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# Audience Research

## Exit Interviews

## Social Media Listening

**New Zealand Film Commission**  
**Te Tumu Whakaata Taonga**





## The Summary



# Audience Reaction: Eyeballs and Cultural Impact

*The Dead Lands* was the top grossing film at the New Zealand box office in its opening weekend (30 Oct-2 Nov 2014; \$397,084 gross).

The audience reaction to *The Dead Lands* has been overwhelmingly positive. The audience that turned up on the opening weekend were more likely to be: Māori, and frequent multiplex cinemagoers, more inclined to see films like *The Maze Runner*, *Gone Girl* or *Fury*.

This audience research highlights the impact of both traditional promotional channels and social media in driving audiences. *The Dead Lands* opening weekend benefited from strong word of mouth promotion, propelled by the cinema trailer, spread by Facebook. Six weeks ahead of the release date, social media buzz was generated from the Transmission Films Facebook trailer post (12th September), which had over 600k trailer views (compared to 143k on YouTube). Māori were particularly influenced by word of mouth and Facebook conversations.

The audience were primarily motivated by the desire to see a Māori story and Māori culture on the big screen – a film that is uniquely from here, new and different. Māori audiences were interested in supporting and celebrating their culture. Others were interested in supporting a New Zealand film, experiencing pre-European Māori history, seeing Māori actors or just the latest action film.

The cultural significance of *The Dead Lands* is clearly demonstrated in the audience feedback. A strong sense of pride in Māori culture is evident, particularly amongst young Māori (often non-speakers of Te Reo). Native speakers might occasionally criticise an actor's accent, but most acknowledge the cultural value of *The Dead Lands* as a compelling story told on the big screen in Te Reo.

*“Mana te Māori. Ka pai”  
[“Proud to be Māori. Good”]*

*“Something I've always wanted to see.  
Pre-European Māori.”*

*“We really enjoyed it. We got a lot out of it.  
It was a good movie.”*

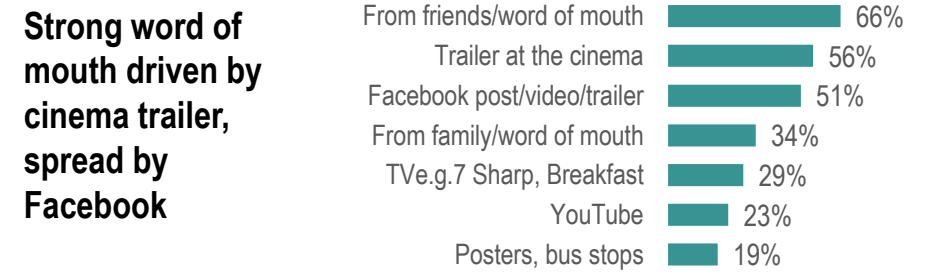
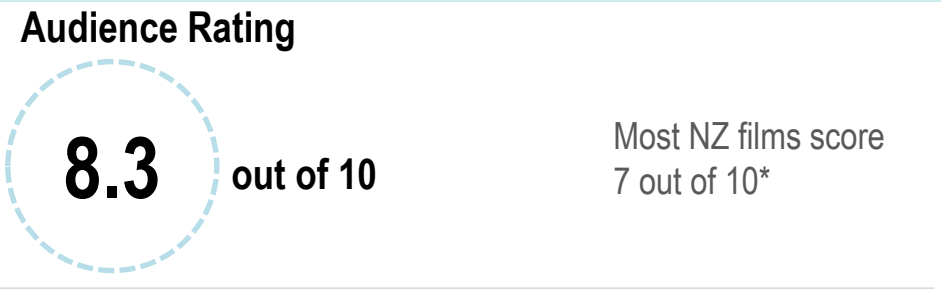
*“Rawe rawa atu! Hatakehi!  
Wera nga tama”  
[“Really awesome! Hard case! Hot guys”]*

