



# **The analysis of audience attitudes toward film trailers adapted to different publishing platforms**

## **Bachelor's Thesis**

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EXAMENSARBETE	
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<p>Sammandrag:</p> <p>Syftet för mitt examensarbete är att forska i filmtrailers och de olika plattformarna för trailers och vilka element i en trailer som påverkar tittares åsikter mest. Jag använde mej inte av någon teori, istället läste jag om forskningar som hade gjorts inom samma ämne och skrev ett kapitel om forskningsresultaten i tidigare forskningar. Jag använde mej av en enkät för att samla data, och jag konstruerade enkäten med verktyget Google Forms. Enkäten skickades ut på det sociala mediet Facebook, och det fanns inga begränsningar för vem som kunde svara på enkäten. Jag valde att använda tre olika versioner av trailern för en och samma film, ”Deadpool” (2016), för att inte blanda in några onödiga faktorer som påverkar tittarens åsikter. De tre olika trailerna som jag valde att inkludera i enkäten var en lång filmatisk trailer som var 2 minuter 40 sekunder lång som visas på biografen före filmvisningen, en kort trailer för TV som var 30 sekunder lång, och en trailer för en Blu-ray-version av filmen, som var 16 sekunder lång. Jag fick sammanlagt 57 svar på enkäten som jag analyserade och kom fram till att en betydande faktor som påverkar tittarens åsikter i trailern är en igenkännbar skådespelerska eller skådespelare. Den trailer som tittarna gillade mest var den filmatiska trailern, som också var den längsta. Dock kommenterade tittarna att de hade önskat att den varit en aning kortare för att inte visa så mycket av narrativet. Den trailer som tittarna gillade minst var den korta Blu-ray-trailern, som de upplevde förvirrande på grund av att den var så kort. Enkätens resultat visade att tittaren vill se en trailer som är tillräckligt lång för att visa narrativet och karaktärerna i filmen, men ändå inte så lång att för mycket av dessa avslöjas. Trailern får inte heller vara för kort, eftersom en förvirrad tittare tappar intresset för filmen om hen inte får information om en del av den narrativa strukturen eller karaktärerna i filmen. Forskningsprocessen tog ungefär ett halvår, från hösten 2017 till våren 2018. <i>Ett längre sammandrag på svenska finns i slutet av arbetet.</i></p>	
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<p>Abstract:</p> <p>The purpose of this research is to investigate different audience attitudes toward film trailers across different platforms, in order to determine the most effective format in terms of increasing interest in the film. I used the online service Google Forms to construct and send out my survey, and I shared the survey on the social media platform Facebook. There were no limitations for filling out the survey, and I received 57 responses. I did not use a specific theory in my research, but instead I gathered already existing research regarding film trailers and distribution platforms and wrote a literature review. I found that an actor or actress who is recognisable for the consumer is a main influencing factor in how the trailer is perceived. When the participants of the survey were allowed to pick their favourite of three trailers, they chose the trailer with the longest duration. However, the participants commented that they would have wished to be slightly shorter. This has shown that the consumer wants to see a trailer that is long enough for them to understand the narrative and the characters, however the trailer should not show too much of the plot of the film in order to preserve the enigmatic nature of it as a whole. This research was conducted over a time period of about six months, from autumn 2017 to spring 2018.</p>	
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## **FOREWORD**

This writing process has been a journey with its ups and downs, and I would not have wanted to go through this process alone. I would like to thank my supervisor Nathalie Hyde-Clarke, for helping me with my work. Without you, I would not have been able to work as effectively, and your knowledge and input has helped me numerous times during the process of writing this thesis.

I would also like to thank my family and friends for their support. I appreciate your support you have given me throughout this experience, and the numerous times you have proofread my work, and pointed out spelling mistakes and small things that I have been able to change for the better thanks to you. I am very grateful for the people in my social circle who took the time to fill out my survey and help me with my research. Without the data that you provided me with, I could not have finished my research.

# 1 INTRODUCTION

The film trailer has evolved over the past years. Evidence of this is the increase in marketing budgets, and the increasing amount of different trailer types that are made for films. This research will focus on how consumers view film trailers, and if they view trailers before watching a film. The modern film trailers have to adapt to the changing online media platforms, and therefore a lot of different trailer types have been created with these different formats, and audiences, in mind. These short film clips have the ability generate a lot conversation all around the world, and if a trailer fails to impress the viewers, this could have an impact on their success later on when the film is released.

As Jonathan Gray (2010) states; "...if the film and television industries invest so heavily in previews, bonus materials, merchandise, and their ilk, so should we as analysts. It is time to examine the paratexts."

A significant factor that influences the viewing of trailers is also your geographical position. A person living in the countryside may not encounter as many trailers as a person living in a city. In Helsinki there are multiple screens in metro trains that allows people to view fast paced, short trailers while travelling. However, the internet has had an impact on overall viewing of trailers, as people nowadays have smartphones with internet that enables them to watch anything they want anytime.

Also, living in different countries means there will be different distribution rights, which can also affect the marketing strategies. The geographical positioning is a factor most people do not take into consideration when they analyse habits of watching film trailers.

## **1.1 Research problem statement**

This research will investigate different audience attitudes toward three film trailers across different media platforms in order to determine the most effective format in terms of increasing interest in the film.

## **1.2 Delimitation**

This research is limited to one film and three different trailers developed for it. The trailers that have been chosen for analysis are for the same film, as it is easier to compare the different formats. When comparing two films of the same genre that are similar in narrative and structure, personal preferences such as actors and settings might make a difference. These factors are irrelevant to this research and having the same character appear in each trailer makes it simpler for participant to compare the film trailers, and rather concentrate on the content delivery and format.

