

How Libraries Beat Redbox and Netflix Movie Advisory in the Public Library

Guidelines for creating useful movie lists

Start creating your lists using types of requests your staff gets asked. They will give you the most immediate bang for your buck.

Don't make your lists comprehensive. If you are making a list of Westerns, don't list every Western in your collection. List 12-20 of the most popular, best, and representative titles. This is a manageable number for a patron to browse.

Use *Videohound* and other movie review sources and lists to help you find the best choices for your list, especially in unfamiliar genres. You don't want to turn someone off of Westerns forever because the choices on your list were poorly made.

Consider the source. Very few 1950s Science Fiction movies are going to have positive reviews. Go to a fan site or subject guide on the topic and choose those titles most popular with the fans.

After you have made movie lists based on the public's questions, allow your staff to branch out and show their own creativity by making lists that reflect their own tastes. They might spark some intriguing conversations with your patrons.

If enough movies are available to fit the bill, create movie lists to complement current topics in the news. When *The Help* is released on DVD, create a list of other movies about the Civil rights era.

Market your movie lists using displays, your web site, and newsletters (both paper and electronic).

Encourage your staff to use lists with your patrons. Every time they hand out a list or direct someone's attention to your movie blog have them enter their name in a drawing held every few months.

Tips for blogging

A blog entry should always be positive. You might make note of some shortcomings you see in the movie, but these should not overshadow your overall recommendation.

Let your staff get personal in their blogs (without getting too personal). Their enthusiasm can encourage enthusiasm in your patrons.

Use blog entries as a quick way to create a mini movie list to connect patrons to a few other titles that might interest them on a hot topic.