ADVERTISING STRATEGIES IN
THE BULGARIAN FILM INDUSTRY

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ABSTRACT
A movie is made to reach as many people as possible, and without a good advertising strategy, this is impossible. What advertising strategies are used to promote Bulgarian feature films? And what Visual Representation is present in Bulgarian Feature film posters? The purpose of this thesis is to answer these question. It traces what were and are today the methods of advertising and distribution of feature films in Bulgaria. Bulgarian feature films that have attracted a greater number of viewers will be considered. This research is qualitative and an interpretative study that will analyze the advertising strategies in the Bulgarian film industry. This research merges visual communication and visual analysis. Bulgarian films made in the country are no more special or unique than all other European films. They are important for the development of the state's culture. Many national cinemas in different countries have the same problems and challenges, political situations, language barriers, and a small national market. The conclusion from the reviewed campaigns of Bulgarian feature films is that the most used ways to promote a movie are the poster, the trailer and the social networks. Cinema is primary and advertising is secondary. Cinema is a consequence of human needs for creativity and self-expression. That's why even the most ingenious advertisement can't save a weak film. And if in the first weekend of the movie's release, thanks to advertising can attract a certain number of people, it will not hide the weak qualities of the film and will not stop the negative word of mouth.

Keywords: Bulgarian cinema, films, advertising, feature movie, advertising strategies
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I. INTRODUCTION

Bulgarian films made in the country are no more special or unique than all other European films. They are important for the development of the state’s culture. Many national cinemas in different countries have the same problems and challenges, political situations, language barriers, and a small national market (Nedyalkova, 2015).

The historical and linguistic specifics of Bulgaria make it a specific case. Bulgaria was under Ottoman rule for 5 centuries more than the other countries that are currently members of the European Union. According to Buchanan (2006), this has slowed down the cultural development of Bulgaria, unlike other even small Eastern European and Western European countries. Literary traditions or scientific achievements during the Ottoman rule are missing, which leads to the great desire of Bulgaria to receive cultural recognition after the Liberation of the country, which took place in 1878 (Buchanan, 2006).

Orban (2007), notes that the linguistic specificity, the communist past in combination with the oriental historical heritage are the prerequisites for the feeling of a cultural isolation of Bulgaria from Europe, which makes the development of the national cinema a way for the development of the culture and the international cultural affirmation of the country. The linguistic specificity of the country is expressed in the fact that Bulgaria is the only country in the European Union that uses Cyrillic (Orban, 2007). Bulgarian film industry represents the more extensive re-organizing of the Eastern European film enterprises, occurring in the midst of identity and economic, worldwide rivalry and collaboration. There are clear and distinguishable historical and linguistic distinctions between Bulgaria and the rest of Europe which are a cultural
and economic challenge for the cinema art.

As an active Film Executive Producer and Film Production Manager in Bulgaria, the topic of advertising in the film industry has always been not only interesting to me but also fundamental to my work. Not only in Bulgarian cinema is advertising essential, whether a movie will be watched or not. We make one movie to reach as many people as possible, and without a good advertising strategy, this is impossible.

What advertising strategies are used to promote Bulgarian feature films? The answer to this question is the purpose of this thesis. It traces what were and are today the methods of advertising and distribution of feature films in Bulgaria. Bulgarian feature films that have attracted a greater number of viewers will be considered.

There are different classifications for advertising in cinema. This thesis will use the classification of Prof. Hristo Katrandjiev Ph.D., according to which the advertising for films is of two types. Katrandzhiev (2008), defines cinema advertising as on-screen and off-screen advertising. Trailers, teasers and product positioning are on-screen advertising, and all promotional materials such as posters, billboards, promotional products are off-screen advertising (Katrandzhiev, 2008, p.4).

Cinema advertising in Bulgaria comes with American films. In 1926, the FANAMET Syndicate, composed of Paramount Pictures, First National, and Metro Goldwyn Mayer, opened a branch in
Bulgaria. The director is appointed the Russian Dmitry Solynik – Krassa. Krassa is the person who turns into practice preliminary screenings of premiere films which is a purely American method of advertising (Kaleva, 2013). According to Staykov (2015), the Bulgarian film industry marks a significant development in the making of trailers and film posters as examples are given films that achieve good financial results and will be analyzed in this thesis, such as "Mission London", directed by Dimitar Mitovski (2010), Love.net (2011), directed by Iliyan Djevelev and "Operation Shenti Kapeli" (2011), directed by Ivan Mitov (Staykov, 2015, p. 27).

According to the academics, the Internet is as much a threat to the film industry as it is an advertising tool for achieving results. Advertising campaigns on the Internet give good results and specifically targeted to potential customers at affordable prices (Chevalier & Mayzlin, 2003). Cinema advertising is also directly related to various brands and industries such as soft drinks and the automotive industry. This increases the chance that a film will benefit from product placement. Movie trailers and TV commercials remain the most effective in terms of attracting an audience for a film (Marich, 2005). But a film's advertising campaign relies on many more components and strategies than trailer and television advertising. The very meaning and plot of the film are important, as well as the cultural and economic peculiarities of the country.
II. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

According to Higson (2006), there is a problematic connection between a nation and national cinema, and he also argues that unity and disunity are features of all nations. What establishes national film at the degree of foundation and belief system is not really what nearby crowds would perceive as indigenous film. Nationalism has incited conversations of national way of life as having a place with an envisioned network those capacities inside indefatigably portrayed geo-political space. Nationalist rhetoric portrays imaginary communities as stable and homogeneous. In any case, this is once in a while a satisfactory portrayal, particularly given the long world history of colonization and international conflict and movement. Nationalism makes it possible to unite the little represented groups of society (Anderson, 1983).

According to Hayward (2000), national film industry doesn't just well-spoken the social specificities of a given previous country but traditions and history, together with overcoming differences are part of nation-building. The national cinema of a country definitely has an impact on large groups of people and can definitely be a means of uniting not only certain groups, but a nation as such. Culture, and in particular cinema art, which is the subject of this study, can influence and shape beliefs. At the same time, cinema is also a means of entertainment.

Brief overview of film production and advertising until 1948

Since the beginning of the first film screening in Bulgaria (1897) and the First Bulgarian feature film "Bulgaran is a Galant" (1915) until 1948 film distribution and film production are in private hands. There is a modest production of feature films. The films are the work of people who love the seventh art and who put their last savings for their making. Boris Grezhov, Vasil
Bakardjiev, Josip Novak, Parlapanov, and Popov are among the founders of cinema in Bulgaria (Kardjilov, 2008, p.19).

In 1930, Metro Goldwyn Mayer opened an office in Sofia and the following year they released a special catalog of films for the upcoming season. The booklet is designed for cinema holders, with the films being advertised through the names of the actors – the stars who are participating in the movie. At that time, filmmakers and other authors were not listed in the printed advertising materials of the film. Individual film flyers are also sold in cinemas like the programs in theatres. They are denoted as a "Tonefilm library" (Kaleva, 2013).

The distributors of American films in Bulgaria also introduce the printing of novels in newspapers as a promotion of the films. In 1936 -The Homeless was published (illustrated feats of the dog Rin Tin Tin) in the newspaper "Morning". During the period 1910-1915, the competition between the cinemas in Sofia – "Modern Theatre" and "Odeon" led to the appearance of the first advertising boards (Yanakiev, 2003, p. 21).

On 14th October 1946, after a political coup and declared the Republic of Bulgaria adopted the Law on Cinema culture. It declares that "cinematographic and photographic shooting throughout the country as free" (art. 4), governs the issues of kinetics (chapter II), as well as those of film production (chapter III).

The law also allows private film production. The film production company "Rila film" takes care of the distribution of the films. It publishes a special brochure, which is sold together with the film ticket. The activity of advertising and distribution is nearly 4.4 million BGN. The
production of the film "Again in life" costs 12,612,023 BGN, as 5.38% of them are for advertising and photos. The revenues from the first year of its projection are very good – 13,101,370 BGN. And just then comes the full nationalization of Bulgarian cinema – the two most-solid private companies "Rila film" and "Pobeda film" become governmental property (Yanakiev, 2003, p.33).

On 5 April 1948, the "National newspaper" published the Law of cinematography, which completely annulled the previous law on cinema culture. The main goal of the Cinematography Act of 1948 is legal to fasten the totalitarian beginnings in Bulgarian cinema (Kaleva, 2013).

**Brief overview of film production and advertising after 1948**

The cinematographic work in the country became a monopoly of the government institutions – by transforming the private-law foundation "Bulgarian case" into the state enterprise "Bulgarian cinematography" in the Committee for Science, Art, and Culture. In "Bulgarian cinematography" with its more than 30 subdivisions, among which the film-producing studios and the film laboratory, also enters the state enterprise "Distribution of films" (Kaleva, 2013).

After the circulation of the reference copy of the film, the heads of the four-film offices (Mezdra, Gorna Oryahovitsa, Stara Zagora, and Sofia) watch it and order the required number of copies to cover the area of the film office. The number of copies shall be determined by means of questionnaires for the qualities and disadvantages of the films filled in by the employees in the kinetics. There is a limit to broadcast no more than 20 movies in a month. The leaders of the local city offices "Kinefication" at the beginning of each month go to the cantors, where they
coordinate the monthly repertoire – which movie in which cinema and how many times it will be projected, also when the spear will be received. The success or failure of each film is determined by the mutual influence of factors such as repertoire, competition, propaganda, cultural-mass work, the material base of the cinema network. Therefore, all these elements will be dealt with together (Tzanov, 2012, p.15).

Since distribution is closely related to cinemas, a review of the cinema network should be carried out in the first place. The cinema distribution in Bulgaria started in the beginning of the 20th century with mobile cinemas. In 1903, Vladimir Petkov became the first Bulgarian to buy a mobile cinema. At the end of 1908, in Sofia was opened the first specially built movie theater – "Modern Theater". The program changes three times a week. In the late 20s in Sofia were opened cinemas "Royal", "Gloria Palace", and in the 30 "Slaveykov", "Slavanska Beseda", "Europe Palace", "Balkan", "Macedonia", "Rex". In 1939 the country had 155 cinemas, from the 123 in the cities with a total of 13 103 000 visitors. In 1944 the cinemas were 165, of which 128 were in the cities. In the second half of the 20th century in the capital were built several new cinemas – on average one in ten years: "Vitosha", "Serdika", "East", "Druzhba", and one summer cinema "Mir". In 1974, the capital already has 39 cinemas and three summer cinemas. Over 14 million viewers annually visit the cinemas (Kaleva, 2013).

The profiling of the cinemas started and as a result, the cinema "Levski" specializes as a pre-premiere, and the pre-premiere views of films of various departments and institutions have been abolished. This expresses the new attitude towards the repertory policy of "Film distribution" and the beginning of raising the film culture of viewers.
In 1982, "Propaganda" was renamed into a Film Information and Advertising Center. It deals directly with the advertising of films. For film propaganda works and the cultural movement "Zname na Mira". The organization makes group visits to teenagers and instructs teachers about extracurricular work with individual films. The Center for Film Information and Advertising is headed by a head of a unit with two alternates of the edits "Film Poster" and "Information Editing." In the 80 years, the number of employees was 18 people. They are engaged in the production of advertising materials for both Bulgarian and foreign films. Promotional materials are printed at a central level and distributed throughout the country (Tzanov, 2012, p.41).

In 80’s the Center for Film Information and Advertising became an active partner of the Bulgarian National Television. By virtue of their contract, every Wednesday is broadcast 3 minutes Foršpand with upcoming premiere films, which are coming to the screen on Friday. The role of television becomes mainly through a significant means of advertising. In 1963, 33% of the Bulgarian population is already watching TV regularly. In the middle of the same decade the registered black and white television receivers reached 500,000 pieces. Almost the whole country is covered by a quality TV signal. Directors, actors, and screenwriters appear in various TV shows to tell the details of their latest film projects (Kaleva, 2013).