*“Awesome seeing traditional Māori in  
Cinema. Exciting”*

# Snapshot of *The Dead Lands* Opening Weekend Exit Interviews

30 October – 2 November 2014

## Overwhelmingly positive audience response



**94%** will recommend to friends & family

**Audiences went to see a Māori story and Māori culture**

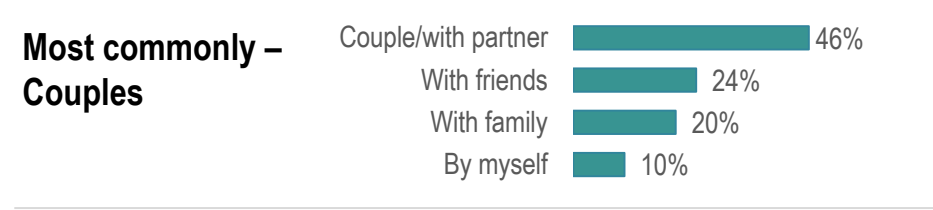
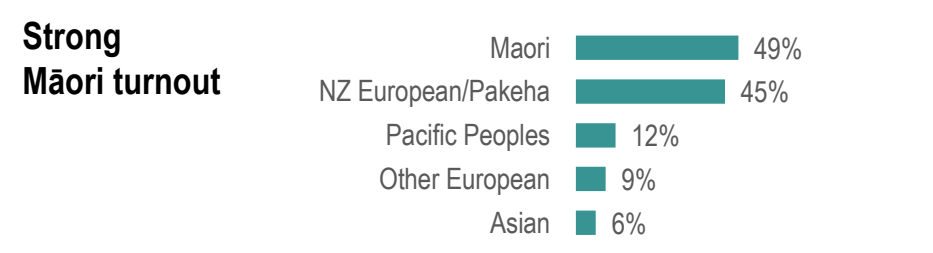
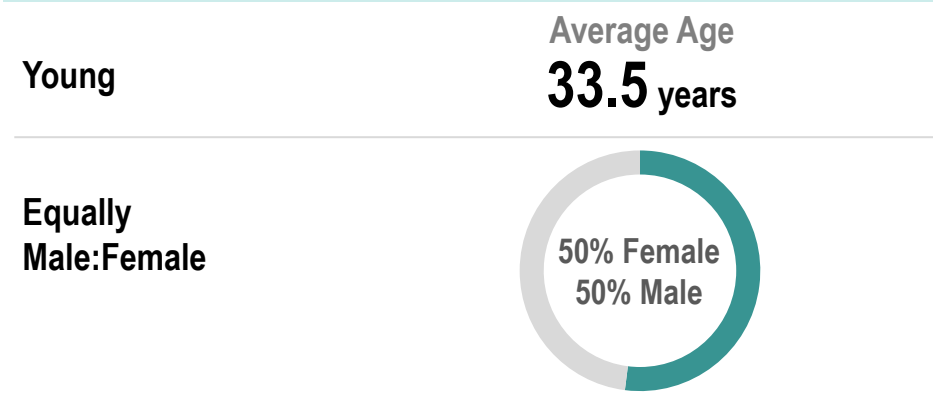
*I'm fluent and it was refreshing to see a film in Te Reo*

*The tikanga of Te Reo, the taonga of the tipuna*  
*[The essence of Maori language, the prized possessions of the ancestors]*

*I wanted to know more about Māori culture*

Source: Exit Interviews Auckland, Wellington, Christchurch, Rotorua (326)  
Research Method & Objectives attached

## Who Went



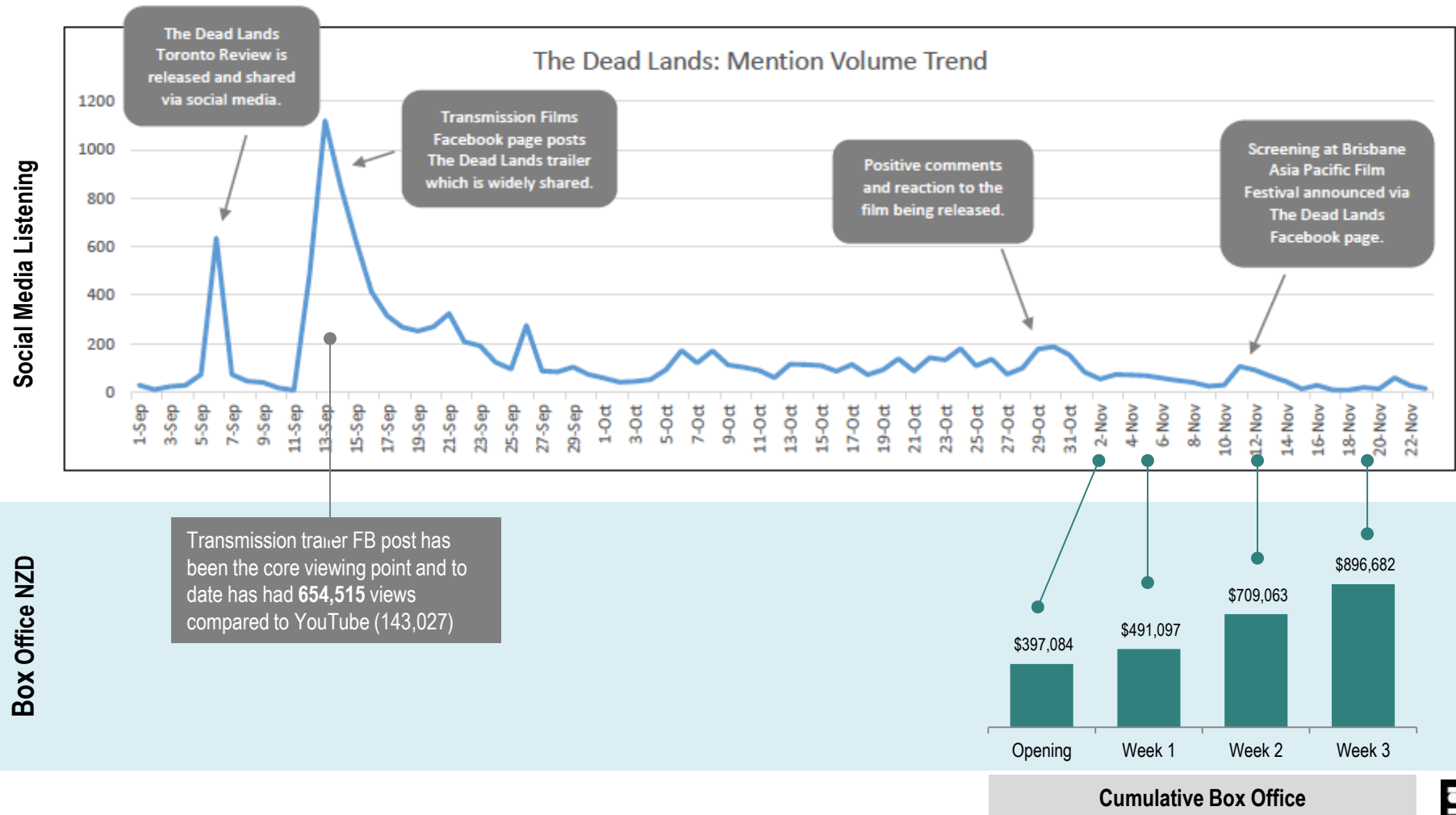
\* Duncan Petrie & Duncan Stuart "A Coming of Age", 2008



