategies. Platforms like TikTok, Instagram, and YouTube are especially effective for reaching audiences, and short-form content such as trailers, clips, and reaction videos can strongly influence decisions. The importance of trending content also shows that creating engaging and shareable posts is key to a film's success.

Next Steps:

Future research could include a larger and more diverse sample to improve accuracy. Additionally, studying specific films that became popular through social media could provide deeper insight into which marketing strategies are most effective.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS / REFERENCES

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***QR CODE TO FULL RESEARCH PAPER

