

**THE STRENGTH OF**

# **THEATRICAL EXHIBITION**

**DECEMBER 2024**



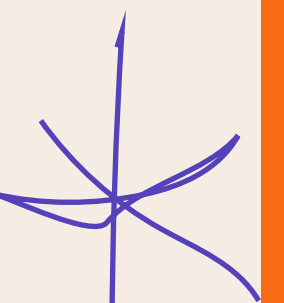


Often, the strength of theatrical exhibition is evaluated based on incomplete metrics like box office receipts for a given year, quarter or opening weekend. While these time-honored statistics gauge the public’s response to movies in the marketplace, they are not a complete barometer of the overall vitality of the global exhibition industry.

# “THEATRICAL EXHIBITION IS A ‘MAIN STREET’ INDUSTRY”



Theatrical exhibition is a “Main Street” industry, with theatres dotting cities and towns the world over. They are cultural centers where people gather to have a wonderfully unique shared experience. Theatres are financial and cultural anchors of communities of all sizes, and as 2024 draws to a close, it is important to look beyond box office and consider other fundamentals that illustrate the strength and promising future of theatrical exhibition. The communal and immersive out-of-home theatrical experience has no peer when it comes to capturing the imagination of and creating excitement among consumers.





## **CONSUMER ENTHUSIASM**

Consumers recognize that movies released theatrically are special and going to the movies remains woven into the fabric of everyday life in the United States and around the world.



## **INVESTING IN THE EXPERIENCE**

Movie theatres sit at the forefront of the “experiential economy,” and theatre owners are investing in big ways to make sure there is no experience like going to the local cinema.



## **BUILDING LOYALTY**

Spurred by promotions and special opportunities provided by exhibition, movie fans the world over are responding to customer loyalty programs that recognize and reward their love of movies on the big screen.