From 1992 to 1994, the Film Information Centre began cooperating with the private Radio Express. Advertising announcements are beginning to be broadcast on the radio for upcoming films. From 1955 to 1990, specialized editions for cinema appeared. Such are the magazines "Cinema Art", "Bulgarian Films", "Film Worker", -Cinema and Time, -Film News
Brief overview of film production and advertising after 1989

On September 20, 1991 "Bulgarian cinematography" is closed and became a National Film Center with the chairman acting at the time the Secretary of the Ministry of Culture. The activity of "Film distribution" stopped in 1994. In 1993, a single Limited liability company ("Sfilm"), which began to act in the place of the "Kinefication", was opened on the basis of the Sofia City administration. In 1996 the company was transformed into a single joint stock with a capital owner through the Ministry of Culture (Kaleva, 2013). The production, distribution, and funding of the films are in private hands, while the cinema network remains state until 1997. For the Bulgarian cinema began difficult years with a lack of money, audience interest, and lack of ideas.

The statistics on the number of cinemas in the country for the period 1995 – 2009 show their drastic reduction. Their total number from 232 for the whole country in 1995 decreased to 56 in 2009. Table 1 is the data from the National Statistical Institute for screenings and viewership visits by year. They show all movies displayed in the cinema network both Bulgarian and foreign (Kaleva, 2013).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YEAR</th>
<th>CINEMAS (pcs)</th>
<th>SCREENINGS (pcs)</th>
<th>VISITS (Thousand)</th>
<th>AVERAGE NUMBER OF VISITS PER CINEMA (Thousand)</th>
<th>AVERAGE NUMBER OF VISITS PER ONE SCREENING (pcs)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>1995</td>
<td>195</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>134 507</td>
<td>1501</td>
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<td>1996</td>
<td>187</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>111 565</td>
<td>1009</td>
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<td>1997</td>
<td>190</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>996687</td>
<td>722</td>
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<td>1998</td>
<td>183</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>99 633</td>
<td>441</td>
<td>3189</td>
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<td>1999</td>
<td>168</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>84 080</td>
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<td>2003</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>136 145</td>
<td>277</td>
<td>3508</td>
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<td>2006</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>157 154</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>2578</td>
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<td>2007</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>139 971</td>
<td>211</td>
<td>2627</td>
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<tr>
<td>2008</td>
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<td>2427</td>
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<td>2009</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>172 120</td>
<td>1020</td>
<td>3029</td>
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<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>207 275</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>4157</td>
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<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>254 183</td>
<td>1007</td>
<td>4636</td>
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<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>241 883</td>
<td>817</td>
<td>4248</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 1-National Statistical Institute, Statistical Yearbook 2000; Statistical Yearbook 2010, Signature 69; Statistical Yearbook 2012*
No Bulgarian film is able to achieve good results and is liked by the audience for about 14 years after 1990. Advertising and marketing of films is not a reason to be discussed, as there is hardly any money to be found for their production. Bulgarians stopped watching Bulgarian movie (Kaleva, 2013). Privatization of the cinemas began in 1997, and in 2001 they were sold to the company—Bulgarian technologies ltd. in a package of 12 state-owned cinemas in central Sofia. The buyer pays BGN 4.7 million, as a condition of maintaining the business for a period of 10 years. Several years later, in 2004, 8 of the cinemas were sold to other companies for the amount of EUR 30 million and are already shopping centers, bank offices, and gaming halls. The total number of screens in Bulgaria is 97, and in 1995 the screens were 232. The national cinema network has been destroyed and this leads to an uneven territorial distribution of cinemas. This fact automatically denies access to 32% of the country's population. A strong concentration of screens starts with 60% of the screens in the country located in 8 cinemas and over 40% of the cinemas are in the capital of the country - Sofia. At 1000 sq.m. There are 0.72 cinemas in Bulgaria. This figure is among the lowest in Europe. For example, in Hungary which is a country of similar size and population, cinemas are 7.8 per 1000 sq.m (Tomova, 2007, p.17).

**Advertising of Bulgarian films abroad**

The advertising materials for the presentation of Bulgarian films in festivals outside the country include the poster of the film in English, the same as in Bulgarian, and an advertising brochure with annotation of the film, filmography of the director and the main actors and photos from the movie.
“Bulgarian cinematography” began publishing the magazine “Bulgarian films” in 1960. The magazine comes out eight times a year in English, Spanish, Russian and French, and is distributed in 80 countries. It succeeds in every edition to present the new faces among film actors, and with the development of Bulgarian National Television it productions are presented. On the cover must be chosen a poster from a current film, and on the back of the magazine - the most common photo of a popular actor (Kaleva, 2013). In the 70 years, Bulgarian films participate annually in 40 international festivals and the films are sold in 80 countries. In 1971, 20 Bulgarian feature films were sold (Vladimirov, 1976, p.6).

Nowadays Bulgarian films are regularly selected for different festivals and Bulgarian serials are sold in different territories throughout the world. The best-selling series is "Undercover" (2011) in 186 territories. The advertisement for each country is with a different accent depending on the assessment of the local director of the duo.

**Geographic and demographic factors for the Bulgarian film industry**

The geographical features of the Bulgarian film industry are expressed in the cinema venues and production factors. The places where people can go to the movies are only in the big cities, and most of them are in the capital Sofia. According to Staykov (2015), concerning cinema production, there is again a concentration in the capital. First, because there are many different locations such as restaurants, parks, shops, studios, mountains and others. Secondly, because the biggest cinema studio is in Sofia, namely New Boyana. Most of the film production is produced there. Also in the capital can be found any necessary infrastructure and enough people who can be included in the film as a team and extras (Staykov, 2015, p.37).
Demographics on the one hand are of the utmost importance. The volume of the movie market is determined by the population. As is also stated by Staykov (2005), according to the latest research conducted in 2011 and according to the National Statistical Institute the population of the Republic of Bulgaria is 7,364,570 people. Women were 3,777,999, or (51.3%). The males were 3,586,571 or (48.7%). These people form the volume of this market as the number of viewers, and the total number of tickets sold as monetary value form the volume of the market as money. The volume of the money market in 2013 is BGN 39.65 million, with an average ticket price of BGN 8.34, which makes 4,749,742 tickets sold (Staykov, 2015, p.37).
III. PREVIOUS RESEARCH

Bulgarian film production has the typical characteristics of European countries - small market, closed language community, an expression of a specific national outlook. The scale of the movie industry requires at least 60 million users to make a product to have a chance for commercial return, and the population of Bulgaria is only 7 million. The products of the Bulgarian film industry are not classically marketed subject, and as with other European cinematography, the state is called upon to seriously support the film industry (Tomova & Andreeva, 2008, p. 1).

Although so far there is no work whose main focus is the advertising strategies and practices in a Bulgarian feature film, the topic is present as a foreshadowing in various developments by Bulgarian scientists or creators concerning the nature of the film industry in Bulgaria (Staykov, 2015, p.13). In 1993, the first book was published to address the definition of cinema as an industry. This is the book "The Profession of Producer" by Ivan Popyordanov and Georgi Cholakov. The two authors aim to explain and structure the functions of the producer in the production team, the field of his responsibilities, and the types of relationships he has with other leading figures, such as director, screenwriter, and operator. Its role in the financial aspect in the process of creating a feature film is analyzed in detail (Popyordanov&Cholakov, 1993).

The majority of cinemagoers are young people, which makes social media a very good advertising tool. As can be seen in Table 2, Facebook advertising among young people is growing remarkably. According to a study, 39% of 18-24 year-olds visit Facebook weekly. This
is 4 times higher visiting rate than the visiting rate of 45-64 year olds, and 8 times higher of the user over the age of 65 (Millennials, 2010).

Table 2-Percent of age group visiting Facebook in a week (Millennials, 2010)

Learning the methods of advertising feature films can contribute to the creation of more films, because if more successful campaigns are made, more revenue and success will be realized, therefore it will be possible to make more films. For this reason, I believe that more researches and analysis are needed on the subject.

The first tool of advertising a movie that came up was the movie *poster*. Posters passing on a visual message, have been utilized for a few thousand years. Subsequently, posters are actually another promoting media. The Hammurabi law code is perhaps the most punctual poster known ever. It was recorded on a diorite stele, eight feet long (a stone), and contained twenty-one even sections above which seemed a bas-help of King Hammurabi and the Sun God who conveyed to him the laws of the Kingdom. This most punctual poster is dated somewhere close to 2067 and 2025 BC (Hillier, 1969, p.11).

Choosing a *date for the premiere* and the season during which a movie will be in theaters
is fundamental to how much viewers will be attracted to watch the movie. Researches and statistics show that going to the movies is increasing during the winter. Staykov (2015), also defines the choice of date for the release of the film in cinemas as quite decisive for the number of attracted viewers:

Not only in Bulgaria but also worldwide, watching cinema is highly seasonal. In the entertainment industry, as an element of the leisure industry, every entertainment competes with the rest. This competition is driven not only by the nature or cost of the entertainment but also by the season or the climatic conditions; increasing the length of the day, as well as the inevitable long stay indoors in the winter, increase people's desire to be outdoors. These simple climatic and behavioral causes make summer the worst movie season. An error in choosing a date for the premiere cannot be corrected; on the other hand, the commercially effective maximum stay of one title on the screen is eight weeks, that is, this time advance must be taken into account (Staykov, 2015, p. 29).

However, one of the most significant things about a movie advertising campaign is a good and attractive trailer. For the last 10 years, the Bulgarian film industry has definitely boasted extremely professional trailers. The trailer features footage and moments from the film that should not reveal too much but should attract attention and activate the desire of viewers to watch the movie. Whereas, the teaser of a movie is extremely short and gives almost no information (Katrandzhiev, 2008).

Nowadays, the trailer for a film starts airing in cinemas and on television a few months before the premiere of the film. According to Marich (2013), modern technologies and social
networks allow trailers to be shared by a large audience, and paid Internet advertising allows generating high traffic and focused on reaching the target audience (Marich, 2013, p.117).

**The effect of film promoting**

The effect of film promoting efforts has traditionally been construed from film industry figures (Johnson, 2008, p. 2). Be that as it may, since crusades have moved on the web, things have started to change. Conversation sheets, gatherings and networks have become a standard element of film establishment sites giving a space where fans can post messages and take an interest in trades about their common intrigue. Anyway it is contended that the most progressive part of these online life areas is that crowds leave 'hints' of themselves that stay long after the film showy discharge is finished (Mathieu et al., 2016, p. 295).

There is disagreement on the part of experts about how much fewer tickets sold is important for the film industry. On the one hand, experts argue that fewer tickets sold is not a threat to the film industry, arguing that the lagging economy is at the heart of consumption and reducing all consumer spending (Berglund, 2012). On the other hand, it is argued that when there is less viewing and less revenue from movies, this is particularly important and should not be overlooked (Dergarabedian, 2011).

Burnett et al., (2006) argue that advertising is not a complicated thing, quite the opposite. And the point is to get a message out to potential buyers and make a purchase. Fill et al., (2013) states that creativity is the main element of a successful advertising campaign. Del Saz-Rubio et al. (1998), argues that advertising is an extremely important and valuable communication tool
that can be very influential at the social level.