# The Dead Lands Timeline: Social Media & Box Office



Transmission Facebook trailer post ignited audience interest and word of mouth





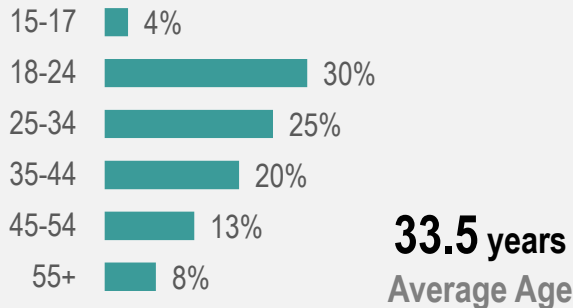
# Opening Weekend Exit Interviews: The Detailed Results



## Audience Profile: Who Went to *The Dead Lands*

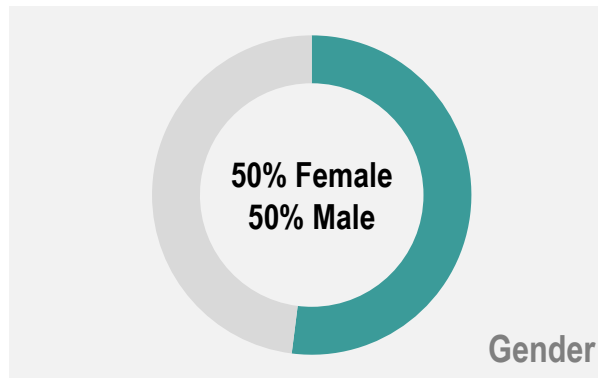
### Young

The opening weekend audience was skewed towards younger age groups – just under half of the audience was aged under 30 years