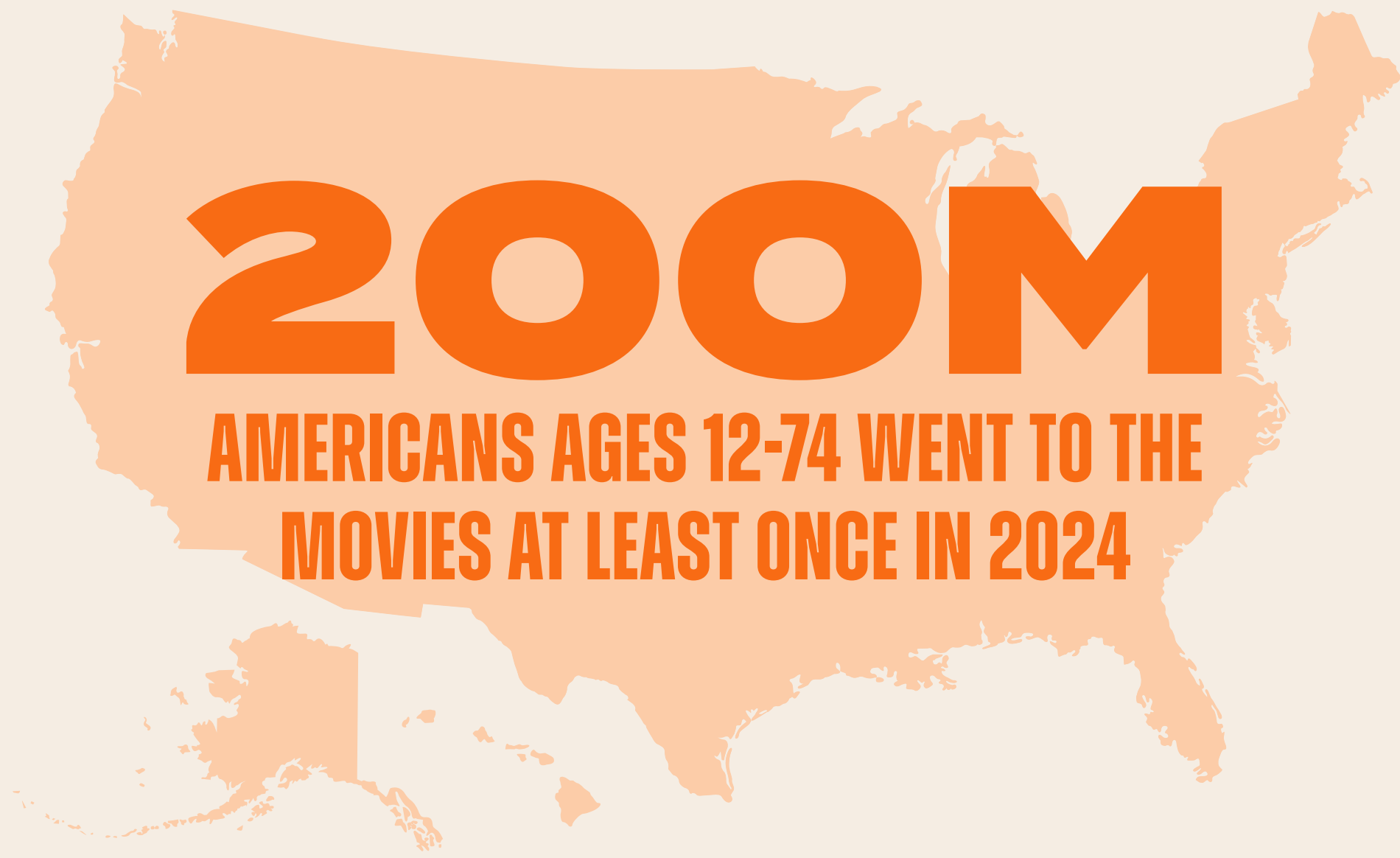
## **MORE MOVIES**

Recognizing the financial and cultural importance of movies on the big screen, studios and the creative community continue to produce an increasing range of compelling movies for wide release in theatres around the globe.



## **SOMETHING FOR EVERYONE**

The theatre is a place for everyone and increased production will result in a greater variety of films being released. Small and medium-budget films, horror films, independent films and family fare are critical to the long-term sustainability of the industry.



# ZOOM

AMERICANS AGES 12-74 WENT TO THE MOVIES AT LEAST ONCE IN 2024



## GOING TO THE MOVIES IS DEEPLY INGRAINED IN CULTURES AROUND THE WORLD

According to a recent study by National Research Group (NRG), an impressive **76% of the American population ages 12-74 attended at least one movie in theatres in the past year, which translates to approximately 200 million Americans.** This is consistent with pre-pandemic movie-going data. Domestic movie theatres bring in more people annually than stadiums for all four major sports–NFL, MLB, NBA, and NHL–combined.

According to a survey of more than **96,000 movie-goers across 14 countries** conducted by the Global Cinema Federation, **72% of respondents are coming to the cinemas 'more' or 'the same' as six months ago.**

In an additional study conducted by Mintel, American movie-goers were asked about their level of interest in visiting theatres over the next twelve months. A combined **85% of respondents said they plan on going to the movies as often or more often than they have in the past 12 months.**

### 85%

OF THOSE SURVEYED PLAN TO GO TO THE MOVIES AS OFTEN OR MORE OFTEN THAN THEY DID IN THE PAST 12 MONTHS



### 72%

OF THOSE SURVEYED IN 14 COUNTRIES ARE COMING TO THE CINEMAS 'MORE' OR 'THE SAME' AS SIX MONTHS AGO



Among the movie-going audience, two groups are particularly enthusiastic about the cinematic experience:


# YOUNG PEOPLE AND HISPANICS

According to UCLA's 2024 Teens & Screens Report, going to see a movie during opening weekend was the **#1 preferred activity** for 10-24 year-olds, with young women ranking movies as their top choice for entertainment and young men ranking it second only to video games. Meanwhile, similar data from NRG shows that Gen Z movie-goers are the most active of any age group, with 90% of females seeing at least one movie a year and 89% of males doing the same.