Before a film hits theaters, distributors and producers launch an advertising campaign with screenings of the film's trailer, as well as the creation of an official film site that contains basic information about the plot, actors and crew. The official premiere of a film is attended by the entire cast and crew. The success of a film from a financial point of view depends on many things such as advertising campaigns, ratings, genre, and the opinion of critics. What most often makes people go to see a movie is the participation of a certain movie star (Prag & Casavant, 1994)? Almost the entire advertising budget (about 90%) is used before the official premiere of the film. (Elberse & Anand, 2007). In the 1920s, people went to the movies every week, while in the 21st century, going to the movies is about 5 times a year (Pautz, 2002). The financial result of a film is extremely important, precisely because of this less frequent cinema attendance nowadays. This put producers and distributors under pressure and increased advertising budgets by 50% between 1999 and 2005 (Elberse & Anand, 2007). The effectiveness of high-budget advertising strategies remains in question (Dunnett & Hoek, 1996). This can work for some movies and not for others.

Social media and their use in film advertising campaigns enable production companies to make a two-way connection with potential audiences. The traditional expression of a film advertising campaign is the creation of trailers and billboards, which is one way method. The Internet and the opportunity to contact the audience from the very beginning of a film is a new and quite good opportunity to build an advertising campaign to engage potential viewers. Nowadays, word of mouth advertising is fast thanks to social media and modern ways of
communication and sharing (Business, 2011). Production companies that use social media to encourage followers to participate in various campaigns significantly change the viewer interest of a film (Elliott, 2011). The connection with the followers creates a commitment that makes them feel part of the experiences around the film.

**Film Marketing Tools**

The cinema industry is a leisure industry, an entertainment industry. The desire to watch a movie is a direct consequence of the need to watch a movie, i.e. it is the activator of taking action to satisfy a given dissatisfaction (Staykov, 2015, p. 18). To choose a film to watch people decide on the basis of information that gives them the film market in Bulgaria. Another important factor for the people is to be given access to cinemas to satisfy their willingness to watch a film. This turns out to be a big problem, peculiar in smaller settlements in country like Bulgaria.

The film advertises comprises of two fragments, to be specific a cinema showcase, and a film showcase. The fulfillment of movies to end clients is staged through creation, conveyance, and broadcasting to a wide crowd. The fundamental members in the film creation organize are significant film studios and autonomous movie producers as their primary objective are to deliver films that pull in light of a legitimate concern for the crowd (Staykov, 2015).

Promoting can be called controlled, recognizable influence using methods for mass communication. Advertisers clarify them in a roundabout way—through arts. The creative director, at that point, as opposed to the advertising specialist, composes the advertisement. Numerous promotions demonstrating items being appreciated in extravagant or captivating
settings (Nelson, 1973). The aim behind advertisement is to unite the entirety of the different components into one territory to accomplish an association that will impart a message inside a given background. The message might be passed on and even controlled via cautiously shuffling the visual components. These components are basically words, photos, delineations, and pictures, joined with a controlling power of the colours (Swan, 1987, p.11).

The reasons for commercials are: (1) to stand out to itself; (2) to enroll the watchers sympathy; (3) to show the watcher a methods for fulfilling a need or need through acquisition of the service or item. In the event that the promoting advocates a thought, the advertisement is intended to make a liking for that thought; (4) to persuade the watcher to make a purchase (5) to show the watcher how and where to purchase or to go in some particular direction (Nelson, 1973, p. 32). It is promptly obvious that the most ideal approach to elevate an ad is to deliberately create an art to convey the message to the target group.

Film marketing is any tactic, strategy and method used to inform the audience or to promote a film to a target audience at every stage - from the shooting of the film, through the movie premiere to the broadcast of the film on television or DVD release. The marketing campaign of a film usually starts months before the film premiere in cinemas, in order to reach potential viewers in time (Durie, Pham, & Watson, 2000, p. 5-6).

The marketing significance varies depending on the stage of a film, with the most financial resources, effort and time invested in the months and weeks before the official cinema premiere. The effectiveness of a marketing strategy determines whether or not to continue
advertising, depending on how successful it is to date. The advertising campaign has different tools during the different stages. They can be divided into four different categories: research, paid advertising, publicity, and promotion (Jowett & Linton, 1980, p. 58).

**Conducting a Market Research**

The first thing to start with before launching a marketing campaign and before making it creative is to do market research. These studies are made at the pre-production stage, even before the shooting of the film has begun and before the film itself is ready. Test screenings, creative testing, tracking surveys, and exit surveys are the four groups that we can determine are important for the preparation of the overall marketing strategy of a film (Marich, 2013, p.45).

The first thing that starts the research is the test screenings of the advertising campaign. Film distribution companies are starting to organize test screenings for films that are already ready, as well as for those that have not yet been completed. A screening is made of randomly selected volunteers or of those selected according to certain criteria, which aims to evaluate the film or certain elements of it.

This is extremely useful for distributors because it gives them an idea of what exactly the film can be reworked and which film elements the audience likes the most, as this is key to the success of the next stages of the film's marketing campaign.

After the test screenings comes the creative screenings, which are made on the basis of all analyzes and all the information collected from the previous phase. At the previous stage, the volunteers were presented with various materials related to the film's campaign, including trailers.
or teasers, posters, etc. In this way, the most effective advertising materials are selected to be included in the official advertising campaign of the film (Marich, 2013, p.44-45).

There are already ways to track mentions of the film on social media, on various websites or blogs. The time to do tracking surveys is again before the movie hits theaters. In this way, distributors can judge how active the campaign will be in the different weeks before the official premiere of the film (Marich, 2013, p.45).

Finally, there are exit surveys, which are made during the first weekend since the film hit theaters. Specific places to conduct the research have been chosen to analyze the reactions of viewers watching the film. This evaluates how much word of mouth advertising can be relied upon, also whether it will be positive or negative. During the exit surveys, the demographic characteristics of the audience are also monitored. Here comes the key moment for distributors to decide whether to continue spending money on advertising or keep it for the next project if they judge that this film will not succeed (Young, Gong, Van der Stede, Sandino, & Fei, 2008, p. 37).

**Paid advertising**

The next marketing tool is paid advertising, which includes all forms of paid advertising on television, radio, social media, publications in magazines and others. The purpose of all paid advertisements is to present the film through different channels and all film advertising elements must be related, just as a brand has a logo and slogan, and all advertising elements must have an identity and connectivity in order to be memorable and recognizable (Marich, 2013, p.9).

Movie trailers usually last less than 2 minutes and aim to present the story and the actors
through memorable and interesting scenes that will provoke the viewers to go and watch the movie. There is a trend that has been going on for a long time and the trailer appeared in theaters months before the release of the film itself. Shorter 30-second and / or 60-second trailers are also made, which are broadcast on television and on the Internet as the goal is to reach a specific audience (Moul, 2005, p.123-124). With the help of social networks and digital technologies, trailers can now be shared online, as well as sponsored advertisements for various marketing tools from the film's campaign. It can also use paid advertising on various video sharing sites such as YouTube (Marich, 2013, p.117).

Digital technologies allow a film ad materials to reach a specific audience and video content to be shared. And all this nowadays is exciting and interesting for users of social networks (Young et al, 2008, p.37). Between 5 and 20 percent of the entire advertising budget is invested in digital advertising from the marketing budget of a movie. The target demographics determine whether this percentage is higher or vice versa (Marich, 2013, p.118).

Billboards and outdoor advertisements are still widely used to promote movies. However, television remains the main advertising channel and partnerships with different TVs are always beneficial, despite the development of the Internet and the increased and facilitated use of mobile devices.

Publicity

The third marketing tool is publicity. It is expressed in the appearance of the film's director, famous actors and the team at various public events, interviews for magazines and
newspapers, guest appearances on television shows. This tool is considered the most economical, but at the same time it is unpredictable and the results of its effectiveness cannot be traced (Jowett & Linton, 1980, p. 58-59).

Film critics' reviews are also part of the publicity, but are more targeted at films that have a profile for participation in prestigious film festivals. However, if the reviews are not very good, film producers and distributors may limit their appearance during the advertising campaign. By default, the most active publicity increases a few weeks before the official premiere and release of the film in theaters (Marich, 2013, p.211).

**Promotion**

Word of mouth, product placement of different brands in the film and different partnerships are components of film promotion (Jowett & Linton, 1980, p.59). This method is beneficial for both parties. If there is a partnership with television, free advertising for producers and generation of interesting content for television is provided. As for partnerships with brands, this provides them with advertising among the film's viewers, and the producers receive additional funding or a barter deal to provide catering or clothing for the actors, for example.

**Advertising strategies**

The advertising strategies used by different companies are analyzed by Tafesse and Wien (2018). They are of several types:

- *Informational*: which provides information about a product or service;

- *Transformational*: in which the emphasis is on the psychological characteristics
manifested by a given brand;

-Interactional: This aims to develop the social channels of a brand and to develop strategies for developing customer relationships (Tafesse and Wien, 2018).

Kusumasondjaja (2018), concluded that an informative message would be less open than interactive publications of a brand. Facebook gives better results when posting interactive things, while Twitter is more suitable for purely informative purposes. Instagram, on the other hand, is suitable for both - information and interactive posts (Kusumasondjaja 2018).

The development of social media and technological advances make consumer opinions very powerful and reach many people instantly. More and more research is focusing on the impact of eWOM communication as well as user engagement. The image of the brand (Seo and Park, 2018), the engagement of the brand (Algharabat et al., 2018) and the congruence of own brand image (Islam et al., 2018) are among the factors that have the greatest impact on consumers. And what motivates them the most to share on social media are the things that bring them satisfaction and raise their self-esteem (Kim and Jang 2019).

As we can see from the figure below, Bulgaria is one of the three countries in Europe which had the highest growth from 2014 to 2018. This fact make this research even more relevant and useful because it can be helpful to explore more in this field which is the main focus of this work.
Figure 1: Audio-visual Market Growth in Countries from 2014-2018.

IV. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The Bulgarian film market is very small and a large number of films fail to attract enough audience interest. Government funding is limited, and many producers resort to private funding through product placement and advertising of various brands in order to make a film. Neither type of funding guarantees the success of a film. What is essential, whether a film will reach its target audience is largely due to the advertising strategy of the film. And of course, word of mouth advertising is important in today's digital era, as sharing information and opinions has never been easier. Moreover, the good word of mouth is possible only if the qualities of the film meet the criteria of the audience.

To investigate this problem, I identified the following problem statement, objective, and research questions:

Problem: Large numbers of films fail to attract enough audience interest.

Objective: To analyze the advertising strategies of successful Bulgarian films and what techniques have been used to attract the target audience in visual representation and in general.

Research questions:

- What advertising strategies are used to promote Bulgarian feature films?
- What visual representation is present in the Bulgarian feature film posters?

Since word-of-mouth advertising has a great influence on the ratings of a film, and in this study we will look at the advertising techniques of only successful films that have attracted a
large number of viewers, I think it is appropriate to use Consumer's Value Theory in order to answer the research question and why certain advertising techniques gave a good result. Moreover, marketing is any type of media used to tell people regarding anything significant, with the goal of persuading them to do something or purchase a specific item. The concept "Movie Poster" refers to a type of marketing medium. The film poster is still an extremely essential component of film promotion. A film poster's goal is to pique public's curiosity in a film, and it's also a successful technique to disseminate a film in a broader range of areas. A movie poster may also provide us with crucial knowledge about the film's production background.