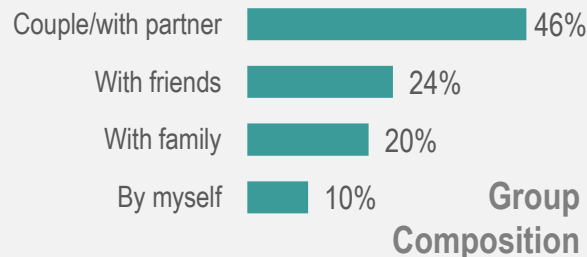
### Equally Male:Female

The audience was evenly split between males and females



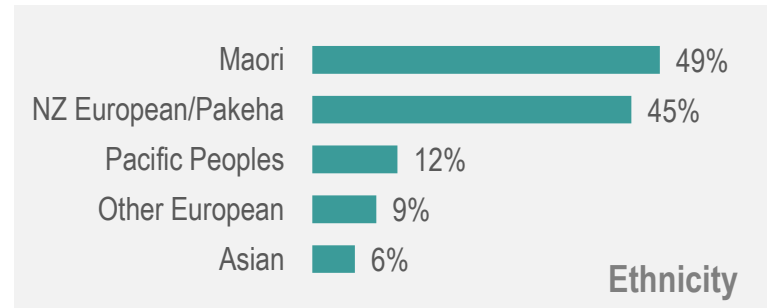
### Most commonly – Couples

Couples were most common followed by going with friends



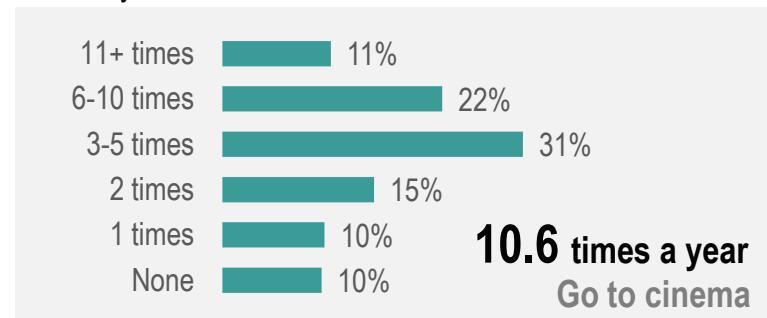
### Strong Māori turnout

49% of the audience identified as Māori which compares to 15% of the total NZ population



### Frequent Cinemagoers

The opening weekend audience claim to go to the cinema 10 or more times a year, compared to the NZ average of 3 times a year\*

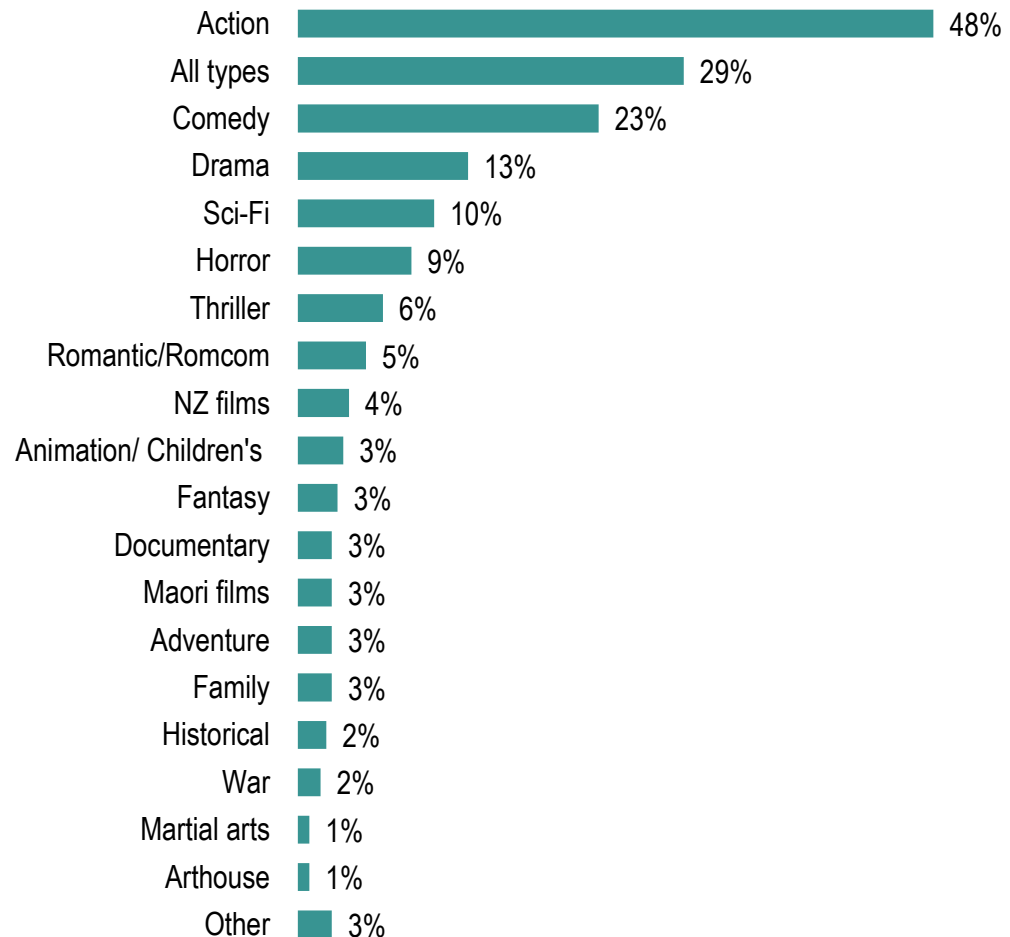


## Audience Profile: Preferred Genres

### Action-skewed audience

Action is the preferred genre of the opening weekend audience, followed by comedy, drama, sci-fi and 'all types'.