**90%**  
OF GEN Z FEMALES SEE AT LEAST ONE MOVIE A YEAR


**#1 CHOICE IN ENTERTAINMENT**



Sources: NRG & UCLA's 2024 Teens & Screens Report

**89%**  
OF GEN Z MALES SEE AT LEAST ONE MOVIE A YEAR

**#2 CHOICE IN ENTERTAINMENT**



Source: NRG & UCLA's 2024 Teens & Screens Report



**45%** OF HISPANIC MOVIE-GOERS REPORT A PREFERENCE FOR SEEING MOVIES ON OPENING WEEKEND

Additionally, the Hispanic community continues to be a growing supporter of going to the theatre. NRG reports that the percentage of "habitual" movie-goers (six or more movies a year) who are Hispanic continues to rise, reaching 27% this year. That figure is up 3% over the past two years. **45% of Hispanic movie-goers report a preference for seeing movies on opening weekend, 11% higher than total movie-goers overall.**



“EXHIBITORS  
OF ALL SIZES  
WILL BE REINVESTING,  
IN THEIR THEATRES.”



Going to your local theatre to see a great movie on the big screen is a special experience. But it doesn't happen by accident. Theatrical exhibition must compete to earn the trust and loyalty of moviegoers around the world by continuing to innovate and craft special experiences for everyone who comes to the theatre.

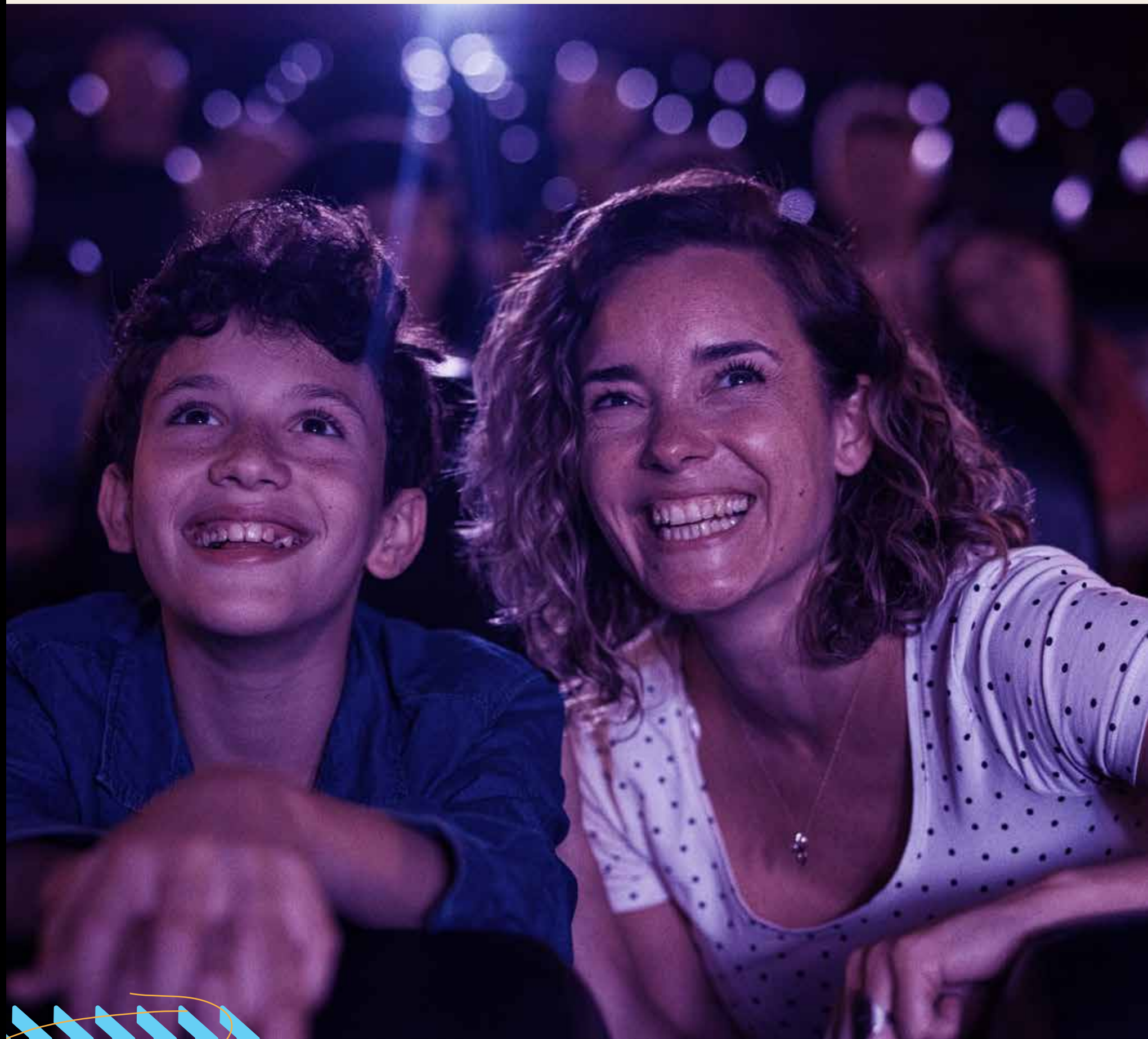
This summer, exhibition signaled its commitment to creating amazing experiences for fans of all ages by **investing more than \$2.2 billion** in theatre upgrades over the next three years. These investments will run the gamut, from improved projection, sound and screens, to modernized food and beverage options, and improved signage, lighting and common areas. The \$2.2 billion investment represents only the commitment of the top eight circuits. Exhibitors of all sizes, from multiplexes to single-screen independent theatres, will be reinvesting in their theatres in the years ahead and renewing their commitment to the theatre as an unmatched entertainment experience.