The objective of film posters is to serve as a main way of not only alerting the wider populace to future films, but also of drawing a large audience via the clever combination of many language and graphic modalities. As a result, study that recognizes the multimodal character of films is critical. When used as a type of multimodal presentation, film posters intended for displaying purportedly noteworthy films on giant screens or commercial banners can provide additional knowledge about how film companies sell their films. A research conducted in the multimodality of animated film posters related to an apt representation of the themes of the Oscar nominated Hollywood films (Iftikhar, Shahnaz, & Masroor, 2019). To understand the visual analysis of Bulgarian feature films, I will also utilize the theory of Visual Semiotics, Visual Rhetoric theory, and Visual Communication to identify the impact of the film posters on its sale. As only a few Bulgarian films are released in cinemas a year, there is no way to conduct interviews or surveys with the viewers after watching the film. In the present study, we will analyze successful films from different years after 2010.
Consumer’s value theory

What makes a product meaningful is the consumer's assessment of quality and value. What leads production and investment decisions is the consumer’s value. Both the environment and consumer preferences and perceptions are changing, making this value volatile (Hassan, 2012). The theory of consumer value emphasizes on value of consumption which explains that why consumers choose to buy or not to buy a product (Smith & Colgate, 2007). Moreover, the theory explains the priority of choosing a product, brand or a service over another. Most people who go to the movies do not do it alone, but with other people and we can divide it into groups. In this way, the preferences of each individual and each group are balanced. We can define the behavior of individuals who go to the movies as broad. According to Chuo (2002), the audience has different variations of change in experience and preferences about innovations (Chuo, 2002).

The motivation of a consumer to visit the cinema is the first difference in the preferences of the audience. It can be for work or pleasure, with family or friends. However, the film product is more of a means of entertainment and pleasure than a work venture. The age and gender of consumers, the frequency of visits to cinemas and the number of people we visit it with can divide the cinema market into more homogeneous groups. The value of time is extremely important for consumers, as well as keeping up with the latest movies. The Internet makes information easily accessible, which in turn makes viewers more impatient. According Holbrook (1999), the consumer’s value is interactive relativistic preference (Holbrook, 1999).

The value of the distance to reach the cinema is also an important element. The greater the distance from the home of the cinema user, the higher the value and the lower the probability
that the consumer will attend. This factor is important to consider when designing a marketing strategy, as it plays an important role in the usefulness of the consumer of the product.

**Consumer Value and Motion Picture Industry**

Theories regarding the production of the experiential value for the media consumers are not much. Moreover, a sufficient amount of literature in the field of experiential marketing in relation to customer value has emerged over time but has not been common for screen practices (Vladica & Davis, 2009). According to Zwick & Dholakia (2004), the media organization and production houses have moved from reliance to intuitive understanding of the audience in connection with feedback development system as compared to the rationalized measurement practices as the advertising-supported broadcast has emerged as well as the consumption culture in the West.

Moreover, the conceptualization of the audience and the creation of images of audiences are also becoming very complex as media consumption is being transferred to a broadband medium (Puustinen, 2006). Exceptionally interceded, interactive conditions are prompting sharp expansions in media consumption, undeniable degrees of personalization, multiplication of involvement sections, and the approach of cross-stage "fluid media". The roles of consumers, spectators, users, and player combinations over social media tend to use it in a multidimensional way (Napoli, 2008). Media consumption over intuitive networks is prompting such enormous conditional data sets and information serious social developments of audiences and markets that have effectively gotten comfortable to firms in retailing, financial services, and various other areas (Korkman, 2006), allowing exact emphasis on advertisements and progressively pertinent
Moreover, the film or the motion picture industry is unique as compared to other media industries due to its viewership and various business models. Here, the interactivity is insignificant and the advertisements are also not as revenue-generating as its principal objective source i.e. the motion picture itself and the viewership associated with it (Martins, 2008). The business model of Hollywood needs returns on high production costs incurred in the production of blockbuster movies. This can only be done by putting up-front theatrical admission fee, distribution, merchandising, and brand extension associated with the movie (Korkman, 2006).

Market research in movie viewers took off in Hollywood during the 1940s. It has principally developed in three ways: conducting idea testing via focus groups before releasing the film, crowd profiling dependent on box office information, and examination of the components that influence consumers' decision to see specific movies or favor different sorts of genres.

**Word Of Mouth**

The audience is the core factor when addressing word-of-mouth element in marketing. In general, it is the act of relating information from one person to another. In the field on film marketing, word of mouth relies heavily on the film reviews. Studying film reviews at the time of release and relating to its popularity. The word of mouth, can be divided into two factors, volume and valence. The volume is the amount of interaction that the film have received at the time of its release through word of mouth. Valence is the nature of the interaction that was involved in word of mouth (Moore, 2015). One of the findings shows that volume aspect of word of mouth is one of the major predictor of the revenue when it comes to the theatrical release of a film (Roschk & Große’s, 2013).
Electronic word of mouth can happen in different ways through the internet. Many of the
social media websites are a major factor in communicating electronic word of mouth. These social
media website include, Facebook, YouTube, Twitter and the different types of reviews forums
(Hausmann, 2012). The ability of the electronic word of mouth to diffuse information in real-time have
enables the film industry to use these platforms to spread information to millions of people and use it as
a reliable marketing strategy (Kim et al., 2014).

**Visual Semiotic Theory**

Semiotics is seen as a parallel subject to Cognitive Science, and the two are more inclined to
collide because they both examine communication interactions. Charles S. Peirce and Ferdinand de
Saussure, the pioneers of the two major semiotic disciplines, established their "theories of the sign" in
conjunction, but separately, near the late nineteenth century. Nonverbal style, in its more traditional
meaning, should be recognized as one of the aspects of speech. The name "semiotics" is derived
contextually from the Greek term "semeion," which meaning "sign." As a result, -Semiotic- is often
described in layman's terms as -the studying of signs.- Any physical motion, marking, gesture, or
symbol, for example that displays any message, instruction, emotion, or sentiment is referred to as a
sign. It is used to depict human ideas, sentiments, and communications (Aiello, 2020).

Visual Semiotics is regarded as not only a sub-field within the Semiotic Science but a
methodology and a theoretical framework (Aiello, 2020). This framework have been adopted by
multiple fields including media and communication. As a result, visual semiotics has evolved in ways
that go beyond classical discourse analysis (Aiello, 2020).
Rhetoric now includes the unique subject of study known as "visual rhetoric," which is the research of visual images. Rhetoric is the science of symbolism (signs) employed to persuade and convey. The modern name for "Rhetoric" is "communications." People regularly interact using both spoken and non-verbal ways. In today's era of digital science and communications, most interaction is portrayed by visual image providers such as advertising, graphic designers, image-makers, and cinema; all of them utilize pictures and signals to create a powerful meaning-making operation (Iftikhar, Shahnaz, & Masroor, 2019).

The term "visual rhetoric," which underpins the science of "Rhetoric," has two meanings. In one aspect, visual rhetoric is an artifact created by humans as they build dialogue by exclusively employing visual symbols. The second meaning for visual rhetoric is that it is the viewpoint of academics who place focus on the symbolic mechanism through which pictures serve as a form of communication. Visual rhetoric is used as the art's communication topic. It is expected that the representational (sign) functions of the visual image will fulfill communication functions in order for it to operate as an artifact of visual rhetoric (Smith et al., 2011). The picture should engage with its viewers through the perception sign-processes portrayed in the digital representation. Both visual semiotics and visual rhetoric are concerned with the analysis of visual signals and symbols that have a communication purpose.

**Visual Communication**

Communication is described as the act of transmitting ideas, information, concepts, or sentiments from one location, individual, or community to another by voice, signs, text, or behavior
The language that individuals use to speak with one another is the most essential ability in the phenomena of communication. Numerous distinct languages are spoken in various parts of the world. When these multiple languages communicate with each other, there may be limits. Even while visual communication has a more restricted lexicon, it is far more egalitarian and united since it is worldwide (Günay, 2021).

Information created through visual communication, as opposed to auditory system communication, have a greater capacity to preserve their longevity and efficacy. Communication encompasses all types of informational exchanges and interpersonal interactions. When this conversation is carried out with images, it is referred to as visual communication. Our vocabulary of speaking enables us to engage with others, or interact (Günay, 2021). Unfortunately, because there are so many languages prevalent across the world, the communication options given by our own tongue are restricted.

Visual communication is the sharing of ideas between individuals using images rather than words. The evolution of vision prior to language has served as the foundation for conversation. Among the methods of communication are visual, auditory, and behavioral interaction paradigms (Günay, 2021). These approaches have enabled people to vocally and nonverbally express the facts they require throughout their lives' communication periods. People have influenced and diversified environmental circumstances, culture, and modes of expression across time.
V. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The attendance of cinemas in Central and Eastern Europe has improved in recent years, and Bulgarian cinema is part of this revival, and for this reason, it is important to study. Most European countries had a significant decrease in cinema attendance in 2013 and 2014, according to data from the European Audiovisual Observatory. In Bulgaria, however, there was an increase in movie theaters in 2013 from 4.1 to 4.79 million. It is important to analyze the increased attendance of Bulgarian cinemas as this could be of benefit to other European markets. Probably the increased interest in cinema in Bulgaria is due to the great media support that is being given to Bulgarian cinema productions. Interesting and engaging advertising strategies for attracting the audience also have a favorable effect on the cinema in Bulgaria (Nedyalkova, 2015).

What advertising strategies are used to promote Bulgarian feature films? To further elaborate another, what visual representation has the Bulgarian Film added to attract the audience? These are the research questions and the answer to these questions is the purpose of this thesis. The thesis traces what were and are today the methods of advertising and distribution of feature films in Bulgaria. There is an extremely limited number of studies on Bulgarian cinema and most of them are focused only on the aesthetic features of a film rather than on production and distribution, nor is the socio-economic and industrial aspect of national cinema taken into account.

Additionally, there are several international studies that are more focused on promoting films on social media only. I think it's good to discuss the whole advertising campaign for a
movie. From the visual representation as the mean of communication in the film’s poster, to the social media advertisement of the feature films. According to Fill et al. (2013), many advertising campaigns fail in proficiently send the right information to the target audience. And choosing the wrong advertising channel is at the root of this failure (Fill et al., 2013). For this reason, it is very important to analyze all the means by which a film is promoted in order to try and analyze which are the best and most audience-sensitive channels.

There is a serious shortage of research on Bulgarian cinema and in particular the advertising of the film product. There is a lack of thorough and comprehensive analysis and publications in which the promoting side of the Bulgarian feature film can be reasonably defined and studied. This is not to say that the topic is unsubstantiated in importance, but so far it is always present in addition to other aspects of the film industry (Tomova, Andreeva, 2008, p. 27). It is a definite fact that after 2010, both in terms of quantity and quality, Bulgarian feature films are growing significantly. The reasoning behind this thesis not only rests with box office leaders like — Mission London, but with the presence of enough other titles that remain at the foot of the top in market performance but in turn form a wave in Bulgarian new cinema, which is quite optimistic (Staykov, 2015, p. 8).

Moreover, the study in this thesis aims to reflect an overall view of the marketing strategy employed by these successful Bulgarian films to provide a holistic perspective on the success of a film. Since media and communication is important, the visual representation provided in these films are as much important to identify the popularity of these films.
Additionally, the research questions provide an understanding of not only Bulgarian film’s box office revenues in terms of visual semiotic theory (multimodal analysis) but also an overall view of the impact that this theory have on film posters in general. A research design elaborated on the effect that visual representation of posters have on the visual genres. The research also provided effective method of applying visual semiotic to identify movie posters in terms of images, sounds, and colors (Linh, 2021). Another research showed that method of visual semiotics have provided interesting data when it comes to posters of films that did well on box office. The study predicted that film that did well in box office were more colorful than those that had negative impact (Zhou, Zhang, & Yi, 2017). Thus, the research questions used in this thesis discusses the Bulgarian film posters in similar context in order to find relevance in its impact on box office revenues as similar research have impacted posters of international films.
VI. METHODOLOGY

Methods

This research is qualitative and an interpretative study that will analyze the advertising strategies in the Bulgarian film industry. The present thesis uses visual analysis. Methodically speaking, it uses visual semiotics theory and relate it to the consumer's value theory to analyze the film posters and the impact it had on the gaining attraction in the target audience.

