

Unveiling Cinema Trends: A Deep Dive into IMDB Data Using SQL

Executive Summary

As I prepare strategic recommendations for the Indian film production company's global release in 2022, I've conducted a thorough analysis of IMDb data, uncovering key insights into audience preferences, top-performing genres, and successful actors and directors. This report outlines my findings and the recommendations derived from analyzing past cinema trends.

1. Understanding the Data

For this analysis, I used a comprehensive IMDb dataset that consisted of five key tables:

- **genre:** Tracks the genres of movies, with columns like `movie_id` and `genre`.
- **ratings:** Holds valuable rating information, including `avg_rating`, `total_votes`, and `median_rating`.
- **movie:** Contains detailed information about each film, including `title`, `year`, `date_published`, `duration`, `country`, `worldwide_gross_income`, and `languages`.
- **role_mapping:** Connects actors and actresses to their respective films using `movie_id` and `name_id`.
- **director_mapping:** Links directors to movies via `movie_id` and `name_id`.

By leveraging these tables, I was able to dive deeper into genre popularity, rating trends, film success factors, and the impact of actors and directors on overall film performance.

2. Performing the Analysis

Genre Popularity and Preferences

- **Drama's Dominance:** My analysis shows that Drama is the most prolific genre, with over 4,285 films produced. It consistently resonates with audiences and often translates into strong financial success. An example of this is the movie *Shatamanam Bhavati*, which illustrates how the genre can achieve both critical and commercial success.

title	genre	year	worldwide_gross_income
Shatamanam Bhavati	Drama	2017	INR 530500000
Winner	Action	2017	INR 250000000
Winner	Drama	2017	INR 250000000
Thank You for Your Service	Drama	2017	\$ 9995692
The Healer	Comedy	2017	\$ 9979800
The Healer	Drama	2017	\$ 9979800
The Healer	Family	2017	\$ 9979800
Gi-eok-ui bam	Mystery	2017	\$ 9968972
Gi-eok-ui bam	Thriller	2017	\$ 9968972
Shan guang shao nu	Drama	2017	\$ 9949926

- **Action and Romance:** These genres are known for their longer durations and immersive storytelling, often demanding larger budgets to accommodate complex production needs.
- **Comedy and Horror:** Typically shorter in length and more budget-friendly, these genres offer a good balance of profitability and audience engagement. They are particularly effective for projects with tighter financial constraints.

genre	avg_duration	running_total_duration	moving_avg_duration
Action	112.88	112.88	112.880000
Adventure	101.87	214.75	107.375000
Comedy	102.62	317.37	105.790000
Crime	107.05	424.42	106.105000
Drama	106.77	531.19	106.238000
Family	100.97	632.16	105.360000
Fantasy	105.14	737.30	105.328571
Horror	92.72	830.02	103.752500
Mystery	101.80	931.82	103.535556
Others	100.16	1031.98	103.198000
Romance	109.53	1141.51	103.773636
Sci-Fi	97.94	1239.45	102.415455
Thriller	101.58	1341.03	102.389091

Production and Marketability

- **Budget Management:** Action films often require larger budgets due to the need for stunts and special effects, whereas Drama and Horror films can be made more affordably, relying heavily on narrative and atmosphere.
- **Global Appeal of Action and Sci-Fi:** These genres attract international audiences due to their visual spectacle, which drives significant box-office returns globally. In contrast, Romance and Drama thrive on streaming platforms, where audiences prefer more intimate, character-driven stories.
- **Creative Genres:** Fantasy, Mystery, and Thrillers allow for creative storytelling that captivates audiences with innovative narratives and intense plots.

Industry Trends

- **Theater vs. Streaming:** Globally, Sci-Fi, Fantasy, and Superhero films are dominating theaters with their action-packed narratives, while Drama and Crime series are rising in popularity on streaming platforms, indicating a shift toward serialized, character-driven storytelling.

Top Performers and Partnerships

- **Actors to Watch:** Based on my analysis, stars like Vijay Sethupathi and Taapsee Pannu bring considerable value to a film due to their consistent performances and loyal fan bases. Sethupathi, with an impressive average rating of 8.42 across five films, and

Pannu, with a 7.74 average across three, can significantly enhance a movie's appeal in both local and international markets.

- **Directorial Impact:** Directors like Steven Soderbergh have proven their ability to produce high-quality films with broad appeal. Soderbergh, in particular, has achieved an average rating of 6.48 with over 171,684 total votes, making him a strong contender for any global project.
- **Collaborating with Production Powerhouses:** Aligning with established production houses such as Marvel Studios or Twentieth Century Fox can help improve the film's production quality and global distribution reach.

production_company	vote_count	prod_comp_rank
Marvel Studios	2656967	1
Twentieth Century Fox	2411163	2
Warner Bros.	2396057	3

3. Conclusions/Recommendations

For Theatrical Release:

- **Target Action, Sci-Fi, and Fantasy:** These genres perform exceptionally well in theaters, where their larger-than-life spectacles captivate global audiences. They offer the best opportunity for box-office success.
- **Capitalize on Star Power:** Working with leading actors like Vijay Sethupathi, Mammooty, or Mohanlal can help attract their substantial fan bases and elevate the film's visibility both locally and internationally.

For Streaming Platforms:

- **Focus on Drama, Thriller, and Crime:** These genres align with the current trends in streaming, where audiences are gravitating toward rich, character-driven narratives. Investing in these genres will help secure a dedicated streaming audience.
- **Innovative Storytelling:** Introducing elements of Fantasy or Mystery can set your film apart in the streaming landscape, attracting niche audiences who are seeking something fresh and unique.

Strategic Partnerships and Marketing:

- **Leverage Global Collaborations:** Collaborating with international production houses could help expand the film's global reach by tapping into foreign markets and gaining insights that could enhance distribution strategies.
- **Effective Marketing:** Drawing inspiration from the success of Italian films, I recommend focusing on highlighting the film's cultural uniqueness while ensuring it resonates with a global audience. This could help capture international attention and broaden the film's appeal.

- **Blend Genres:** Combining multiple genres can create a unique film that appeals to diverse audiences, further enhancing its competitiveness in the global market.

By conducting this deep dive into past cinema trends and industry performance, I've been able to develop strategic recommendations to guide the production company's global release. A well-considered blend of popular genres, star power, and international partnerships can help the film stand out and succeed in a competitive global market.