# INVESTING IN THE EXPERIENCE

One area that has seen increasing consumer demand is large-screen format auditoriums, frequently called “PLFs” (premium large-format). Global exhibition is responding to this increasing demand.

**According to Comscore, there are 950 theatres in North America that have large-format screens, which is a 37% increase from five years ago.** According to Omdia, the number of PLF screens around the world has more than doubled since 2016 and is now over 5,700.



**“EVERY  
AUDITORIUM  
AT YOUR LOCAL THEATER  
PROVIDES A  
PREMIUM  
EXPERIENCE.”**

While consumers are responding to various large-screen format offerings, it is important to note that those screens comprise only 9% of the annual domestic box office, and every auditorium at your local theatre provides a premium experience. Theatres around the globe are tailoring auditoriums to meet the desires of today’s discriminating movie-going audience.

The clear commitment of theatre owners to reinvesting in their facilities will ensure that going to the movies will always be a unique, special and unforgettable experience for people of all ages.



# 950

LARGE-FORMAT SCREENS IN NORTH AMERICA

# 37% INCREASE OVER 5 YEARS

Since its inception, the exhibition industry has succeeded by knowing the people who come to their theatres and working each day to get them to

# COME BACK AGAIN AND AGAIN

The battle for consumer attention is fiercer today than any time in our history. Consumers have more entertainment options than ever and are understandably very discriminating when deciding how to spend their entertainment dollar. Recognizing this landscape, chains of all sizes have developed and marketed customer loyalty programs that add value for movie-lovers every time they go to the theatre. These programs include special advanced screenings, reduced-price tickets, food and beverage discounts, curated movies and special events tailored to the movie-goer's tastes.