The chosen film is *Deadpool* (2016) as it is quite a recent film, and it received a lot of attention for its marketing and trailer style. The three different trailer types that have been selected for comparison are the cinematic trailer, TV-spot trailer, and a trailer for the films Blu-Ray release. All of these are currently available online.

### **1.2.1 Deadpool (2016)**

The trailers analysed in this thesis are for the film *Deadpool* (2016). This is because the film made a major impact on the film industry with its revolutionary marketing strategies, and as previously mentioned, it also received a lot of attention from the public.

The marketing for the film was very straightforward, including using adverts for mobile applications such as the dating app Tinder. Adverts for the film were also found in subway stations (such as the Helsinki Kamppi metro station) where a short clip of the film would be shown as a preview. Another important factor that made the marketing more straightforward, was that the character Deadpool addresses the audience directly in the adverts and in the film, which is called breaking the fourth wall.

The budget for the film was \$58 million, and during its opening weekend in the US only, it made \$135 million. The film was already a highly anticipated film while still in the pre-production phase, as it had an already existing fan base from the famous comic book series that goes by the same name, *Deadpool*.

The film stars Ryan Reynolds who is a well-known Canadian actor. He has also previously appeared in comic book adaptations on the white screen, such as *X-men origins: Wolverine* (2009), and *The Green Lantern* (2011).

The film follows the story of Wade Wilson, a New York City based mercenary, who previously worked as a special forces' operative. He falls in love with a woman named Vanessa, and they plan a future together until Wade is diagnosed with terminal cancer, and leaves Vanessa in order to avoid her having to watch him die.

Wade is then approached by a recruiter, who offers him a cure for his medical condition. Wade agrees to the experimental treatment, and during the painful treatment process, his superhuman abilities are activated by the severe pain he experiences. Wade is left with a healing ability that cures his cancer, but his appearance changes for the rest of his life as scars have appeared covering all of his body.

Wade finds Vanessa, but resists telling her that he is in fact still alive. He discusses things with his other friend Weasel, and decides to seek Ajax, the man responsible for the treatment and its consequences. He then discovers that Vanessa has been kidnapped by Ajax, and Wade manages to rescue her, by killing Ajax and everyone standing in his way.

## **2 THE TRAILERS**

Three different trailers for the same film were chosen to be analysed. One full-length cinematic trailer, a trailer for a TV-spot, and a Blu-ray commercial for the film. These are all differently constructed in terms of narrative and duration, as they were adapted to fit different platforms.



### **2.1.1 Trailer 1**

This is the cinematic trailer, the longest trailer at 2 minutes and 40 seconds. It explains the narrative in detail, and it was made for platforms where the viewer has time to watch the entire trailer, for example before watching a film at the cinema. The narrative is explored in detail, and it is very clear who the protagonist and antagonists are as they are introduced in this trailer. The narrator also supports the storytelling and delivers a more detailed plot explanation.

### **2.1.2 Trailer 2**

This is the TV-spot trailer, the most compact trailer of the three, at 30 seconds long. It contains the narrative of the film in a much shorter package, but still gives the viewer a solid expectation for the film. This is a very modern form of a trailer as it delivers a lot in such little time, and a very functioning product as viewers nowadays will not easily commit to watching longer videos unless they have a pre-existing interest in the product.

### **2.1.3 Trailer 3**

This is the Blu-Ray trailer, only 16 seconds long, being the shortest trailer of the three that I have chosen. It does not explain anything of the narrative structure of the film, it only advertises the film. It is assumed that the viewer does already have pre-existing knowledge of the film, and that the iconic character *Deadpool* in it, will raise enough interest in the viewer to watch the film again.

## **3 LITERATURE REVIEW**

The first trailer made for a film is often considered to be the trailer for “*The Adventures of Kathlyn*”, which was showed in New York in 1912 (Kernan, 2004), but since the term “trailer” did not exist at that time, the trailers back then were more similar to commercials if we compare it to the film industry today. For example, the trailer for “*The Adventures of Kathlyn*”, was actually shown as a preview at the end of a film, and there was a cliff-hanger included that would catch the viewer’s attention, “Does she escape the lion’s pit? See next week’s thrilling chapter!”

Hickson (2006) researched that in order for a film to be successful, it is imperative that the film performs well at its box office opening weekend. The film trailer is a way of catching the consumers' attention and giving them expectations of the film, which will determine if they wish to go see it or not. Hickson (2006) found that the film trailer is the most efficient advertising medium used by film advertisers to communicate with consumers. According to Hickson, it is also important that the trailer reaches as wide an audience as possible when it is distributed.

Several different factors also contribute to a trailer being an effective and purposive media text. Finnstewalder et al. conducted interviews with individuals that commented on several different film trailers. Interview results found that the exposure of storyline in a trailer is an important influencer of consumers' expectations of the film content for two reasons; firstly, there needs to be a proportionate amount of content exposed within the trailer itself; and secondly, the overexposure of storyline can result in a lack of intrigue (Finnstewalder et al. 2012).

The participants also stated that they thought a trailer should "have a teaser effect in regard to the film's offer but should limit information on the storyline" (Finnstewalder et al. 2012).

Finnstewalder et al. (2012) came to the conclusion that if too much information is revealed about a film, risks of exposing the plot and the narrative of the film exists. Also, if too little is revealed about the film, consumers may find the trailer irrelevant and not worthy of their time. Information of a film is certainly also available through websites of a film, but it is highly unlikely that the consumer will be inspired to engage in active information seeking if their level of interest is not high from the start.