The purpose of visual analysis is to track how, through movies, certain messages reach viewers. Analysis of movie messages benefits from qualitative methodologies because of the visual characteristics of the film's works and the cultural connection of the content (Benshoff, 2016). Visual analysis was chosen to be appropriate for this study because of the visual kind of the films and also most of the used advertising methods in cinema rely on posters, trailers, banners, and so on - purely visual aids. The success of an advertising campaign and a movie is still reflected in the financial results achieved. Although the exact financial profits of most films, as well as the exact number of viewers, is not entirely public information. Most movie theaters refuse to provide any more detailed information as it is confidential.

As the primary data, qualitative visual analysis give a verbal account of individual actions and interests based on a significant sample (Jasmine, 2020). It was appropriate for the study since it covered the examination of film posters. Thus, when examining people's perception of anything, the qualitative technique is typically preferable since it allows the subject to describe how they comprehend the material (Jasmine, 2020). Nonetheless, a qualitative approach was appropriate for this research because the researcher selected numerous samples of the feature
Visual analysis is done on all posters of the five films by analyzing what components were used - font, actors, colors, and what is the overall feeling. Since we do not have information who exactly are the creators of the posters themselves and there is no way to be familiar with their other works, in this case we analyze only what visual features the posters have. The research will look into the text (verbal signs) and the characters and background (non-verbal signs) to draw an analysis on the film posters. Through this analysis, a comparison could be found between the posters that were chosen and the part that the posters played in making the film a success.

Additionally, the communication through media will also be discussed. This will provide a detail on the overall success of the film and the effort that the film-makers deployed through different media to promote the film.

- Kaleva (2013), kino.dir.bg, cinefish.bg, nova.bg. This gives us information about the tickets sold, the financial return of the film and the advertising methods used to promote the films that are the subject of research in this thesis.

**Empirical Procedure**

This thesis will discuss the films "Mission London" (2010), "Love.net" (2011), "Tilt" (2011),"Living Legends" (2014) and "Attraction" (2018). The criteria that the films must meet in order to serve this study are:

- The films must be Bulgarian. - Since we are looking at advertising in the Bulgarian
cinema industry it is essential that the films to be Bulgarian, that is, they are made by Bulgarian cinema filmmakers and that at least 70 percent of the film is shot on the territory of the country.

- **Movies should be a feature.** - Another important criterion is that films are feature films since we are mainly looking at the success of cinema distribution. Series, documentaries, etc. are television formats and will not be covered in this thesis.

- **The films must have attracted a lot of viewers’ interest.** - I will analyze the successful advertising campaigns and the movies that have achieved the best financial results for the different years. This is important because the success of a movie is mainly about how much the audience is attracted and what kind of financial return we get. Because good financial results will help to make more and more movies. And of course, we should not forget that, in addition to art, cinema is also a business.

- **Movies should be made after 2010.** - It is clear from the history of Bulgarian cinema that contemporary successes and greater results in the industry start after 2010 and therefore only successful Bulgarian feature films made since 2010 will be analyzed. In addition, it is important to analyze contemporary advertising methods, which have changed a lot because of the advancement of technology, and that is why it is important for films to be produced sooner.

These are the four selection criteria and the five films listed above meet all. These films encompasses a wide range of genre which will further help this study by providing a generality between
different types of films in Bulgaria.

My research benefits from the archival work conducted by the scholar Kaleva, as well as from use of online primary sources. Kaleva is a scientist at the National Film and Theater Academy in Sofia, Bulgaria. She has held meetings with the producers of various films and in her work has presented a lot of statistical information about the advertising campaigns of some of the most successful Bulgarian feature films. In her work, Kaleva has collected many archival materials from the National Film Center, the National Film Library, and the National Library and has also conducted personal interviews with the producers and advertising managers of the films "Mission London", "Love.net", and "TILT".

This information is valid and will be presented and used for analysis in this thesis. Systematized information from Kaleva (2013), on how the campaigns went and how many viewers they attracted will be presented and used to analyze the overall performance of the film. The Bulgarian film statistics websites kino.dir.bg and cinefish.bg are used for box office and plot information. Some reliable media like nova.bg and ikarpress.bg are also used for the same purpose. The international website imdb.com is used again for box office details, premiere date and plot information. The video platform youtube.com is used to watch the trailers and other video materials which are uploaded and are related to the movies analyzed in this research, and for screenshots of the product placement. The primary online data are the posters and other photos like the films DVDs which are found in the internet. The secondary data used in this thesis is the information shared on websites and the archival work conducted by the scholar Kaleva. I use detailed information by Kaleva (2013) for three of the movies – Mission London,
The secondary data for the other two movies is collected from website sources. I have utilized this data in order to make analysis of the advertising campaigns as there is not enough public information from various institutions and previous studies that I can analyze. All the information collected from the mentioned websites, from the scientist Kaleva and the collected photos will be presented in the results section. The collected data will then be analyzed. I chose to use information from Kaleva's work, because I cannot collect a primary data on this topic, unless there are personal meetings and discussions with the producers of the various films. This could not be done at this stage given the epidemiological situation in the world around Covid-19. In addition, most cinemas are reluctant to share details about advertising campaigns and revenue, as they believe this is confidential information. Therefore, I decided to use the secondary information from Kaleva, who conducted interviews with the producers of 3 of the analyzed films and I consider this worthy and useful for the purposes of this thesis.

Study limitations

Due to the word limit in the current thesis and the defined structure, some limitations have arisen. The analysis of advertising campaigns and strategies in such a small number of films cannot lead to broad conclusions and more significant discoveries.

The main limitations are also the insufficient statistical base provided by the National Statistical Institute, the Executive Agency National Film Center, the Ministry of Culture and other institutions for the film industry in Bulgaria. There is a lack of publicity of part of the registers which would be of great benefit to researchers and analysts of cultural processes in the
country (Staykov, 2015). Another limitation with regard to statistical information is the refusal of distribution companies and operators of venues to provide information for the purposes of the survey on the number of tickets sold for Bulgarian feature films on the grounds that this is confidential commercial information. All this leads to less depth and accuracy of some of the analysis.

Other limitation of this study is the use of secondary data. The information gathered through secondary sources may not be as credible as when gathered legitimately from the source. This is a typical hindrance with online sources because of an absence of administrative bodies to screen the sort of substance that is being shared. There is also very little relevant information from Bulgarian and international sources on the topic and this is definitely quite limiting for the whole study. However, I think such studies are of great benefit as there are many countries around the world with the same problems in culture and cinema as in Bulgaria. Despite the small list of films that have been analyzed, this is an interesting and good start for follow-up studies to include more films and more detailed results.

Additionally, another limitation is based on the fact that the study is theoretical in its approach and does not properly addresses the audience impact on the advertising strategies. Consumer’s feedback is extremely important and in this type of research, the audience is a key source of profit for the film. Moreover, the films that are chosen are the ones that made good revenue on the cinema. There should also be a comparison with the films that did poorly in Bulgarian cinemas and contrast the different technique that both these films utilized.
The visual analysis of the films chosen in this thesis should also be compared to the international films. This way a more broader and general perspective could be derived from the research on the impact of visuals on the profits of the films. Since there is a focus on the visual analysis, other films national and international with similar genre and feelings should have been discussed. The research as of now is only a brief understanding of the elements that were used in the visual aspect of the posters. As such, this study can only be used as a starting point in analyzing the data through the perspective of media and communication.
VII. ETHICAL APPROACH

Visual analyses is applied to different methodologies. Movies, portraits, photos, videos, ads, illustrations, and more carry visual information (Clark, 2006; Prosser and Loxley, 2008). Some moral issues appear and the main can be considered as:

- Analysts should take care to protect the rights and reputation of those who are investigated;
- When it is necessary the research should be guided on deliberate informed consent;
- The data must be processed correctly and in accordance with the rights of the analyzed;
- The privacy should be guaranteed if a distribution of the potential re-utilization of information.

In qualitative research ethics, one must also consider the impact of the current research as a whole. This include the fact that the research is useful in its content when it comes to benefiting the area of the research (Roth, & von Unger, 2018). On this ethical assumption, the thesis focuses on the visual analysis of different Bulgarian films as a way to analyze the different visual strategies when comes to these films. There are not many articles that relate to Bulgarian films in this manner and as such the research will provide a better understanding on the success of the films in Bulgaria and internationally.

Additionally, marketing researches regards visual representation as a mean to understand the information provided in the images (Borgerson, & Schroeder, 2002). For this reason, visual representation should be handled properly in order to provide a clear understanding of the image.
that is being portrayed to the audience and should not have biasness of the researcher. The research should be objective and practical and must not only be a representational analysis of what the author portray the images as.

These issues raised by visual research are important to all researchers. These are also the ethics I tried to follow in this research paper.

In this thesis, I have used photos of posters of various films, as well as photos of DVDs, footage from the films and other photographic materials that are published on the pages of social media and film websites. The source from which the photo was taken must be marked below each photo. The photos have not been altered or blurred, they have not been corrected in any way, but they have been used exactly as they were published in the official channels by the production team of the film companies. A secondary data is also used in the current paper in the Results and Analysis section. I presented and analyzed the data correctly and in accordance with the rights of the analyzed. All the collected secondary data as well as the used images are freely available on the Internet. According to Prasad (2013) in the event that the information is openly accessible on the Internet, books or other open gathering, consent for additional utilization and examination is suggested. Be that as it may, the responsibility for unique information must be recognized. On the off chance that the examination is a piece of another exploration venture and the information isn't uninhibitedly accessible, but to the first research group, express, composed authorization for the utilization of the information must be acquired from the examination group and remembered for the application for moral freedom (Prasad, 2013).
VIII. FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

1. Results

Advertising campaign of the movie "Mission London"

![Poster of the movie "Mission London",](https://www.imdb.com/title/tt1127702/)

*Image 1: Poster of the movie "Mission London",


*Director:* Dimitar Mitovski

*Writers:* Alec Popov, Delyana Maneva, Dimitar Mitovski


*Producers:* Dimitar Mitovski, Ivan Doikov Producer: SIA Advertising
Co-producers: Fidelity Films, Cinematrix Film, Premiere Picture, Dream Factory Macedonia

Released: 04/16/2010

Duration: 104 min.

Category: C - not recommended for children under 12.

Distributor: A plusFilms

Budget: 2 730 000 BGN

Visual Aspect and Verbal Aspect

The verbal sign in the posters consist of the masthead that depicts the tagline. From this tagline one can determine that the film, Mission London is a comedy that revolves around mistakes. This tag line is necessary in providing a simple understanding of the plot of the film and the center genre of the film. Moreover, humor is one of the factor that is effective in persuasion of target audience (Usman, 2013). The title of the film is represented at the bottom of the characters. The text is represented in the capital letter and attracts the most attention. The title is simple and easy to remember. Then at the bottom of the title the name of the director is written, Dimitar Mitovski. Of course, when going to the cinema many individuals are fans of the directors and highlighting the name of the director provides a positive marketing strategy.

The poster for the movie "Mission London" is extremely attractive. The most interesting characters that can attract attention are included, as well as in the trailer. The background is a drawing in the gray range, and the title is made in red and stands out well without being
intrusive. The poster is memorable and the other printed materials and billboards are made in the same style as can be seen in Images 2 and 3. The background of the poster has famous landmarks of London such as Big Ben and London Bridge which shows the plot being based in London and explaining the viewers who cannot understand the Bulgarian Language. The background is also connected directly to the plot as it provides a non-verbal reference to the plot of the movie. The Alan Ford, who is depicted at the front center in the poster provided an international and popular face to the film’s image.