Q. What types/genres of movies do you most like to go and see at the cinema?

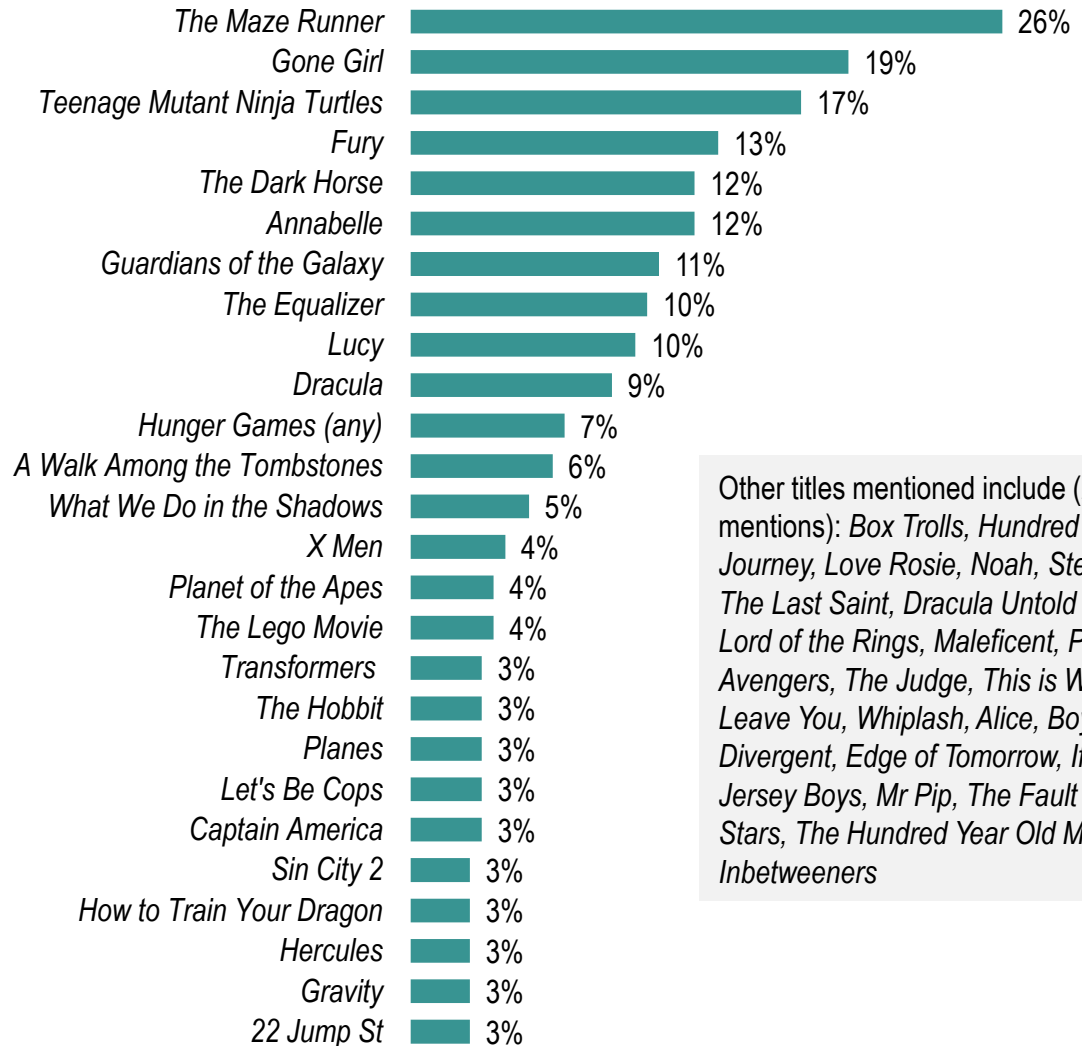




## Audience Profile: Most Recent Films Seen

Mainstream & Hollywood titles such as *The Maze Runner*, *Gone Girl* and *TMNT* dominate the recent films seen by *The Dead Lands* opening weekend audience

Q. What are the 3 most recent films you've seen at the cinema?



Other titles mentioned include (2-3 mentions): *Box Trolls*, *Hundred Foot Journey*, *Love Rosie*, *Noah*, *Step Up*, *The Last Saint*, *Dracula Untold*, *Frozen*, *Lord of the Rings*, *Maleficent*, *Pride*, *The Avengers*, *The Judge*, *This is Where I Leave You*, *Whiplash*, *Alice*, *Boy*, *Divergent*, *Edge of Tomorrow*, *If I Stay*, *Jersey Boys*, *Mr Pip*, *The Fault in Our Stars*, *The Hundred Year Old Man*, *The Inbetweeners*