Finnstewalder et al. (2012) also found that celebrity endorsement would affect the consumers' attitudes to a certain film. For example, using an actor or actress known for a film of a certain genre, will more efficiently help the consumer assume the genre of your new film, as the consumer will associate them with their previous work and genre they have worked within.

Film critics also influence the consumers' choice to see a certain film, as they provide knowledge and opinions of the film by having access to pre-viewings before the release of the film to the public.

Another important element used to construct a trailer is music. Music aids in portraying specific themes of a film, as music of a certain genre is often connected to certain types of feelings, which enables the consumer to relate to the film more effectively and become more emotionally involved. Music used in promotional material can also help influence the way the consumer feels about the advert, which in this case are film trailers. (Finnstewalder et al. 2012) If a film is considered to be of the action genre, its trailer may contain powerful music with a high tempo to strengthen the mood, also establishing the genre of the film to the consumer more clearly in a shorter period of time.

Jerrick (2013) studied the college students' attitude toward film trailers, and how the trailers impact their decision to go see them at the cinema. Jerrick (2013) found that there are many factors that influence the appeal of a film trailer, "the more familiar they were with a film trailer's factors (e.g., actors, music, plot), the more likely there were to see the promoted film in theatres." He also found that most of the survey participants saw the plot of a film as the main influencing factor in the decision to see a film.

According to Hesford (2013), a trailer as promotional material is an evocative product, which can lead to different reactions among consumers. Trailers can be too revealing or that it is giving away the best parts, or consumers can even regard the trailer as better than the final product. Consumers may also feel like the trailer was "lying" to them. This is the result of saturation marketing, and of the commercial nature of the modern trailer. Film trailers are no longer very different from normal TV adverts. They can even be similar to TV adverts on purpose, to generate discussion and attract attention. There are no limits to how a modern trailer should be constructed nowadays.

Gray (2010) has researched the way "hype" is affecting the consumer attitudes toward media texts. "Today's version of "Don't judge a book by its cover" is "Don't believe the

hype.” According to Gray (2010), hype establishes expectations that affect the way we interpret, listen to and look at media texts. This is an important and modern factor that influences consumers right from the start of watching trailers. Hype may be achieved by making several different trailers for the same film, in order for the consumer to be able to prepare themselves for a film that is arriving soon. Watching as much footage as possible for a film that they are interested in, will definitely raise more interest in the actual film too if they like what they see.

As promotion is important in economic terms, there needs to be a wide and thorough understanding of the different strategies and the different platforms across the media industry. “Hype” is what leads to consumers spending hours watching various types of trailers for the same film. Various consumers may also find themselves intentionally looking for spoilers by accessing different websites according to Gray.

“...Paratextuality is not only big business, but often much bigger than film or television themselves” (Gray 2010). Gray also highlights the importance of paratexts surrounding films. It is not just the film that triggers success; but also, the products related to the film, such as licensed products (e.g. Mickey Mouse toys) or video games. The most important paratext is the saturated marketing of a film, as it is the most efficient way of reaching the consumers.

However, as Gray (2012) states in his research, paratexts should not be blindly trusted when analysing films: “paratexts can often lead audiences down blind alleys and should by no means be considered inherently helpful” What Gray (2010) means with this is that sometimes the “hype” for a film will lead you astray from realistic expectations. For example, if a new film is announced, and it is said to be based on a piece of literature, you should not blindly expect the film to be an exact copy of the narrative in the book. These kind of pre-existing expectations can lead to disappointment in the film.

Therefore, the marketing and promotion will only play a small part in this research, whereas audience attitudes will play bigger role.

These days, Netflix is a popular video on demand streaming service, which launched its services in Finland in the year 2012 (Nuutinen, 2016). On Netflix, there is a feature which

shows the trailer for the films or scenes from the film before actually choosing to watch it. This is a great example of a new way that trailers can be used to interest you into watching the film as your interest in the film can be awoken by this simple feature.

## **4 METHODOLOGY**

The survey method was chosen to collect the data for this research. The method of choice is explained in this chapter.

### **4.1 Survey**

The survey-method is an effective tool for collecting data, as it enables you to reach a large number of different participants. The participants do not necessarily need to be from the same country, and they can be of any age if the survey is distributed wisely. It is not necessary that the participant uses English as their first language, which enables more participants to complete the survey, not depending on that they have to have the same first language.

The survey method is a quantitative research method, and in the past, the most common way of conducting a survey was by post. In recent years as the use of internet has peaked, which has led to a choice growing more and more popular, creating a web-based survey, which enables the respondent to be able to complete the survey regardless of time or place. This method has been frequently used in research involving media and communication (Ekström & Larsson, 2010 p. 87), making it a valid method for my research.

### **4.2 Web survey**

I have decided to use Google Forms as my platform for the survey. It is a free, and easy to use service that includes tools that will help me analyse the collected data. However, using an online survey comes with a lot of responsibility, as it will require using clear questions that can be comprehended without the presence of the researcher. If a respondent cannot understand how to answer a question, it is highly unlikely that they will complete the survey, and therefore a significant amount of data could be lost as a result. It is

also imperative to first construct a prototype survey that should be sent out to a small group of people. As I am using film trailers in my research, it is important to include them in the survey in a way that everyone can access them, since without watching them, the respondent cannot complete the survey.

The trailers in the survey were named Trailer 1, Trailer 2 and Trailer 3. A decision was made to set neutral names for each of them, as it is not crucial for the participants to consider the different platforms they are intended for as they are filling out the survey. It is more relevant for the participants to focus on the experience that they get from viewing the trailers.