The three women depicted in the posters all have vibrant clothes and their clothes shows the different part they play in the film. The clothes of the actress that is portraying the queen is visibly dressed as the Queen of England and is very noticeable. Additionally, there are duck feathers portrayed in the posters as well. These feathers reflect the humorous tone of the film which relates to one of the character holding a clever in the poster. Overall, the costumes in the posters are reflective of the profession of each of the actors.

*Communication through Media*

The movie —Mission London is one of the most-watched Bulgarian films in the last 20 years. The total number of viewers who watched the film is 376,209 people. Revenues amounted to BGN 2,601,893 and were achieved in 19 weeks. At the same time, films such as "Troy", "300", "Clash of the Titans" were running in theaters, and Mission London managed to gain more viewership in the country than they do (Kaleva, 2013).

Director James Cameron's —Avatar— film, in 10 days attracts 130,770 people
across Bulgarian cinemas. —Mission London— attracts 142,833 viewers in 10 days and became an absolute record holder in the box office of Bulgaria for all time. The film stars British actor Alan Ford, known from the films of director Guy Ritchie, and American Thomas Arana, known by —Gladiator— and —L.A. Confidential—. This allowed the film to be widely advertised through these two personalities.

The movie —Mission London is an eccentric comedy and is thus promoted in the advertising campaign. A Facebook campaign is also launching at that time. The official ad campaign begins in March 2010 with screenings of the movie trailer in 50 cinemas nationwide. Apart from the main poster of the film, separate posters were made of some of the central characters in the comedy. Especially for posters and outdoor advertising, which also includes billboards, a special photoshoot was taken. The teaser for the movie was released before each screening of the movie. —Avatar in mid-December 2009, launching a preliminary ad campaign (Kaleva, 2013). This was a significant move by the producers, which guaranteed a large number of viewers to see the tease.

The official partner of the film production is BTV television, which broadcasts the trailer, news reports about the film novelties, and the film cast and crew take part in the TV shows. — Mission London also receives media support from Radio FM +, OK! And Capital Light magazines, Weekend, and dnes.bg and cinefish.bg websites. After the film's release, the advertising campaign continues with information in news feeds on viewership, interviews with crew members, and articles about interesting facts about the production.

However, what keeps the movie on the screen and makes it a hit among viewers is the word of mouth advertising. In September 2010 is the television premiere of — Mission London on BTV. The film attracts around 1 million viewers and becomes an absolute hit on the Bulgarian television prime time (Antonova, 2010).

At the end of October 2010, the film came out on DVD and begins to spread. "Mission London", however, did not manage to be sold to foreign distributors, although it was presented on the market during the Cannes Film Festival and the Moscow International Festival that year (Kaleva, 2013).
The marketing and advertising campaign of the movie "Mission London" launched the independence of Bulgarian cinema and the search for alternative sources of financing. Previously, Bulgarian films were mostly made with state money on competition, and advertising campaigns and media partnership, except with the state television was not a practice.
Advertising campaign of the movie "Love.net"


*Director:* Ilian Dzhevelekov

*Writers:* Nelly Dimitrova, Ilian Djevelekov, Matei Konstantinov

*Cast:* Zahari Baharov, Hristo Shopov, Lilia Maravilla, Dilyana Popova, Koyna Ruseva, Diana Dobreva, Vladimir Penev, John Lawton and others.

*Producers:* Matei Konstantinov, Georgi Dimitrov, Ilian Djevelekov

*Producer:* Miramar Film

*Co-Producer:* New Television

*Premiere:* 04/01/2011

*Duration:* 109 min.

Category: C - not recommended for children under 12
Distributor: Alexandra Films

Budget: BGN 1,972,000

**Visual and Verbal Aspect**

The poster for the film "Love.net"— was created in order to promote the film in cinemas. Visually, the poster looked well organized, has a photo of two of the main actors and creatively depicts the title. Included are the festivals in which the film is selected as presented at the top. Everything looks professional from the font to the colors. The poster fits into the advertising campaign and is as attractive as the "Mission London"— movie. The color theme which is red depicts the romantic nature of the movie and gives a brilliant eye-catching look to the movie poster. Red is a striking color and giving the poster a red theme will immediately catch the eye of anyone who come across the poster.

Since the film revolve around the theme of digital connection, the main title is also created to emphasize the main highlight of the whole plot, internet. The two main characters also provide value to the sensual and romantic nature of the film. At the bottom the name of the producer, Miramar film in capital letters. Miramar films are an advertising and film production house located in Sofia, Bulgaria. The focus on the production company provides the audience with the fact that Miramar films played an important part in the production and release of the film. There are also the name of the director and the cast written on the poster providing audience more detail information about them.

From the front image of the characters one can immediately determine that they are
romantically involve. The woman in the poster is looking away from the camera into the distance while the male character is directly looking into the camera. This places a feeling of mystery in the poster that is connected to the plot of the film. The background in the poster is blurred putting the actors at front and center. The actors are also dressed in fancy clothes giving an insight of a date.

**Communication through Media**

"Love.net" attracted 210,000 spectators in cinemas. In the paid Internet platform for Bulgarian cinema, netcinema.bg is viewed by 10,000 people. In March 2012 was the television premiere of the film on New Television and was viewed by 750,000 spectators. For the first three days of its spread attracts 22,382 spectators and earns BGN 189 729. "Love.net" is more viewed in Bulgarian cinemas than the movie "The Tourist" with Angelina Jolie and Johnny Depp, "The King's Speech" and "The Black Swan" (Kaleva, 2013).

In February 2011 begins the active advertising campaign of the film and is made entirely by the team of "Miramar film". The producers decided to take up the advertising campaign without hiring PR and advertising agency because they have great experience in advertising. The target group chosen by the producers is quite wide-from 17-year-olds to 60 years old(Kaleva, 2013). Until the 17-year-old film reached through the story of love in the net, but to attract 60-year-olds was chosen the famous vocalist of "Uriah Heep" John Lawton, who played himself in the film.

At the end of 2007 began cooperation with the dating site elmaz.bg. The administrator announces to its users the launch of the preparation for the feature film "Love.net" with the
message "Let’s make this film together...". For two months each participant in the site has the opportunity to send a brief description of the most interesting story he has experienced on the Internet. 7,346 stories were received by the end of January 2008 and the profile of "Love.net" registered over 50,000 visits and led to the rating charts of the site (Kaleva, 2013).

The one-minute teaser for the movie was released in 80 movie screens back in July 2010. The trailer was released during the Christmas Holiday. The movie's website launches one month before the premiere. New TV does not broadcast the full trailer of the movie, which features naked scenes. However, the uncensored version of the movie page goes on the Facebook page and paid advertisements. The radio stations BG radio, Radio City, Veronica, Rock radio, and Darik run regular adverts for the movie. On the television show "Coffee Time with Gala", which airs every weekday morning, the "Love Games" contest begins with a prize trip to Verona and Venice. 100,000 flyers were printed to announce the game, in which anyone registered on the film's Facebook page has a chance to win one of the 200 Sony cameras. The Bulgarian email platform abv.bg started to send newsletters about the movie to the online users (Kaleva, 2013).
Source: https://www.kinoarena.com/bg/movie/love-net in March 2020

The premiere of “Love.net” was attended by the Prime Minister of Bulgaria - Boyko Borisov, who for the first time accepted to be at such an event, although he had previously been invited by other Bulgarian producers. His presence is a good publicity stunt for the movie because the newspapers cover the event with lots of photos and news. It also give the unique aspect to the marketing strategy that attracts target audience (Usman, 2013).

The movie “Love.net” won the award for director’s debut, screenplay and female lead role. The Bulgarian Film Academy also awarded it for directing, cinematography, set design and editing. The Paris Southeast European Film Festival honors the actor Hristo Shopov. The film has also been selected in the official competition programs of the Bahamas, Romania and Cyprus at international film festivals. —Love.net was released on DVD in March 2012, and before that, in November 2011 it was uploaded to the first Bulgarian paid cinema platform netcinema.bg (Kaleva, 2013). The advertising of the film was quite large-scale and versatile, which ultimately turns out to be profitable and the film achieves significant results.

Image 7: “Love.net” DVD cover,

Source: https://www.facebook.com/Love.NET/ in March 2020
Advertising campaign of the movie "Tilt"

Image 8: Poster of the movie “Tilt”,


**Director:** Viktor Chuchkov

**Writers:** Borislav Chuchkov, Victor Chuchkov

**Cast:** Yavor Baharov, Radina Kardzhilova, Georgi Staykov, Hovhannes Torosyan, Alexander Sano and others.

**Producer:** Chuchkov Brothers

**Co-Producer:** Ostlicht filmproduktion

**Premiere:** 02/11/2011

**Duration:** 94 min.

**Category:** C - not recommended for children under 12.

**Distributor:** A plus Films

**Budget:** BGN 2,329,540
Visual and Verbal Aspect

The poster of the film "Tilt" again depicts the main characters in the film and, as with "Love.net", the festivals at which the film was selected are included. Everything looks professional and well done for the overall attractive look of the poster. The actors and protagonists in the movie appear on the poster which gives it a comprehensive and a blockbuster look. The name of the director is written in white at the bottom. This is important in promoting a film through posters as there are many audience members who place emphasis on their favorite director. Further, the color theme used for the movie is based on dark and metallic hues which explain the adventurous yet thrilling nature of the movie plot. The blue undertones in the poster also represent imagination and inspiration which is related to the plot of the film.

The head mast provides names of all the characters that are crucial to the film‘s plot. This provides the audience with the understanding of whom to aspect in the film attracting actor‘s fans. The bottom of the poster provides reviews for the film that help the audience know what to aspect from it. The characters depicted on the posters are all young. This provides the audience with the understanding that the film revolves around young people. The upper image shows three characters. The male and the female are close to each other showing that they have romantic feelings towards one another. The man behind them have a stern expression showing disapproval of the main characters. The background in the image shows buildings, most probably a city from far away. The image at the bottom shows the main four members that the film revolves around. Their confidence look mixed with the blue hues give them the concept of freedom and adventure. The background in the bottom image is covered with artistic cloud and place more focus on the
four characters. All the actors in the posters are wearing casual clothes.

**Communication through Media**

14,059 viewers watched the movie —Tilt during the opening weekend. The total number of viewers of the film is 143,727. The film is in the official selections of 36 festivals - Woodstock Film Festival, St. Louis International Film Festival - USA, Santa Barbara Film Festival, Fresh Film Fest, Czech Republic, Vancouver European Union Film Festival - Canada and others. HBO purchases the film's broadcast rights and presents it in 12 countries (Kaleva, 2013).

From the beginning of the filming process, a preliminary advertising campaign for the film begins. Various media publish information about the production process and then for the other stages of filmmaking. The film does not have an official media partner from major television stations in the country. The official and active advertising of the movie —Tilt— began in mid-2010 when the teaser for the movie was released, and a few months later the official trailer was released. (Kaleva, 2013) It is no coincidence that February 2011 was chosen as the premiere of the movie, as it is an active period of cinemas.

Another good backing is that the movie comes out shortly before Valentine's Day - February 14, and the genre of the movie itself is a romantic drama. The entire advertising campaign is carried out by an advertising agency together with the producers of the film.