Recognizing good value, the movie-going public has responded. This past year in the U.S. and Canada, movie theatre loyalty programs saw a **12% jump in new subscriptions** from 2023 to 2024. **There are currently over 118.9 million theatre loyalty club members.** With new promotions and incentives being developed every day by exhibition, that number will only continue to grow and form a solid foundation that will help drive all aspects of theatrical exhibition – tickets, concessions, merchandising, and word-of-mouth promotions – into the future.

**106.5M**

**LOYALTY  
MEMBERS IN  
2023**

Source: NATO

**118.9M**

**LOYALTY  
MEMBERS IN  
2024**

Source: NATO

**12% INCREASE  
YEAR OVER YEAR**



# MORE MOVIES

While we do live in a world with more content available than ever before, it is understood that movies released theatrically are special. The past few years have seen audiences rushing to theatres to see ground-breaking motion pictures of all stripes, and the movie-going public wants more.

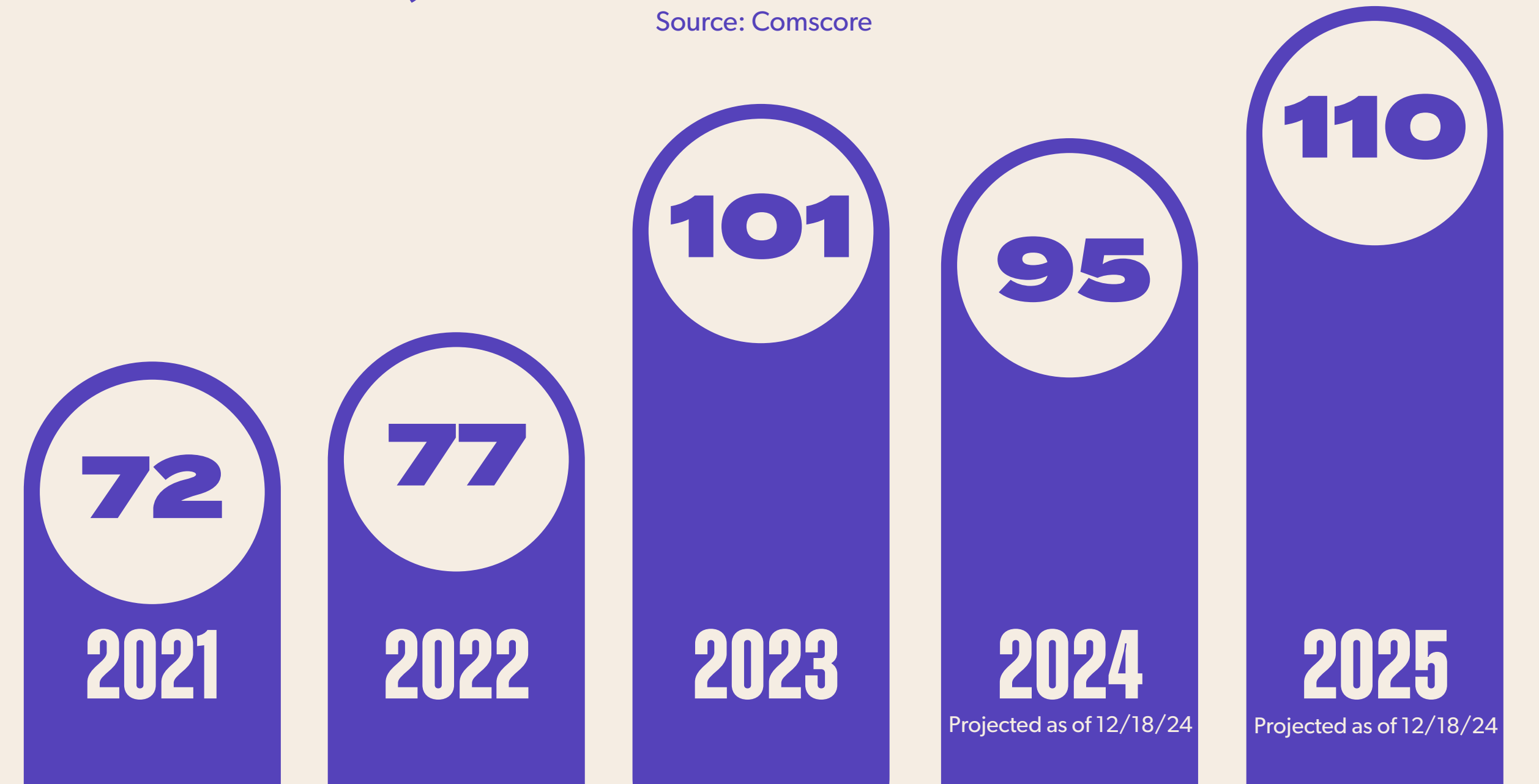
In 2025, **projections indicate that at least 110 movies will be produced and released at over 2,000 locations in the U.S. and Canada.** This positive trend is expected to continue into 2026, with more than 50 wide releases already slated to launch that year. Distributors are aggressively laying claim to the most sought-after release dates.