A prototype survey was made and sent out to five people in a test group hoping to detect any potential flaws. After reading the responses to the survey, I made a few alterations to it. Firstly, I changed the second question from “Do you watch film trailers?” to “Do you often watch film trailers?” as it was quite a broad question and I found it more interesting to know whether or not my participants consider themselves to actively watch film trailers.

The option of explaining why the participant answered as they did in question 3 was added to the questionnaire.

The questions asking if one of the trailer gives away too many jokes was removed, as it felt like it was not a question this research necessarily needed to get an answer. More focus was instead put on what the participant would have wanted to see in the trailer, by adding the question “Could you identify two things that would make it more appealing for you?”

Here is a copy of the final survey.

What is your definition of a film trailer?

Long-answer text

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Do you often watch film trailers?

- Yes
- No

How often do you watch trailers?

- More than once a day
- Once a day
- More than twice a week
- Once a week
- Once a month
- Once every half a year.

Do you always watch the trailer before going to see the film in a cinema?

- Yes
- No

Figure 1. Questions 1-4 from the survey.

Do you always watch the trailer before seeing a film at home/at a friend's house?

- Yes
- No

Have you ever found that a trailer has ruined the film for you and you no longer want to see it?

- Yes
- No

If you answered yes, can you explain why?

Long-answer text

---

Have you ever purposely avoided watching a trailer for a film that you knew you were going to watch?

- Yes
- No

If you answered yes, can you explain why?

Long-answer text

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Figure 1. Questions 5-9 from the survey.

Please watch the first trailer now, and answer the following questions.

Description (optional)

Trailer 1



On a scale of 1 – 10, how much did you enjoy this trailer?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Did not enjoy            Loved it.

Can you identify two things that made it appealing to you?

Long-answer text

Could you identify two things that would make it more appealing for you?

Long-answer text

Figure 3. Questions 9-14 from the survey.

Based on this trailer, would you go to the cinema to watch the film?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

not likely at all           would most definitely go

...

Now, please watch the second trailer, and answer the following questions.

Description (optional)

Trailer 2



On a scale of 1 – 10, how much did you enjoy this trailer?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Did not enjoy           Loved it

Can you identify two things that made it appealing to you?

Long-answer text

Figure 4. Questions 14-18 from the survey.



Could you identify two things that would make it more appealing for you?

Long answer text

Based on this trailer, would you go to the cinema to watch the film?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

not likely at all           would most definitely go

Now, please watch the third trailer and answer the following questions.

Description (optional)

Trailer 3



Figure 5. Questions 18-20 from the survey.

On a scale of 1 – 10, how much did you enjoy this trailer?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Did not enjoy           Loved it

Can you identify two things that made it appealing to you?

Long answer text

Could you identify two things that would make it more appealing for you?

Long answer text

Based on this trailer, would you go to the cinema to watch the film?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

not likely at all           would most definitely go

Now, to some more general questions about these three trailers.

Description (optional)

After watching all of the trailers, which trailer was most appealing to you?

- The first one
- The second one
- The third one

Figure 6. Questions 20-26 from the survey.

Can you identify at least one thing that made it most appealing?

Long-answer text

Which of the trailers is the least appealing to you?

Trailer 1

Trailer 2

Trailer 3

Could you explain why?

Long-answer text

Have you seen this film?

Yes, I saw it in the cinema

Yes, I saw it but not in the cinema

No, I haven't seen it.

Figure 7. Questions 26-30 from the survey.

I used Facebook to distribute my survey. This decision was taken because of its popularity as a social media platform, and there are many different ways of distributing it on Facebook. It is possible to share it on your own wall, and your friends and family are also able to share it quickly, so it will reach as many participants as possible. There are also smaller communities that exist in groups on Facebook, and these individuals will be more likely to share the survey and complete it as they exist in the group for a reason.

## 5 SURVEY RESULTS

After three weeks of posting the survey on Facebook, I received 57 responses. As some of the questions were not mandatory to fill out, there is a variation in the number of responses to every question. I will still regard these responses as valid data as they also show how the participants prioritise the different questions and whether or not they find them interesting enough to fill out as they go through the survey.

The first question asks what your definition of a film trailer is. Majority of the replies state that trailers are short, commercial and give you a preview of the actual film. One

participant stated that they do not know what a film trailer is, and two other participants consider trailers “a piece of visual information” and “insight”. One participant thought that a trailer could be defined as “Short advertisement of the film in question where the viewer gets the idea of what the film is like from. Helps people decide do they want to watch the actual full-length movie or not.”

**Do you often watch film trailers?**

51 responses

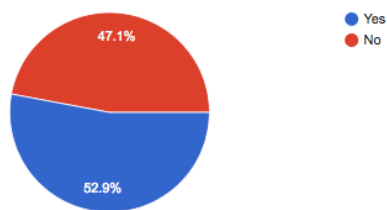


Figure 8. Results of question 2 from the survey.

**How often do you watch trailers?**

52 responses

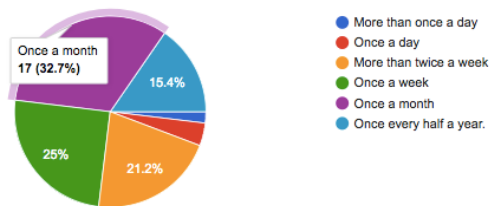


Figure 9. Results of question 3 from the survey.

Question 2 and 3 are about watching film trailers. In question 2, 52.9% say that they often watch film trailers and 47.1% said they do not. In question 3, 1.9% said they watch them more than once a day, 3.8% once a day, 21.2% more than twice a week, 25% once a week, 32.7% once a month, 15.4% once every half a year.