The film's festival successes have been used in film marketing and poster design as well as in the trailer. Bulgarian National Television (BNT) becomes a co-producer by pre-purchasing the broadcasting rights. Interviews were also organized in the BNT broadcasts with the crew and
the actors. The trailer was also uploaded to a site created for the movie. The official media partner for the film is Vbox7, a video sharing portal where the trailer and teaser are uploaded to the cover page and reach 40,000 views in just a few days. Other media partners are abv.bg, vesti.bg, the digital magazine Pulsemag.bg and Darik radio. The German co-producer Ostlicht filmproduktion of the film "—Tilt" distributes it in cinemas in 24 cities in Germany-Stuttgart, Dresden, Nuremberg, Hamburg, Cologne and more. In May 2013 in the official premiere in Berlin (Kaleva, 2013).
Advertising campaign of the movie "Living Legends"

Image 9: “Living Legends” movie poster,
Source: https://www.cinefish.bg/Jivi-legendi-Living-legends-id33287.html in March 2020

**Director:** Nikolay Iliev

**Writers:** Nikolay Iliev, Sanya Borisova, Nikolay Vasilevski

**Cast:** Stefan Shterev, Yana Marinova, Georgi Kadurin, Lubomir Kovachev, Dimo Alexiev, Sanya Borisova, Michele Placido, Orlin Pavlov, Anna Maria Guzelev, Kaloyan Mitev and others.

**Producers:** Nikolay Iliev, Yan Yanev, Boyko Iliev

**Premiere:** 14/02/2014

**Duration:** 100 min.

**Distributor:** bTV Studios

**Budget:** BGN 400,000
Visual and Verbal Aspect

The colors and graphic design of the "Living Legends"— poster are made professionally and look attractive. The background of the poster that shows blue vibrant sky and sun near the horizon of the sea provides a cheerful and optimistic image from the film. The blue sky give the film poster a feeling of adventure and freedom while the yellow sun reflects the positivity. Additionally, the characters in the poster are also cheerful and smiling. This is direct reflection of the main plot of the film which revolves around finding oneself again. The clothes the actors are wearing are casual. Moreover, the there are four men shown in the poster on the right side while a single female on the left side. There is a slight gap between the two genders. This gap highlights the friendship between the male friends and the romantic connection with the female.

From the five leads, the actor standing in the front is wearing the color yellow while the rest are wearing darker shades. This also provides attention to the actor in the center who is the main lead. The main title of the film uses a font that also reflects the feeling of casual adventure of the film’s plot. Above the main title, there is also shown the reference of another film, —The Foreigners—. This reference allows the audience who were fans of the previous film to relate to the creators and will help boast the sales in the cinema.

This poster, as with all the other films presented above, we have the main characters and festivals mentioned. Moreover, the movie poster includes basic cast and their names which give a comprehensive idea of the movie to the purchaser by looking at the poster. Moreover, the awards won by the movie are another value addition to the movie poster which compels buyers to become the audience of the movie. There is also information about the social media page at
the bottom of the poster that will allow the audience to locate the film through social media platforms as well.

**Communication through Media**

According to the official box office of cinemas in Bulgaria, "Living Legends" is the most-watched movie of 2014 and is the most-watched among all films made in the previous 5 years. Among the most prestigious foreign awards of Living Legends is the Best International Feature at the Manhattan Film Festival in New York (2015). He also excelled at the Los Angeles Comedy Festival, opened the festival in Ischia, Italy, and picked up awards for Best Director and Best Actress for Sanya Borisova at the International Festival in Romania (Antimova, 2017).

Living Legends is a proof that the financial security of a movie product is no guarantee of success. With a low budget of BGN 400,000, the film manages to achieve the best results compared to the Hollywood films released at the time. Already in the first week, the movie "Living Legends" has revenues of BGN 111,000 and outstrips American productions such as Robocop –BGN 52,835 and Winter Fairytale in New York with Colin Farrell BGN 46,463. The trailer of the movie comes out a few months before the premiere. The distributor is bTV studios, which is owned by one of the largest TV stations in Bulgaria. BTV starts broadcasting the trailer on its prime regularly, and the film crew often guest-plays in various shows. At the end of 2014, the DVD with the movie "Living Legends" was released (Antimova, 2017).
Image 10: The back DVD cover of the movie “Living Legend.

Source: https://www.ozone.bg/product/zhivi-legendi-dvd/ in March 2020

The fresh comedy made on a small budget turns out to be an extremely successful movie funded by product placement and distributed by one of the largest distribution companies in the country - BTV Studios.
Advertising campaign of the movie "Attraction"

*Image 11: “Attraction” movie poster,
Source: https://www.kinoarena.com/bg/movie/privlichane in March 2020*

*Director:* Martin Makariev

*Writers:* Yana Marinova, Alexander Chobanov, Georgi Angelov, Borislav Zahariev

*Cast:* Yana Marinova, Alexander Sano, Bashar Rahal, Radina Borshosh, Louisa Grigorova-Makariev, Koina Ruseva and others.

*Producers:* Yana Marinova and Bashar Rashal

*Producer:* Spirit

*Co-Producer:* New Television

*Premiere:* 23/02/2018

*Duration:* 109 min.

*Distributor:* Lenta

*Budget:* BGN 650,000
Visual and Verbal Aspect

Again, this poster does not differ from the others considered in the present thesis in terms of design and layout. The color purple is extensively used in the poster that brings out the feeling of creativity. The title of the film is written with crystals that represents the theme of competitive dancing and dance floor. The poster is also divided between two scenarios. The upper image provides the love story that is between the two main characters. The two main lead are looking longingly at each other telling the audience that film have romantic themes present in it. The bottom image shows the entire main cast with the main couple in front and center. The cast at the back is wearing same school uniforms. This shows that the plot of the film is based in a school. The main couple is doing a dance pose. This shows that there are themes of dance present in the film. All these information will give the audience an understanding of the film plot through the poster.

There is not much emphasis on the background and the whole focus is on the characters in the film. They have presented the main characters and the standard texts and layout. At the head of the poster there is the date the film will be released. Below it are the names of the two main leads, attracting the fans of both leads to watch the film. Underneath the title there is a tagline that also provide information about the plot of the film. Ever since its release in cinemas, the movie "Attraction" has beaten three big Hollywood titles and become number one in Bulgaria's box office.

Communication through Media

The film is the debut of the famous actress Yana Marinova as a screenwriter and producer
in association with Bashar Rahal. "Attraction" ranks first in the cinema rankings and ranks among some of the most watched Bulgarian films in recent years. Nearly 23,000 viewers watched the film in the first week, and positive reviews for the film did not stop. The audience is fascinated by the way it is filmed, the modern dialogue, as well as the extremely strong soundtrack, featuring musical stars known in Bulgaria and abroad. Co-producer of —Attraction is New Television. The film is distributed in cinemas by Lenta which is the distribution company owned by New Television (Nova, 2018).

A good marketing move of the producers is to include many and varied music hits that include footage of the movie in their videos. The Macedonian star Slataristika released a video on his song —Money with footage from the movie. Popular music producer Stanislav Valev-Stani, who lives and works for well-known labels in Copenhagen (Denmark), has also released a track that has a strong summer hit record —We Like It Loud featuring the three Grammy-winner Tiffany Fred and collaborations with Vasko Ivanov-Dexter, and the video is full of footage from the movie —Attraction. Internationally acclaimed music artist, composer and producer Nedy John Cross is also rocking hard-rock tracks into the highly anticipated film —Attraction. "Living in my dreams" and "Fire" are just two of the audience-blasting tracks featured in the movie (Epicenter, 2018).

The famous and extremely popular model on the social networks Nikoleta Lozanova also appeared in the film for a short time (Nova, 2018). Emphasis on her involvement has been placed in the movie trailer to attract a large part of her followers.
Live meetings with audiences all over Bulgaria are also part of the film's marketing campaign and attracted many young people who wanted to meet the cast of the film on the day of the first screening in different cities. The television premiere of the movie "Attraction" takes place in May 2019 and is also a success. The film's advertising campaign has achieved some of the best results in recent years.

**Discussion of the results**

All the information found about the advertising campaigns of the five Bulgarian feature films analyzed in this thesis was reviewed. All of the films reviewed in this thesis have used different advertising techniques and have made new moves that have been successful. Much of the funding for film making is provided through the product placement of different brands in film. However, what unites everyone is the partnership with the largest Bulgarian TV channels and their distributors, which are the largest and most important in the country.

The posters of all the films are professionally made. The fonts that are used for various textual data are well chosen. The images of the actors and the composition of the poster are visually well positioned. The films Love.net, Tilt and Living Legends have won awards from
international festivals and this is the commentary of the posters themselves. The title, the names of the main actors and the date of the premiere appear on the posters.

According to the information gathered, all the films described in the present study achieved very good results and were among the first places in the home box office. According to the secondary collected data, all films in the current analysis, with the exception of Tilt, had product placement of brands, which also helped to finance them. All films had radios, televisions and websites for media partners. All presented films had a TV premiere on one of the two largest televisions in Bulgaria. The films Mission London, Love.net and Living Legends also release DVDs, but the process and result of their sale is unclear.

All the films were released in theaters during the winter season. As described in the theoretical part, Staykov (2015) claims that cinema attendance is highly seasonal. In this case, the producers of all the films in the current study have chosen a date for the premiere in the strong cinema season and this has also had an impact on successful outcomes.

Although social media is one of the best means of reaching young audiences as most movieggoers according to Millennials (2010), we do not have enough information about the campaigns of the various films on social media, with the exception of Love.net, where social Networks are even used to collect stories that have happened to different people and are then included in the plot of the film itself.

2. Data interpretation

The results and the effect of film promoting

After much of the advertising has moved to the Internet in recent years, social media is
part of the overall advertising strategy of film campaigns (Mathieu et al., 2016, p. 295). From the results and the information I gathered in this thesis, it is clear that Internet advertising is part of all campaigns of the considered films. However, the result of Internet advertising in particular cannot be accurately measured and its effectiveness cannot be assessed by the present study. The overall advertising strategy is important in this case.

According to Prag & Casavant (1994), the presence of famous actors is a key to the success of a film. Famous Bulgarian actors take part in all the films from the current study and all of them are depicted on the official posters of the films. We can consider the plot qualities of the films as good, because if they were not, they would not attract so many viewers, as sharing information is very easy and relevant today. Word of mouth has a lot of power and all social networks make it easier to express opinions about movies, as well as to share with many people.

**The results and the film marketing tools**

The poster is the first way to advertise and is extremely important (Hillier, 1969). It is still used in all movie campaigns today. The posters of the films that are the subject of analysis in this thesis are professionally made. As noted by Staykov (2015), the presence of famous actors on the posters is of particular importance for attracting the attention of the audience as well as potential viewers (Staykov, 2015). This is included in all the films we review in this study. Another extremely important thing that Staykov (2015) found is the choice of a date for the premiere of the film. Cinema is seasonal and the success of a film largely depends on when it will hit theaters (Staykov, 2015). All of this was taken into account by the producers of all the films in the current study, and they released the films at the appropriate time of year.
Another film marketing elements to consider is the identification of target audience that for a specific genre of films. Choosing target audience wisely will also help in promotion and gaining profitability in the film projects (Cinefish, 2014). Knowing your intended target audience permits you to assemble a profile around them, which incorporates things like demographical class, inspirations and relationship with the film's subjects. When a profile is set up, it is clearer consumer behavior and work on an advertising effort towards them (Marich, 2005).

Moreover, the positioning of film includes building up a chose selling contention of the film. A film's business point of view should have a general allure so a crowd of people will pick your film over others (Vladica & Davis, 2009). The producer should choose what you need to enlighten individuals regarding the film and how they are intended to decipher that message. In light of this, the message of the director is not equivalent to the business message from the distributor or producer (Kardjilov, 2008). A method to set up the film's positioning is to benchmark the film against contemporary titles. Moreover, research on the success or failures of their advertising effort and commitment with the crowd, and apply these exercises to a film (Prasad, 2013). Contemporary films should just be from the previous 3-5 years as the market moves so rapidly that approaches can get dated.

