In regards to marketing, cross-promotion is a commonly used tool that is used to increase awareness of a brand to potential customers. For example, if a product is first created as a toy, being able to create a cartoon television show for the main demographic is a great way to increase sales. However, if a product itself has taken off to the point where it is spread across several industries, how does the sales of the original product compare? American comic books or more specifically the superheroes and villains have been around since the 1930s and throughout the years have consistently been marketed toward young male audiences. But as their audience grew older the popularity eventually translated to older audiences as well that exploded when television, film and toys became licensed for the products.

The film industry really started to take off with the release of Superman in 1978 that proved to Hollywood that comic book characters were lucrative and had a large built-in audience. Today, Marvel and DC, the two biggest comic book publishers, are also the two biggest comic book film producers as well. It is not uncommon for a single film to make hundreds of millions to billions of dollars in the worldwide box office. While the cost to produce these movies have skyrocketed, the amount of profit that is made from these movies is making Disney and Warner Brothers, the controlling the companies of Marvel and DC, extremely profitable. It is apparent that movies have overtaken their original source material of comic books and overshadowed their production and marketing.

This project is aiming to examine the effect of the movie industry has on the comic book industry it has taken inspiration from. By inspecting the role that movies have on the effect on comic book sales at the same time we can analyze what effects this cross-promotion has on the original product. I will be investigated three major groups of comic books and their respective movies. The first two are the most visible on the market being Marvel and DC but the third group will be all other movies and comic books that do not fit into the fit two categories.

The data that we will be using for this project can be found on the web site <http://www.comichron.com> that tracks physical sales of individual comic books on a monthly basis. Starting in the mid-1990s and continuing into the present day, virtually all physical comic book sales are tracked by month. By examining, the dates of comic book sales during the theatre run of specific comic book hero we will seek to find a correlation between the time when there was no movie related to the title. Certain comic books have multiple movies over the years so we can look into this effect more closely multiple times.

The potential for clients that the findings can be reported to are numerous as the aforementioned Marvel and DC are constantly searching for new characters to put in movies as well as bring back previously used characters. But the findings could also be used for potential comic book properties looking to expand to other industries.