**Do you always watch the trailer before going to see the film in a cinema?**

52 responses

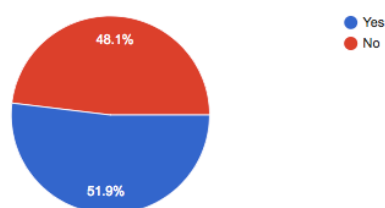


Figure 10. Results of question 4 from the survey.

Do you always watch the trailer before seeing a film at home/at a friend's house?  
52 responses

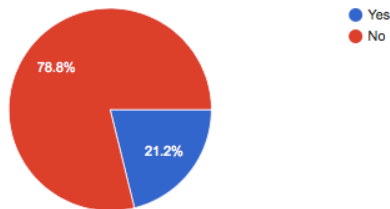


Figure 11. Results of question 5 from the survey.

In questions 4 and 5, it is asked if the participants watch the trailer for a film they will see before either seeing it at home or at a friend's house, or at the cinema. 51.9% said they do watch before going to the cinema, and 48.1% said they do not. When watching a film at a friend's house or at home, the percentage for watching the trailer is 21.2, and 78.8% for not watching.

Have you ever found that a trailer has ruined the film for you and you no longer want to see it?  
52 responses

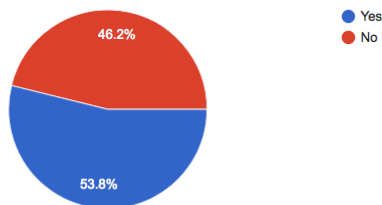


Figure 12. Results of question 6 from the survey.

As you can see in the diagram of figure 12, 46.2% thought a trailer has not ruined a film for them, which caused them to not want to see it anymore, and 53.8% stated that a trailer has indeed ruined a film for them.

In question 7 I asked the people who answered yes to the previous question, to explain why they thought the film was spoiled by the trailer. One person stated that they cannot

explain it, while four said “it didn’t look interesting”. All of the replies allude to the trailer having showed too much of the movie.

In question 8 42.3% stated that they purposely avoided watching the trailer for a film they were going to see and 57.7% said they have not avoided any trailers. When asked to explain why in question 9, one participant states that he does avoid certain trailers, “Especially the trailers for the Marvel-movies spoil A LOT in their trailers, so I never watch them.”.

“My friend told me not to because he said the movie is better if you know nothing about it” and “Big movies like star wars that I already know that I want to see, those movies I purposely don't watch the trailer for in case it spoils the movie. Smaller movies that I might want to see, those I watch the trailer for before going to the cinema.”.

In the remaining replies to the question, spoilers are the main reason why they avoid certain trailers.

## 5.1 Responses to trailer 1

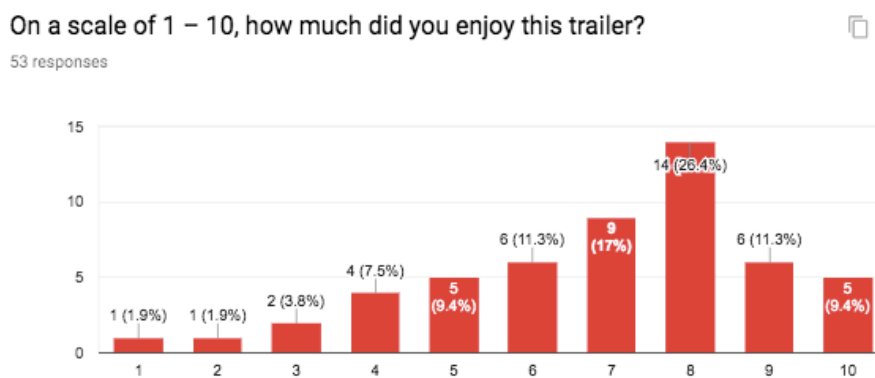


Figure 13. Statistics of replies to question 10.

When asked to score how much they enjoyed trailer 1 in question 10, score 1 and 2 both received one vote, score 3 received two votes, score 4 four votes, score 5 five votes, score

6 six votes, score 7 nine votes, score 8 fourteen votes, score 9 six votes and score 10 five votes.

In question 11 I asked what they enjoyed in the trailer. Majority of the responses include the actor Ryan Reynolds, the humour in the trailer, and the soundtrack. One person commented “it teases the style of the movie and uses references that i identify. The soundtrack was good and the trailer also had distinct changes in tempo and style to change it up as to not get boring.”.

When asked to state what would make the trailer even better in question 12, five participants said they would have liked it to be less violent. One participants replied “if the trailer was shorter, I paused it at 1:47 because I couldn't be bothered to watch it all”, and three responses demanded seeing more of Ryan Reynolds in the trailer. Majority of the participants would have wanted the trailer to be shorter. Another participant commented on the rating of the trailer, “Kinda hankering for the red band trailer, as i do not think this reflects the movie as it is not rated the same as the movie”. This person is referring to a certain type of trailer, one that is rated R, which means that it is not meant to be watched by anyone under 18.

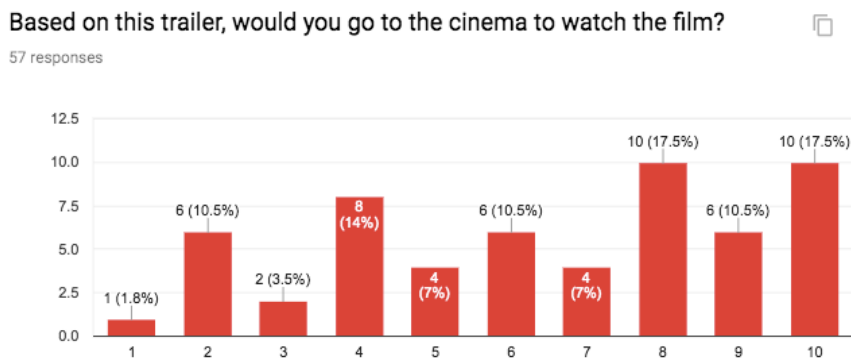


Figure 14. Statistics of replies to question 13.