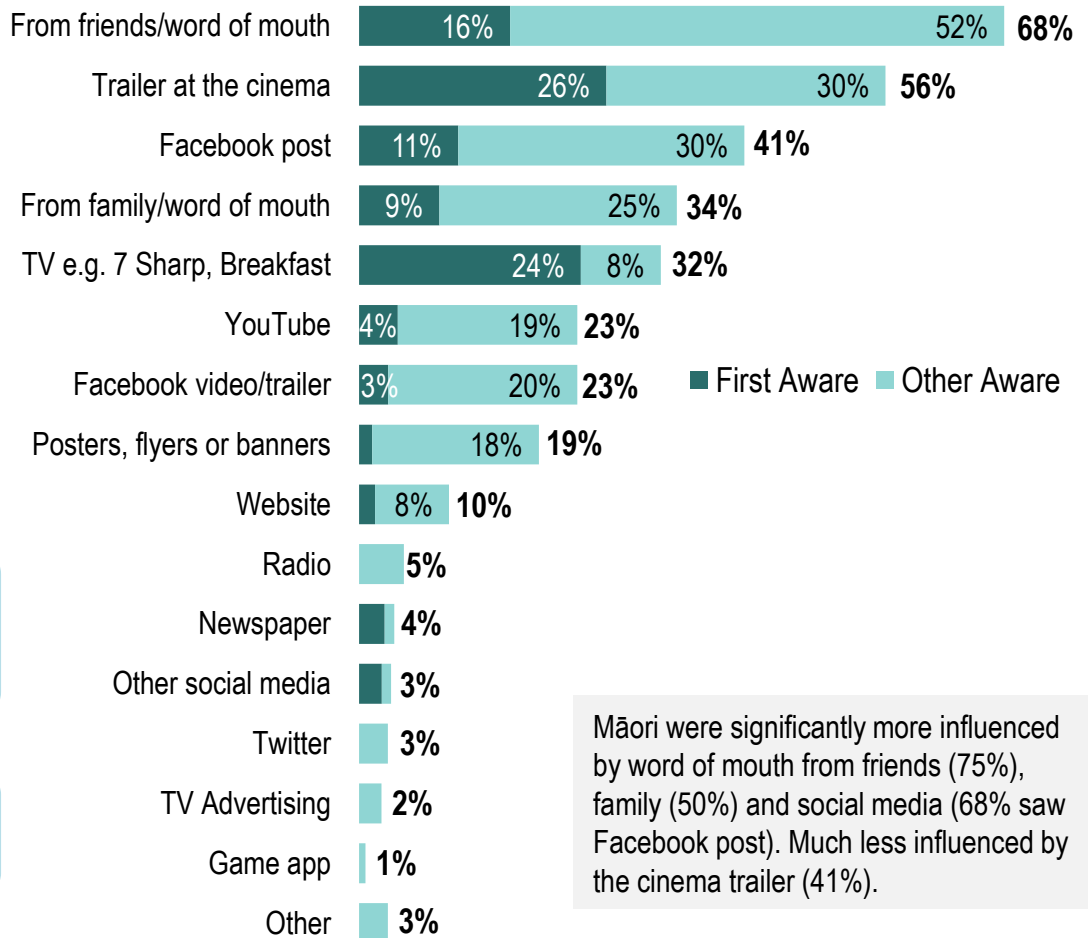
## Audience Insight: How Did You Hear About *The Dead Lands*?

Strong word of mouth driven by cinema trailer, spread by social media especially Facebook. Under 30 audience more influenced by social media (Facebook, YouTube), while 50+ audience more influenced by TV.

*All the great feedback from friends and because I'm Māori and love the fact that the movie is based on Māoritanga. And I haven't seen a movie about Māoris since Utu.*

*The tikanga of Te Reo, the taonga of the tipuna  
[The essence of Maori language, the prized possessions of the ancestors]*