The continuing commitment of the movie studios to theatrical exhibition not only recognizes the cultural and financial importance of movies on the big screen, but also that movies that begin in the theatre are more successful in every subsequent delivery platform than those that do not. The result is more movies for the public to enjoy. Movie-going begets movie-going, and the more movies available, the more the public comes back for more.

**“MOVIE-GOING BEGETS MOVIE-GOING AND THE MORE MOVIES AVAILABLE, THE MORE THE PUBLIC COMES BACK FOR MORE.”**

## TOTAL DOMESTIC RELEASES AT 2,000+ LOCATIONS

Source: Comscore



# SOMETHING FOR EVERYONE

## 5%

INCREASE IN COMEDIES  
RELEASED IN THEATRES  
OVER THE PAST 2 YEARS  
175 IN 2024



## 38%

INCREASE IN HORROR FILMS  
RELEASED IN THEATRES OVER  
THE PAST 2 YEARS  
74 IN 2024



## 25%

INCREASE IN INDEPENDENT  
FILMS RELEASED IN THEATRES  
OVER THE PAST 2 YEARS  
749 IN 2024



Tentpole movies will continue to be critical to the success of the filmed entertainment industry, but they are only part of the equation. To truly thrive and sustain the business, smaller and medium-budgeted films must find a place. Comedies, family films, horror and other genres are also fan favorites on the big screen.

Production of these movies has made a resurgence in recent years, a trend that will continue. According to Comscore, among all movies receiving a domestic theatrical release in the past two years, the number of **comedies released in theatres increased 5%** (175 in 2024). As for **horror films, they increased 38%** this year (74 released), up from 59 released in 2022. **Independent releases, meanwhile, jumped 25%** from 2022 (699 released) to 749 released in 2024.