In question 13, only one participant rated the trailer 1. Scores 8 and 10 each got the same percentage of votes, 17.5%, and score 9 received 6 votes, which is 10.5%, along with scores 2 and 6 which also received the same number of votes.

## 5.2 Responses to trailer 2



Figure 15. Statistics of replies to question 13.

The second trailer received an average score of 7 in question 14.

In question 15, the things that the participants found most appealing in the second trailer were the humour and the punchlines. Question 16 showed that majority of the participants wanted the trailer to be longer than it was. One participant said, “Well the pace is a bit fast but that's the style of tv-spots.”, referencing to the shortness of the trailer. The trailer received a score between 6-7 when the participants were asked if they would have gone to see it in a cinema, in question 17.

## 5.3 Responses to trailer 3

The third trailer received an average score of three, in question 18. When asked to identify the appealing elements of the trailer, most participants said they liked the humour. One participant made a comment on the style of the trailer. “Originality, breaking of the 4th wall. Completely unpredictable.”

Majority of the participants wished for trailer 3 to be longer. Five responses commented on the violence once more. The participants also wanted the storyline to be clearer in order to be able to assess whether they would like to see it or not. When asked to score their willingness to see the film in the cinema, scores 1 and 2 received 19.2% of the votes each.

## 5.4 Overall findings

In question 22, 41.1% thought trailer 1 was the best trailer. Trailer 2 received 33.9% of the votes, and trailer 3 was the least appealing trailer at 25%. The length and “spoiler free” nature of the trailer was mainly the reason why, when the participants replied to question 23.

Trailer 3 got 57.1% of the votes making it the least appealing trailer in question 24. The reason for this being the least appealing was its length, which was deemed too short, and therefore causing a lack of information given about the film. Also, the participants who voted for a trailer other than trailer 3, deemed the trailer was too long. One participant made the comment, “Too long, this is the kind of trailer made for cinema/tv etc. marketing-purposes and it won't work in platforms such as Facebook because people have attention-spans of goldfish when they scroll on social media. Since I was filling this form on tabletop-computer, it did not feel appealing.”

### Have you seen this film?

56 responses

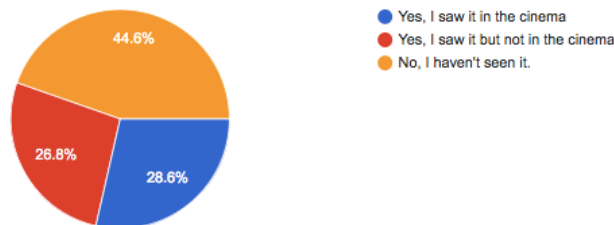


Figure 16. Statistics of replies to question 26.

44.6% had not seen the film, while 28.6% had seen it at the cinema, and 26.8% had seen it someplace else (such as on Netflix or DVD).



## 6 ANALYSIS

In this chapter, I will go through and analyse the data I have collected. When I constructed my survey, I wanted to research if there is a different consumption of film trailers based on the different trailer types that have evolved. I also wanted to analyse three different trailers and if there actually is a need for so many different types of trailers, from the consumer perspective.

As Kernan (2004) states in her research, “While watching a trailer, you try to take in as much as possible and establish whether the advertised film is worthwhile to pay and see in the near future”. I believe there is a contrast in watching the trailer before heading to the cinema and before watching the film at home because of financial reasons. Cinema visits have become more expensive, and the consumers want to know what they will get before they pay money to see it, to avoid disappointment.

When it comes to the basic questions at the beginning of the survey, I am not surprised by the responses, as I regard the average consumer as an active watcher of film trailers. The trailers are part of the modern cultural society and it is very popular for fans of films to watch several different versions of trailers for a film before it is released, as a way of “hyping” the film even more. Fifty-two percent consider themselves active watchers while forty-seven do not. Although this is a good sign that I have a good sample of participants since they are equally divided between watchers and non-watchers, which will give me a balanced mix of responses.

The majority of the participants would say that they view trailers once a month, or once a week, which is surprising for me as we encounter trailers every single day in the social media and on for example billboards at bus stations. So the percentage of people replying, “More than twice a week”, was expected to be higher. Although this could be the difference between what is a conscious choice as opposed to incidental watching, for example on the metro.

A surprising percentage of the participants (78.8%), did not feel the need to watch the trailer before watching the movie at home or a friend’s house.

The promotion of film trailers nowadays is based on “hype”. As Gray (2010) researched, it is the way of gaining the interest of the consumers when they are watching a trailer, and a participant in question 1 stated that a trailer “... gives you just enough to peak your interest and leaves you asking for more”. This confirms the belief that a trailer is not only a visual piece of information, but also a way of catching the attention of consumers.

However, there is a difference to the need of “hype” when it comes to watching films at home or at the cinema. As the participants stated, it is more important to watch the trailer before paying to see the film at the cinema, than it is when you are watching it at home. This is because when a film is watched at home, the formality of the viewing is often more relaxed, and can therefore result in the viewer not being as concentrated on the film as they would be at the cinema. The more concentration is needed to watch a film, the more important the presence of hype is during the decision-making of which film to watch.

I also noticed that the “star” status of the protagonist of the film, Ryan Reynolds, played a part in the appeal of the trailer for the participants. His name was mentioned very often in the comments, and this can be linked to what Finnstewalder et al. (2012) found in their research about celebrity endorsement, which was mentioned in the chapter Literature Review.