*I wanted to know more about Māori culture*

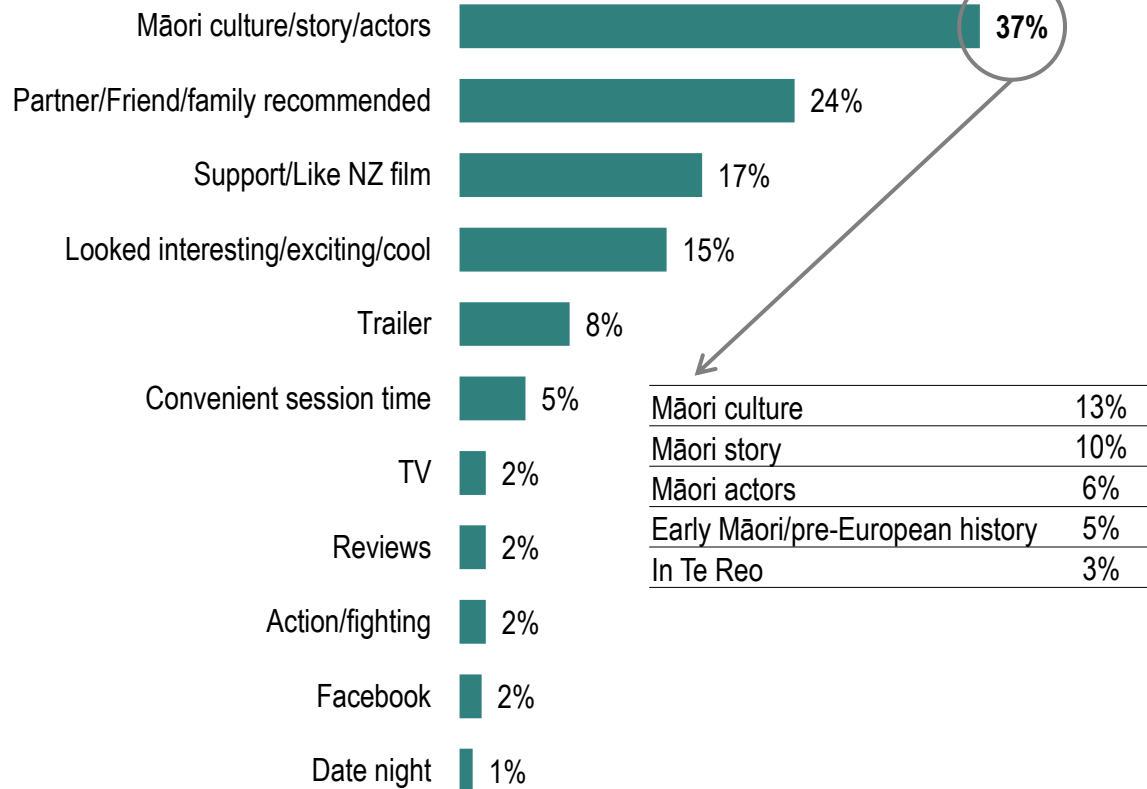


Māori were significantly more influenced by word of mouth from friends (75%), family (50%) and social media (68% saw Facebook post). Much less influenced by the cinema trailer (41%).

## Audience Insight: Why did you see *The Dead Lands*?

The audience was mostly motivated by a desire to see a Māori story, culture, history and the actors. Supporting a NZ film was also common. Endorsement from family and friends is critical.

Q. How did you end up choosing to see *The Dead Lands*?



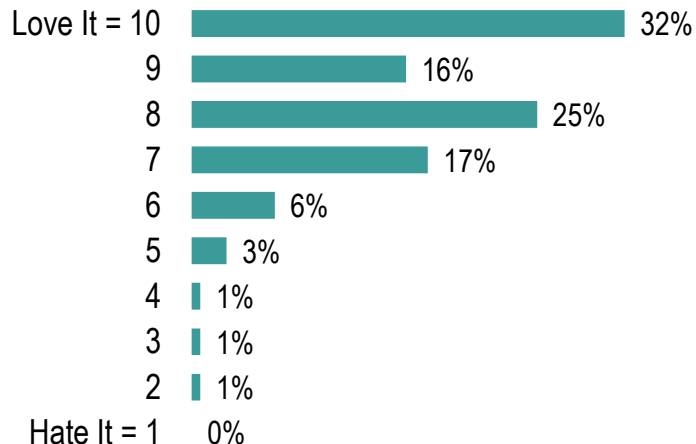
## Audience Reaction: Overall Rating & Recommendation

### Average Rating

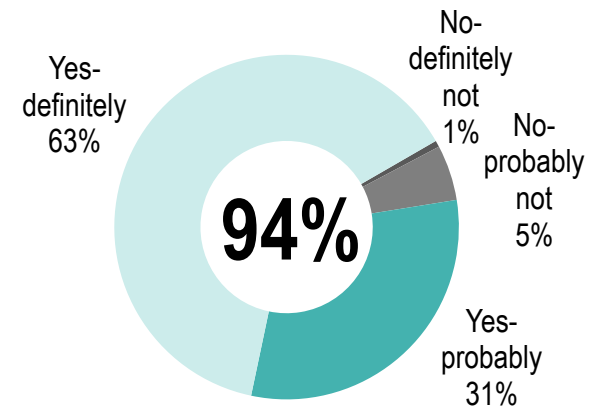


This is a very strong result. In comparison, most NZ films score 7 out of 10\*

### Q. What is your reaction to *The Dead Lands* overall?



### Almost everyone would recommend *The Dead Lands* to friends and family



### Q. How likely are you to recommend *The Dead Lands* to friends and family?

Those more likely to give *The Dead Lands* a higher rating include:

- Māori
- Pasifika
- Under 20 year olds
- Wellington audience
- Rotorua audience
- Went to Event Manukau

## Audience Reaction: Three Words to Describe *The Dead Lands*

Q. What are 3 three words to describe *The Dead Lands* to someone who hasn't seen it?

Those who have seen *The Dead Lands* will tell their friends and family that it is an “awesome”, “mean” (good), “violent”, Māori action film.



