

This week the Soundtrack to Juno bounded to number one on the charts. A measly 65k units is all it took. Not great for a #1, but these days, its a great total for any theatrical soundtrack. Which raises a question. If a best selling soundtrack sells about 100k units, and 99pct of the rest sell under 10k units, is selling a soundtrack the best use of the music ?

I think not. Whether sold digitally or by CD, the reality of today's music and theatrical release market is such that music from movies would generate more total dollars for everyone if it were given away with the purchase of a movie ticket.

To release a major motion picture theatrically these days [costs a lot of money](#). Not only does it cost a lot of marketing dollars to release a movie, not a single movie company in this country has any idea which money that it spends really drives people to theaters. Thats a problem. So where does music fit in ?

One way to entice people to get off the couch and attend more movies is to increase the value to customers. The most cost effective opportunity to increase value is to give away items to theater goers that have a very high perceived value, but a very lost cost of distribution.

Enter music.

How many people are going to rush out and buy the Soundtrack to the new Rambo movie ? But riddle me this. How many more people would go to the movie if they knew that their movie ticket stub had a code to unlock a free download of the movie's soundtrack ? Or if they bought a ticket online in advance of the release, they could download the soundtrack right from the online ticket site ?

Talk about a possible win win. Music publishers would make far more money getting paid a lump sum or for every song downloaded by ticket buyers than they would from sales of the soundtrack. The total cost per song to the studios would be a fraction of their marketing budgets and probably only in the thousands of dollars. The incentive to consumers to buy movie tickets, lets just say it would certainly be more than without the music.

And there is no reason to stop there. Why not offer downloads of the script to people who have already seen the movie (meaning the download of the script would start a couple months after the movie was released). It could be for free with a ticket stub code, or could be sold for a couple bucks per download without. Again, its just more value to the consumer, without much cost to the studio.

Bottomline, is that anything that can be delivered digitally as a download could be bundled into the value of a movie ticket and delivered from the ticketing site, the studio or from the theater's website. The cost to deliver a song, script or even video (like what you might find as extras on a dvd) digitally is nominal relative to the marketing investment required to get people to the theater.

Why not ?