In trailer 1, the character development was most significant, and the narrative is explained in detail. This has a clear impact on the trailers appeal to the consumer, as it is the most preferred of the three according to the data. The participants felt like they were introduced to the film and the characters, therefore making the narrative clearer, and the film more likable.

Trailer 2 is the more fast paced and edited trailer, which the consumers did also find appealing, but in the survey, there were comments about the length of the trailer. It was deemed too short and too “action-packed”, and a participant even commented “Well the pace is a bit fast but that's the style of tv-spots.”, showing an understanding of the more modern trailer format.

Trailer 3 was disliked by majority of the participants. It was too short and didn't include any significant character development at all, which caused the participants to be confused by it. However, the participants that did like trailer 3 the most, thought that the other two trailers were too long and that they give too much of the plot away.

The percentage of participants often watching trailers and them who do not, were almost the same, 52.9% said they watch trailers, and 47.2% said they do not. I believe that every person sees at least one trailer every day while scrolling social media, riding a bus or checking the news. Trailers are becoming more and more like commercials and it is very hard to avoid them in modern society. However, there is of course the difference in trailer-watching when you choose to go on a website to watch trailers, instead of watching one while scrolling on sites such as Facebook.

This research is similar to the studies of college student's attitudes toward film trailers by Jerrick (2013), as those participants also stated that trailers should have a teasing effect, but not show too much of the plot of the film, resulting in the film being "spoiled" in their opinion. Another similarity is the importance of the narrative of the film in the trailer, as majority of the participants of this survey never failed to mention how they thought they needed less or more of the plot in the trailer. Furthermore, it was the most common influence of the appeal of the trailer, identical to what was found in Jerrick's research.

## **7 CONCLUSION**

I discovered that a key component in the ingredients of a good trailer is in fact the use of an actor or actress with a celebrity "star" status, as the participants of my survey repeatedly mentioned the actor's name in what they liked about the trailer. Including someone recognisable aids the construction of a film trailer that feels familiar for the consumer, as they have a set of expectations thanks to him/her, in whether they will like the trailer or not before they have watched it to the end.

When analysing the data of my questionnaire, I realised that I had gathered a large amount of data. However, the quality of the data was not compromised by the quantity, and I believe that every question in my survey served its purpose. Film spoilers are always hot topics, and it has long circulated urban legends among consumers of how film trailers are becoming less popular because of spoilers, and this research proves this wrong as majority of the participants of the survey did not feel that they avoid film trailers in order to enjoy movies more.

I should have gathered information regarding the age of the persons who filled out my questionnaire, in order to determine how age also affects their opinions. Also, I did not check if every answer I received was unique.

Another interesting finding from my research is how the consumers find it more important to watch a trailer for a film before heading to the cinema, than when they are watching a trailer at home or in another environment. These statistics show that people pay more attention to film trailers when they are looking for something to watch at the cinema. This suggests a change in the consumer behaviour when watching films.

As with any other media product, the consumer needs to be able to access it quickly and they need to be able to use it effectively as there is no patience for waiting. News are also broadcasted and updated more frequently than ever. This has also had an impact on the film trailers as the findings of the survey were that the consumers wish to see more shorter trailers with more information.

The consumers prefer trailers that are longer than 30 seconds (trailer 2), but still shorter than 2 minutes 40 seconds (trailer 1). Trailers that are very short, such as trailer 3 at 16 seconds, only tend to confuse the consumer, and not raise any interest in the film at all.

Although the consumers liked the directness of the protagonist, how he was addressing the audience in trailer 3, they thought the setting was too confusing, and the duration was too short. In trailer 1, the consumers liked the character development and the introduction of the protagonist, but felt like at the same time, too many new things were introduced, therefore spoiling a bit of the narrative and the film. In trailer two, the main

complaints about the trailer were that it was too short and edited, and it could have been longer. Not much was commented on regarding the actual narrative or the characters, showing that sufficient information of the narrative and characters was shown in the trailer.

According to my responses from the survey, it is imperative that the trailer shows some of the narrative, but not all of the important key scenes, and it should not give away too many jokes which causes a “spoiling” effect, ruining the actual film. It is important that trailers do not cause consumers to avoid watching them in the future, as trailers should be seen as a guiding light into the realms of what the film will be about.

I believe that my research has been significant in how to better understand the consumers’ wants and needs in film trailers. I have also successfully managed to improve the understanding of how film trailers affect the consumers’ need to actually see the film at the cinema, at home, or not at all through my questionnaire that provided me with the statistics that I needed and can be found in my analysis section.

The whole theme of spoilers in film trailers has been discussed among consumers for a significant time now, and it is a topic that will never become irrelevant due to it being so controversial. It has been important to research the consumer behaviour due to it being the most influencing factor when looking at the numbers at the box office. A trailer deemed good and enigmatic will attract more people to see it, while a spoiling trailer will result in ruining the film for the viewer causing them not to make the effort to go see it, and instead, wait for it to be available on an on-demand service that they pay for monthly anyway.

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## **SAMMANDRAG PÅ SVENSKA**

Jag studerar mediekultur på yrkeshögskolan Arcada med inriktningen manus och regi. I mitt examensarbete forskar jag kring publikens attityder mot filmtrailers.

Jag har alltid varit intresserad av filmer och under min studietid på Arcada har jag också lärt mej hur viktiga alla skeden av en films produktion är, även förproduktionen och postproduktionen. Eftersom jag har studieinriktningen manus och regi, har jag funderat mycket på narrativet och den dramaturgiska strukturen som används för trailers. Under flera kurser har jag lärt mej att analysera film, och se på både små och stora element som sedan kan analyseras.

