



Statistics on Twitter TV traffic in the UK



The Walking Dead

## Predicting the Hits

Film studios are increasingly engaging market research firms to predict with better accuracy which content will prove popular with audiences. While some of this data may inform decisions on a creative level, the implications for marketing are more immediate. This sort of agile behavioural analysis offers companies the ability to target content in a much more finely tuned manner.

- **Piedmont Media:** Based in Los Angeles, [Piedmont Media Research](#) has developed a system for predicting a film's box-office takings based on an audience's emotional engagement with characters, narrative and other quantifiable elements. Films are given a resulting score, with anything over 250 being considered a success.

"What we do is essentially test the strength of people's personal connections to any given concept," Piedmont's president Josh Lynn told Stylus. "It's several questions that are scaled together into one composite score, based on relative statistical significance." The company predicted Universal's supernatural comedy R.I.P.D would be a box office failure this summer with a score of only 137. The film took in a low \$12.7m on its opening weekend.

- **Google Movie Search:** A June 2013 study from Google, [Quantifying Movie Magic With Search](#), examined how simple consumer patterns can predict box-office revenue with an accuracy of 94%. On the basis that moviegoers consult 13 sources – such as Wikipedia, or trailers on YouTube – before they decide which movie to see, tracking those pre-decision steps could be vital for advertising and marketing directions.

Unfortunately, by this point, the studios' money has already been spent. Here, Piedmont's statistical analysis trumps Google. The company can predict the success of a film in advance of production, before any budget has even been spent on the project. "By getting consumer analysis of the film before a penny is put into production, studios and other financial partners can determine in a much smarter, accurate way not just which films to make, but at what price level to make them," said Lynn. "Studios won't just be making entertainment that scores highest overall, but making smarter investment decisions as a result of having better information."

5 Nielsen Twitter TV Ratings						
Daily Top Five 12/03/2013						
RANK	NETWORK	PROGRAM	UNIQUE AUDIENCE (000)	IMPRESSIONS (000)	UNIQUE AUTHORS (000)	TWEETS (000)
1	NBC	The Voice	3,481.4	27,506.8	324.3	1,179.4
2	CMT	CMT Artists of the Year 2013	1,937.9	3,906.8	35.0	54.5
3	MTV	Awkward.	1,169.3	2,187.5	35.6	48.1
4	Oxygen	Bad Girls Club: Miami	1,131.8	6,478.5	47.4	130.7
5	FX	Sons of Anarchy	896.7	3,112.5	29.1	59.7

Nielsen Twitter TV Ratings daily top 5 results in the US

- **Epagogix:** Computer-based algorithms and scientific methods are also being employed by entertainment consulting firms in their effort to predict hits. [Epagogix](#), based in both the UK and the US, analyses film scripts and places a numerical value on plot points. This value is then fed through a computer algorithm, which calculates how much it will make at box office (give or take 10%). Epagogix can also recommend script changes to make the project more profitable.
- **Wikipedia Predictor:** Research from Oxford University reveals how a mathematical algorithm applied to data about activity on a film's Wikipedia page (page views, edits, shares) can predict box-office takings with a high level of accuracy. Dr Taha Yasseri, from the Oxford Internet Institute at the University of Oxford, said: "These results can be of great value to marketing firms, but more importantly for us, we were able to demonstrate how we can use socially generated online data to predict a lot about future human behaviour."