

Do shorter home video release windows cannibalize movie theater attendance? An empirical analysis of consumer expectations, preferences, and behavior

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An empirical analysis of consumer expectations, preferences, and behavior

The survival of movie theaters is often debated as the motion picture industry adapts to shorter home video release windows. While theater owners fear cannibalization and distributors emphasize mutual benefits, consumer perspectives remain underexplored. This study proposes a framework linking release window changes to consumer expectations, preferences, and behavior, tested in three empirical studies. Study 1, using longitudinal panel data from seven European countries over one decade, shows consumer expectations about home video availability remain consistent despite major distribution changes. Study 2, using 16 years of conjoint analysis, highlights the persistent importance of pricing, channels, and windows but reveal no preference trend toward either short or longer windows. Study 3, analyzing post-COVID-19 market data, suggests shorter windows do not cannibalize theater attendance.

Keywords: *motion picture industry, sequential distribution strategies, release window*
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