### **Syfte**

Jag har länge fascinerats av filmtrailers eftersom de alltid får så mycket kritik och kan vara kontroversiella genom att de skapar en vision för slutprodukten för tittaren. Dessutom satsar företagen hela tiden mera tid och pengar på att klippa trailers, och trailern har utvecklats märkvärt under de senaste åren, det finns ofta flera olika versioner av trailers har skapats för att bäst anpassa sej till publiceringsplattformen. Kritiken som trailers ofta får är att de är för korta, för långa eller att de visar för mycket av narrativet eller karaktärerna i själva filmen, och på så sätt förstör förväntningarna för filmen. Jag vill analysera vad det egentligen är som publiken vill se i filmtrailers.

### **Metod och material**

Jag använder mej av en webbenkät, och av tre olika versioner av trailers för en och samma film, för att kunna jämföra olika trailers utan att onödiga faktorer så som olika skådespelare, olika genrer eller olika narrativ påverkar min undersökning.

### **Avgränsning**

Jag använder tre trailers som använts vid marknadsföringen av *Deadpool (2016)*. Den första trailern, trailer 1, är 2 minuter och 40 sekunder lång. Trailer 2, är 30 sekunder lång, och trailer 3 är 16 sekunder.



## **Teori**

Jag har letat efter relevanta forskningar som har gjorts tidigare, och skrivit min teoridel baserat på dem. Till exempel Finnstewalder et al. (2012), har kommit fram till att det i en filmtrailer endast borde visas passligt med information, inte för litet eller för mycket. Om en film visar för mycket, anser de att förväntningarna för filmen är förstörda, medan om filmen visar för lite, är det möjligt att de klassar filmen som irrelevant eller ointressant.

Så klart finns det också mer information på olika webbsidor om filmer, men det är ovanligt att en tittare söker mer information om en film om trailern om den inte fångat hens intresse från början. De gjorde intervjuer med individer som kommenterade på olika filmtrailers. De kom också fram till att narrativet är ett av de viktigaste faktorerna som påverkar en tittares upplevelse när de ser på en trailer.

## **Enkäten**

Jag har använt mej av enkätmetoden för att samla material för min analys. Enkätmetoden är en pålitlig metod som används ofta för att forska om medie- och kulturbranschen. (Ekström & Larsson, 2010 s. 87).

Jag gjorde först en enkät som jag testade på en liten målgrupp på fem personer. Jag kollade svaren som jag hade fått och förbättrade frågorna och enkätens uppbyggnad. För att förenkla det för deltagarna valde jag att inkludera alla trailers i enkäten, och jag gav dem namnen Trailer 1, Trailer 2, och Trailer 3.

Jag använde mej av verktyget Google Forms, som jag konstruerade min enkät med, och jag delade min enkät på sociala mediet Facebook. Jag fick 57 svar, men i vissa svar hade svaren lämnats tomma, men jag tar ändå de i beaktande eftersom de visar att intresset för att titta på trailern inte har varit tillräckligt högt. Jag valde att inte göra det obligatoriskt att svara på alla frågor eftersom det också visar hur intresset för trailersena förbättras eller försämras under ifyllningsprocessen.

## **Resultat**

Svaren som jag fick på de öppna frågorna var i överlag bra. Statistiken som jag samlade ihop gav också en bra insikt i hur konsumenterna ser på filmtrailers. Trailer 1 var den mest omtyckta trailern, medan trailer 3 var den som konsumenterna gillade minst. Trailer 2 var i överlag också en bra trailer enligt svaren som jag fick, men konsumenterna tyckte att den ändå var i kortaste laget.

Kritiken mot trailer 1, var att den ändå var lite i längsta laget, och att den skulle ha kunnat varit lite kortare för att upprätthålla intresset för filmen, och inte visa för mycket.

## **Analys och Slutsatser**

Jag hade förväntat mej att svaren skulle visa att konsumenter ser oftare på trailers eftersom vi ser dem överallt. Men var man rör sej påverkar också hur mycket man ser av trailers. Till exempel i Helsingfors kan man se en trailer då man åker till exempel buss eller spårvagn, och då man rör sej nära till exempel ett shoppingcenter. Om man bor mera ut på landsbygden kanske man inte ser trailers så ofta, förutom då på internet som nästan alla har tillgång till.

Men största delen av svaren indikerade att konsumenter ser på trailers cirka en gång per månad. Jag antar att dessa är gånger då konsumenten själv väljer att medvetet söka upp en trailer och se på den, inte då de ser en trailer i förbifarten någonstans, eller som en reklam.

Jag skulle ha kunnat inkludera en fråga i enkäten som gav mera insikt i vilken ålder människorna som deltog i enkäten är. Det skulle ha hjälpt förklara resultatet mera, och inte ge en så allmän bild av vad konsumenterna har för attityder mot filmtrailers.

Jag kom fram till att skådespelerskan eller skådespelaren i trailern har en väldigt stor roll i hur konsumenten ser på trailern. Om de känner igen skådespelarna har de förväntningar om hur filmen kommer se ut, som kan vara både en bra eller dålig sak, eftersom de snabbare vet om de vill se filmen eller inte.

Det är viktigt att trailern visar narrativet och karaktärerna i filmen, och ger en passligt klar bild på hur filmen kommer se ut. Men en helt förklarande förklaring av filmen kommer påverka tittarens

intresse negativt, eftersom de inte längre har ett behov av att betala och se på filmen om de redan upplever att de har sett tillräckligt i trailern.