



Will Cinemas Survive COVID?

When I was younger, I used to love going to the cinema. I didn't go very often so it was such a thrilling experience when I managed to visit. I used to run to the pick n' mix section and buy an unnecessarily large quantity of sweets, I used to get my slush puppy, (which never fails to give you head freeze) and then buy the tickets for the full cinematic experience.

Now, I'm not much of a cinema fan, but my partner is a comic lover and entertainment fanatic, so whenever there's a new release, particularly in the comic world, we're always the first ones there! Having lived in Austria, Germany, Spain and the UK, I've certainly seen my fair share of cinemas, none of which have changed my opinion towards the cinema. So when COVID-19 hit at the beginning of 2020, I wasn't particularly upset that I would be losing the cinematic experience. For all those cinema-goers, like my partner, it was devastating.

In March 2020, cases of COVID-19 were increasing dramatically in the UK and we soon went into lockdown. All cinemas were closed in the space of a day and life as we knew it changed over night.

After a few months in lockdown, cinemas were allowed to reopen at the beginning of July, but "coronaphobia" has taken hold of the British population and the cinema industry is suffering the consequences.

It's true that cinemas have all the necessary safety precautions in place- perspex screens at the till, one-way systems in the cinemas and socially-distanced seating, but sitting in an enclosed space with strangers doesn't seem to be appealing in the midst of a pandemic.

The Peak of Cinema

In a time before coronavirus, the UK was one of the leading film industries in the world (behind Bollywood and Hollywood). We have produced some of the most successful films worldwide, including Harry Potter and James Bond. In 2019, box office revenue was £1.3 billion and UK-made films generated around 16% of global box office sales. Cinema admissions were holding steady despite the boom of online streaming and even the number of cinema sites was increasing. Huge hits such as “Avengers End Game”, “Joker” and “The Lion King” made the cinema a social event at weekends and with tempting offers such as “buy one get one free” or “half price on Mondays”, it was irresistible.

The Fall of Cinema

The three leading cinema companies in the UK are Cineworld, Odeon and Vue, the largest being Cineworld with around 24% market share. So when the news came earlier this week that Cineworld was closing for good, resulting in 5,500 UK job losses, the impact of COVID-19 on the cinema industry hit home. Cineworld announced all 127 of their cinemas in the UK will be closing with thousands of job losses.

Although I’m no health expert, the fact of the matter is that cinemas are perfectly safe places with all the safety procedures in place, certainly no more dangerous than going to the shops or the pub with friends, but British people are scared and with a second wave of COVID on it’s way, going to the cinema is the last thing our minds.

Cinemas were banking on the success of big names, such as the new Bond film to increase sales, but with release dates being pushed back again and again, it appears there is no comeback for the cinema world yet.

With the biggest cinema provider in the UK now closed and talks that Vue and Odeon may follow, where does that leave us? Will the cinema ever make a comeback? Have we adapted all too well to watching films on our home screens? What is the future of the entertainment industry?



Is The Death Of Cinemas Near?

Yes	No
<ul style="list-style-type: none">☞ They are extremely expensive☞ It's easier to watch a film at home / home cinemas☞ If COVID doesn't destroy the industry perhaps another disease/ changing market will☞ Streaming platforms are the upcoming market☞ Entertainment / media companies are going bust as a result of the pandemic	<ul style="list-style-type: none">☞ You can't beat the atmosphere of going to the cinema☞ Some countries bouncing back from COVID have reopened cinemas successfully☞ The film industry has too much power to close☞ People have an emotional attachment to the cinema☞ There aren't enough high-quality films anymore

Vocabulary:

To be in the comfort of your own home

To watch a film (Br) - to watch a movie (Am)

Trend

Popular

Chain

Customer demand

Bailout

A hit

Hollywood / Bollywood

Questions:

- 1) Do you like going to the cinema? Do you go often? What do you like watching?
- 2) Do you prefer watching films at home? Why/not?
- 3) What are your cinema traits? (getting popcorn, drinks etc...)
- 4) How expensive is a cinema ticket in your country?
- 5) Do you think there is a way to adapt cinemas to an outdoor scenario? Would it be as popular?
- 6) Why do you think cinemas are so expensive nowadays?
- 7) Do you think streaming platforms will overtake cinemas?
- 8) What is your favourite film of all time -would you prefer to watch it at home on TV or in a cinema? Why?
- 9) What are the advantages/ disadvantages of visiting a cinema?
- 10) Do you agree/disagree that film stars are too popular/famous anyway?