

Contemporary Situation of Film Marketing Practice in Sri Lanka

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Film is an art form which is basically to entertain people through visual storytelling. On the other hand it's a business which has been a huge revenue driver in the entertainment industry. However, not all films succeed with high profit margins. Success of a film depends on various functions and Film Marketing is one of them. According to the Film Marketing hand book "any activity that assists a film in reaching its target audience at any time throughout its life" is called as Film Marketing. The main stages of activity in the film industry are development, production, post-production, distribution and exhibition and there is a need to focus on marketing in all of these stages. Despite the very high number of Sri Lankan film halls, audience and film sales are very low. However, a cinema without audience doesn't make any sense. Having audience is considered as a requirement for prosperity and development of the movie industry. This is where the importance of marketing a movie emerges.

The aim of this research was to study the contemporary situation of Film Marketing practice in Sri Lanka. The research was conducted as a systematic inquiry. Secondary data were articulated such as books, research articles, articles on journals, newspapers, web sites and these materials were sufficiently utilized for the analysis. Due to the lack of secondary data related to film marketing practice in Sri Lanka, primary data were collected by interviews. Ten film directors, five film producers and three academics who research on film industry in Sri Lanka were selected using purposive and judgmental sampling technique.

The research revealed that though world's most lucrative film industries (Bollywood, Hollywood) has provided interesting case studies for Film Marketing, many of Sri Lankans even those within the film industry, understand marketing activities as the creation of posters and trailers, advertising and promotional activities in advance of a film's release. They have no idea about the bigger picture of Film Marketing. On the other hand many film industry professionals do not regard what they do as marketing, although on a daily basis they are packaging each film and marketing it to a number of people.

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