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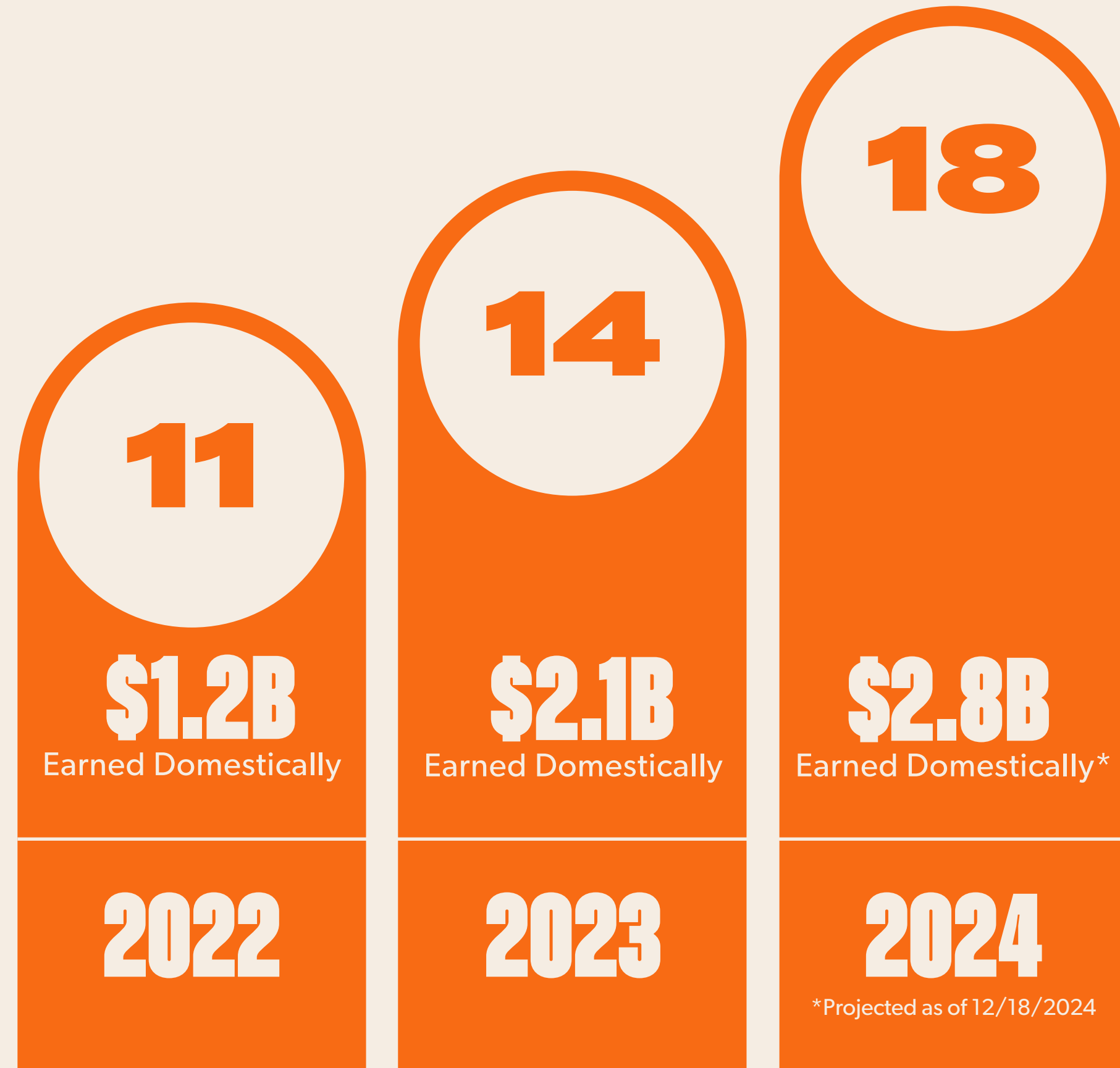
# SOMETHING FOR EVERYONE

In 2025, the number of family-friendly, PG-rated films projected to be released at 2,000+ locations currently stands at 20 films, up from 18 in 2024. This continues a clear trend that has seen greater emphasis on movies for the entire family.

A diverse slate of movie offerings has a positive financial and cultural impact that delights movie-goers around the world.

## PG-RATED MOVIES

Released at 2,000+ Locations



“A DIVERSE SLATE OF MOVIE OFFERINGS HAS A POSITIVE FINANCIAL AND CULTURAL IMPACT THAT DELIGHTS MOVIE-GOERS AROUND THE WORLD.”



# CONCLUSION

To accurately assess the strength of theatrical exhibition, it is essential to move beyond the latest box office numbers and look at the fundamentals that paint a fuller picture of the industry. As theatrical exhibition heads into 2025, it does so bolstered by consumer excitement for movies on the big screen, a continuing and strengthening commitment to serve the movie-going public and enhance the experience for all, and an increased movie production slate across all important genres to ensure that there is something for everyone at the cinema. By any measure, 2025 is a year of opportunity and promise for theatrical exhibition, and it is a year the industry will embrace from a position of strength.

