**How audiences respond to products**

Audiences can respond to media in a variety of ways for either good or bad. Deciding to continue watching something or reading something and deciding not to is a basic response to a product because it has either attracted you to it or turned you away from it. Critical success of a film by critics and fans can influence you towards buying a product; this is an example of how audience response can influence others.

Thanks to the Internet, it is much easier for production companies to hear from audiences directly. Years before the internet had an impact on the media industry, ratings and shares were the biggest way for companies to know how their produced faired week to week. If the ratings were high, it was being received well enough for it to be watched and if they felt it wasn't performing well enough, leading to cancellation. However there have been notable incidents in which audience responses have caused renewal for show; *Family Guy* was after its third season for two years. However, due to a high ratings on *Cartoons Network Adult Swim* and a huge sale in DVD's it was renewed for a fourth season becoming the first ever show to be revived because of DVD sales. This is an example of how an overwhelmingly good response can have an impact on company decisions.

Audience response is not only limited to the final film product. Due to the constant update from production thanks to the Internet, we are able to see what is happening throughout the entire process. The recent *Suicide Squad* gained a huge fan backlash after it was revealed that *The Joker* would be having tattoos all over his body, something not seen in the comics. *Ben Affleck’s* casting as the new *Batman* also garnered backlash, similar to *Heath Ledger* being cast as *The Joker* in *The Dark Knight.* The recent decision to cancel the anticipated sequel *Tron 3* has gained a 10,000-signature petition (which is still climing) aimed directly at *Disney* to go forward to the sequel. The decision to cast *Scarlett Johansson* as the Japanese lead character in *Ghost in the Shell* caused racist backlash and has inspired fans to address *Disney* and asking them no to whitewash *Mulan* in her upcoming live-action adaptation; a similar thing occurred when *Rooney Mara* was cast as the native American *Tiger Lilly* in the new *Pan.*

Since the rise of Internet usage, fans were able to exhibit their reactions digitally instead of physical action. In the 70’s and 80’s there are several notable and notorious incidents in which a film caused mass panic, backlash, protest and/or anger. *The Exorcist* is an early example of a film that gained a large controversy and wide audience outrage for a number of reasons. The graphic depictions of the young girl in bloody scenes, sexual situations and the graphic language she uses, religious implications, the nature of Satan possessing an innocent child and the overall horror of the film caused all sorts of reactions from the audiences including, walk-outs, passing out, throwing up, protests and even a lawsuit in which a man sued the company because he fainted and broke his jaw on the seat in front of him. Despite the great controversy, the film is a financial and critical success and was even nominated for Best Picture at the Academy Awards (though it did not win). The film was also banned in several cities in the UK, prompting something called ‘The Exorcist Bus Trip’ which saw people being taken to the nearest town showing it by travel companies. Other films gaining audience reactions like this include *A Clockwork Orange, The Texas Chain Saw Massacre* and *The Evil Dead.*

The use of protests has diminished over the years since the Internet came into play. While most protests do not work in getting films removed from theatres, *Silent Night Deadly Night* was successfully removed from circulation after families protested its use of Santa Clause as a serial killer and that it harmed children’s perception of him. Recently though, *Fifty Shades of Grey* received several protests from groups saying it glamourized domestic violence however this was unsuccessful in its attempt to sway viewers or remove it from circulation as it went on to gross $569 million and is the 3rd highest grossing film of 2015.

Despite a lot of negative audience response to many films out today, there are examples of films gaining a positive response. *The Hunger Games: Catching Fire* inspired the protesters in Thailand to use the 3-finger-salute in the film that represents silent protest. *Donald Sutherland*, who plays *President Snow* in the franchise, has publically stated he hopes the film will inspire a youth revolution against corrupt leaders and governments in the world. These demonstrations and the one mention previously show just how effective audiences can be, not only for financial reasons but also for cultural impact and social change.