Last but not the least, the marketable elements including the valuable associations of the film should be accredited for strengthening the sales of the films. These elements include merchandise, soundtracks, labels, posters, awards, marketing campaigns and books in case of adaptations (Hirschman, 1983).
The results and the consumer’s value theory

From all the film campaigns reviewed and from all the information gathered, it is clear that consumer preferences are focused on comedy and commercial films. Given that cinema is mainly an entertainment industry, it becomes clear that consumer preferences are for entertainment films. The value of the distance should also not be underestimated, as in Bulgaria cinemas are only in the largest cities, located in malls and shopping centers. This makes it difficult for a large part of the population to access, even if they want to watch a movie.

There are three major categories of customer value which includes value for customers, value for shareholders and value for stakeholders (Hirschman, 1983). Soon after the measuring elements of shareholder and stakeholder value have been defined, the measurement and understanding of customer value remained undefined. Korkman (2006), recognizes three distinctive stages in the customer value literature: customer value as an intellectual process, as a resource-based production, and as an experiential cycle. Moreover, customer value mentioned as experiential process has become a generally acknowledged recommendation since Holbrook and Hirschman proposed in 1982 that the experiential element of customer conduct is, much of the time, more significant than contemplations of usefulness or cost underway of consumption value. Consequently, marketing of merchandise can't depend on regular advertising systems that that accept that consumers' objective assessment of price and quality of goods and services (Holbrook, 1999).

Production of valuable customer experience is the primary aim of firms in the sectors where customer experience is the key service. Moreover, the innovation in customer experience
is vital for producers of customer experience (Vladica & Davis, 2009). As the scholarly writings on service innovation clarify, a total comprehension of customer experience innovation requires thought of how an experience good produces value all through the whole customer exchange cycle. In experience merchandise that point principally to yield entertainment value, like film industry, seemingly the fundamental belief is yielded during the utilization of the experience great. As of now, be that as it may, solid information is scant about the abstract elements of interceded utilization encounters (Austin 2007). Specifically, no conventions have been set up; consequently, to notice and look at the manners in which that utilization of screen productions creates value among target audience.

**The results and visual semiotic theory**

From the entire movie posters reviewed it was analyzed that the movie advertising strategy also comprises of an important element i.e. movie posters/advertisements. Moreover, the characteristics of Bulgarian movies include movie title, movie cast, awards and regalities addressed. Additionally, the color themes relate to the movie genres or the nature of the movie plot which gives the posters an eye-catching yet relatable look. The posters are an important part of the advertising strategy and may contribute to the success of the movie by increasing the viewership and the audience that looks forward to viewing or purchasing it the movie DVDs.

Posters consume a space among art and advertisements. They have an unmistakable business reason to advance an event or product yet they additionally have creative worth. People buy them and decorate them in houses and commercial setups. Exhibition halls have entire displays dedicated to poster art. While analyzing a poster it is significant that you assess both
how well it satisfies its motivation (i.e. promotion) just as its aesthetics. Elements such as descriptive one-liners, cast, and summary of story-line, awards and accreditations may give appealing look to the posters as in the case of Bulgarian film posters.

One of the main focus of this thesis is on the visual analysis of the posters. These visual analysis relates to the theory of visual communication, visual rhetoric, and in general visual semiotics. Analyzing the five film posters of the feature film, from the main design of the poster one can assess that there is a use of multiple characters. Except of the film –Love.net, the rest of the four film have multiple characters of the film depicted on the poster. From the perspective of marketing, one can deduce that audience prefer posters that have numerous characters from within the film shown. One such reason for this is because then the consumer will know exactly which actors are presented in the film. Additionally, before reading the verbal text, an individual places emphasis on the non-verbal image.

Secondly, as shown in all the posters, the popular actors are represent in the front. This is necessary for captivating the fans of the actors and using those fans to boost the sale of the film at the box office. The more actors there will be the more chances of reaching to the actor’s personal fan base. In relation to foreign film poster, for example, in Hollywood, many film posters have utilized the multiple characters aspect. Films like Star Wars Franchise and Spider-Man: Homecoming (2017), have posters that involve multiple characters. Similar to these Bulgarian films, the two Hollywood films mentioned have earn large revenues at the box office.

The star power is also positively correlated with the star power (Peng, Kang, Anwar, & Li, 2019). This means that many of the audience that come to watch a film is attracted by the
celebrities that are present in the film. For example, the model Nikoleta Lozanova, was used to attract a greater number of audience. Similarly, Alan Ford in —Mission London— was used in the film main poster to highlight his star power and use of a known celebrity in the film.

In all the five movies there is a recurring theme of humor used. This is important to discuss since humor as mentioned above has a positive impact on the target audience in marketing strategy (Usman, 2013). Mainly because humor as a genre is accepted by a large number of people. Especially, a majority of audience goes to cinema to be entertained and have a good time. Humor presents the audience with a good time where they will be entertained by the light heartedness in the film. As such, many of these feature films have humor within their storyline no matter what the main genre of the film is.

Additional to the themes of humor that is present in most of the films chosen, there is also verbal text that help the film in promotion. For example, “Living Legends,” “Tilt,” and “Love.net” have stated the film festivals that the films were shown in. The impact of films is positively affected by their screening in film festivals (Verdaasdonk, 2005). This means that an audience is more likely to come watch a film if they are shown in the large film festivals. Thus, placing the verbal signs of different film festivals will attract more audience to the cinema. The reason for this is because, many of the individuals are reliant in critics before going to watch a movie. Hence, the name of these film festivals provide good publicity to films.

The colors in the posters were chosen to direct audience interest. Each poster reflects upon the theme of the film. Films that are heavily based on romance uses the color red as the base tone to direct the information of romance. The theme of blue and yellow is shown to
Colors can influence mood and using relevant colors provide good understanding of what the film poster is trying to relate (Jonauskaite et al. 2019). As such, when creating film posters color choices are regarded as important in defining the mood of the film.

In terms of societal implications, as mentioned above, Bulgaria’s film industry had suffered a downfall in the previous decade. In order to relate to the audience, the film should have a cultural connection towards the target audience. This can also be seen in the film posters. For example, in —Mission London‖, the main plot revolves around London and the connection that Bulgaria has with England as being part of the European Union. Moreover, in —Love.net‖ the target audience are the young adults who are more present on the internet through different social media. The use of internet in the poster depicts the cultural connection that the young adults have with finding intimate partners on social media apps.

Moreover, it is also observed that the visual components on a movie poster can pass on incredible messages. The best posters may make one anxious regarding a new release. The most exceedingly awful ones might not have an influential impact by any means. By dissecting film posters, you can acquire a superior comprehension of the components that viably command the notice of film viewers and sell the film’s story even before viewers see it for themselves.
IX. CONCLUSION

The current thesis is unique in the manner that it made use of visual analysis to study the impact of visuals in advertisement. Although, this study have only used Bulgarian films as the main source for the analysis, the method can be applied to international films as well in order to have a clear understanding of how visual rhetoric impact advertising. The two main question in the thesis, (1) different advertising technique to promote film in Bulgaria, and (2) Visual representation found in Bulgarian film's posters. Both of these questions were answered in reference to the Consumer’s Value Theory and the Visual Semiotic Theory. The two theories provides an overall analysis of the film’s advertising strategies.

According to Kaleva (2013) ads and movies have a huge impact on large groups of people. Both define and create values, attitudes, preferences and innovations. Cinema aims to meet the specific needs of viewers, most often spiritual and entertaining. However, this does not in any way exclude the commercial side of things. And advertising is created entirely for this, but it is not the primary one. First, there must be a specific product or service in order for the ad to be created and serve to promote something. Cinema, on the other hand, is a need for the people of art, an expression of creativity and a cultural need for a country, it is primary (Kaleva, 2013). We can conclude that a movie really needs to be good in order to attract a large number of viewers, because even if the advertisement is excellent and in the first week of the film release many people go to watch it, it cannot stop the word of mouth. People's opinions, especially in today's technological world, are easily shared and reach many people.

The economic situation in Bulgaria and the limited cinema market are led by the
production companies that made the films analyzed in this thesis to deal with both television products, advertising, and the production of the film itself. This gives filmmakers knowledge of marketing and advertising. To reach the right audience, a movie must be seen as a commercial product, not just as a work of art (Kaleva, 2013).

Discussion encompassing Bulgarian film is broad and multifaceted even at local level. According to Nedyalkova (2015), Bulgarian film history should be re-conceptualised in the consequence of post-Communist rebuilding and ideological changes. Well-known filmmaking ought to get hypothetical and institutional consideration. She also suggests elective arrangements like computerized and celebration dissemination merit further investment and testing (Nedyalkova, 2015, p. 204).

The conclusion from the reviewed campaigns of Bulgarian feature films is that the most used ways to promote a movie are the poster, the trailer and the social networks. Cinema is primary and advertising is secondary. Cinema is a consequence of human needs for creativity and self-expression. That's why even the most ingenious advertisement can't save a weak film. And if in the first weekend of the movie's release, thanks to advertising can attract a certain number of people, it will not hide the weak qualities of the film and will not stop the negative word of mouth. On the other hand, a good movie with a bad advertising and distribution campaign it surely will fail. The failure is not to reach the exact audience.

Although, there are multiple ways of understanding a film marketing but posters are one of the most important tool in advertisement. The first advertisement material that is provided to
the audience is the film poster. The study is significant in analyzing film posters through visual analysis. One of the main objective of this thesis was to understand the use of posters in film advertisement. From the above analysis one can see that there are few theme that are most common in all the posters chosen. One of those theme is the usage of multiple characters in the poster and the second is the emphasis on film festivals.

The main conclusion that can be drawn from the thesis is that symbolism is an effective method in creating a mood for the posters. Moreover, these symbolisms help the audience understand the main theme and plot of the film. Along with the communication through media, the posters are the “first-line” of advertisement in media. In the future studies, researchers can use the same visual analysis theories to connect the trailers to the films as advertising strategy. The different use of visual communication, symbols, colors, etc. can be utilized to reflect the appeal of the audience to the film and the impact they have on the box office.

The limited market and the economic weakness in the country are the reason the production companies that made the films discussed above to deal in parallel with advertising. However, the production of Bulgarian films is necessary and I remain open to a more detailed study of film production in Bulgaria and the advertising of films. Significantly more detailed research is needed to make deeper and more decisive results. A much more detailed visual analysis of trailers and posters can be useful for the Media and Communication Sciences. Also, a study with interviews with Bulgarian film producers could be a good sequel. Since there are significantly few studies that focus on how a film is promoted I consider it necessary and beneficial for the Media and Communication Field.
In Media and Communication Field, the theory of visual semiotics is taking place as an important theory is discourse studies of film posters. Communication through different medium have always been necessary in order to impart an idea. Film posters are no less important in imparting the content of film in terms of images, colors, and meaningful text. This multimodal discourse analysis have been followed in multiple studies outside of Bulgaria to study film posters (Linh, 2021).

The present thesis does not aim to present marketing as a panacea for the problems of the film industry in Bulgaria or Europe, but to offer those advertising strategies that have achieved good results and can benefit the creators of Bulgarian and European feature films. The unlimited use of market statistics, analysis of user profiles of the audience, skills for its segmentation and selection of adequate communication strategies and positioning of the film are mandatory skills for every producer. In a market economy and a free market for audiovisual products, there should be a growing research interest in these aspects of cinema (Staykov, 2015). The future of the Bulgarian film industry lies in the wider application of marketing tools by marketers. The Bulgarian audience needs its national cinema and is inclined to go to the cinema and watch a Bulgarian feature film, and it is in the hands of the Bulgarian filmmakers to justify it to the maximum extent.
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