Note: The size of the word corresponds to the frequency that the word was mentioned

## Audience Reaction: Overwhelming Positive Response from Māori

- Highly positive response from Māori, who mostly rated the film 9 or 10 out of 10 (average of 8.6)
- *The Dead Lands* was very much a whanau focused event. Just under half (47%) went to the opening weekend in a couple and 31% went with family.
- Even more so than the opening weekend audience as a whole, Māori audience interest and motivation was ignited by word of mouth by friends and family, and spread by social media. Almost all Māori who attended on opening weekend had talked about the film with friends or family, and 68% saw a Facebook post (c.f. 41% total audience).
- Essentially there were two core audience segments on opening weekend: Māori and very frequent cinema goers. Hence, highly engaged participation in social media/social conversation, yet fewer Māori had seen the cinema trailer.

***“Mana te Māori Ka pai”***

***[“Proud to be Māori. Good”]***

(25-29 yo Māori male, last film seen was Transformers 4)

***“All the great feedback from friends and because I’m Māori and love the fact that the movie is based on Maoritanga. And I haven’t seen a movie about Māori since Utu.”***

(20-24 yo Māori male, last films seen were Step Up 3, Let’s Be Cops)

***“I went for the culture because I’m Maori- and I don’t know much about my ancestors”***

(20-24 yo Māori female, last films seen was Dracula)



## Audience Reaction: Final Comments

*Q. Any final comments about The Dead Lands?*



Note: The size of the word corresponds to the frequency that the word was mentioned

***“He mea nui te ao Maori ki au, I have a big passion towards my Maori culture”***

(18-19 yo Māori male, hasn't been to cinema in last 12 mths)

***“Awesome seeing traditional Māori in Cinema.  
Exciting”***

(20-24 yo NZ European/Pakeha female, last films seen were  
The Maze Runner & Lucy)

***"Something I've always wanted to see. Pre-European Māori."***

(30-34 yo NZ European/Pakeha male, last film seen was Guardians of the Galaxy)

***"We really enjoyed it. We got a lot out of it.  
It was a good movie."***

(50-54 yo NZ European/Pakeha female, last films seen were The Dark Horse, Guardians of the Galaxy)

***“Rawe rawa atu! Hatakehi! Wera nga tama”***  
***[“Really awesome! Hard case! Hot guys”]***

(20-24 yo Māori / NZ European/Pakeha female, last films seen were The Maze Runner & Lucy)



## Social Media Listening

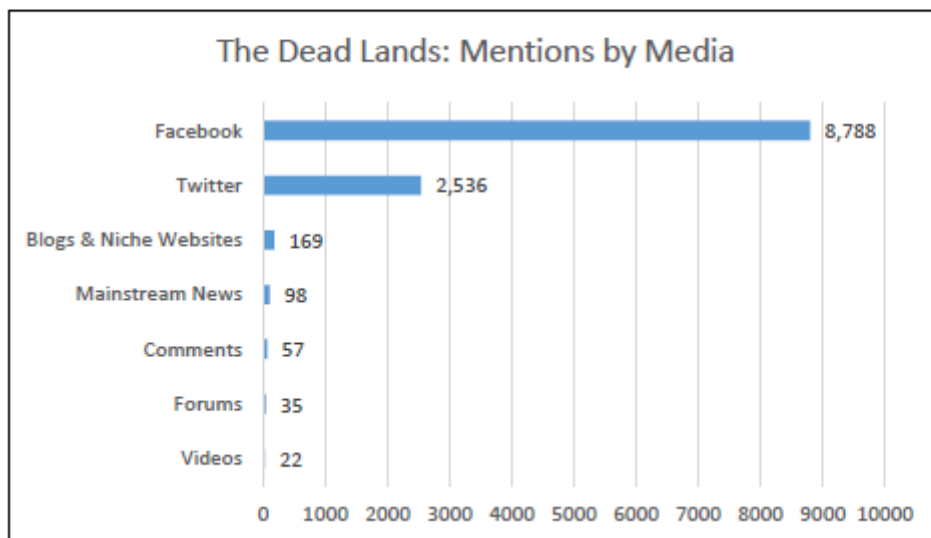
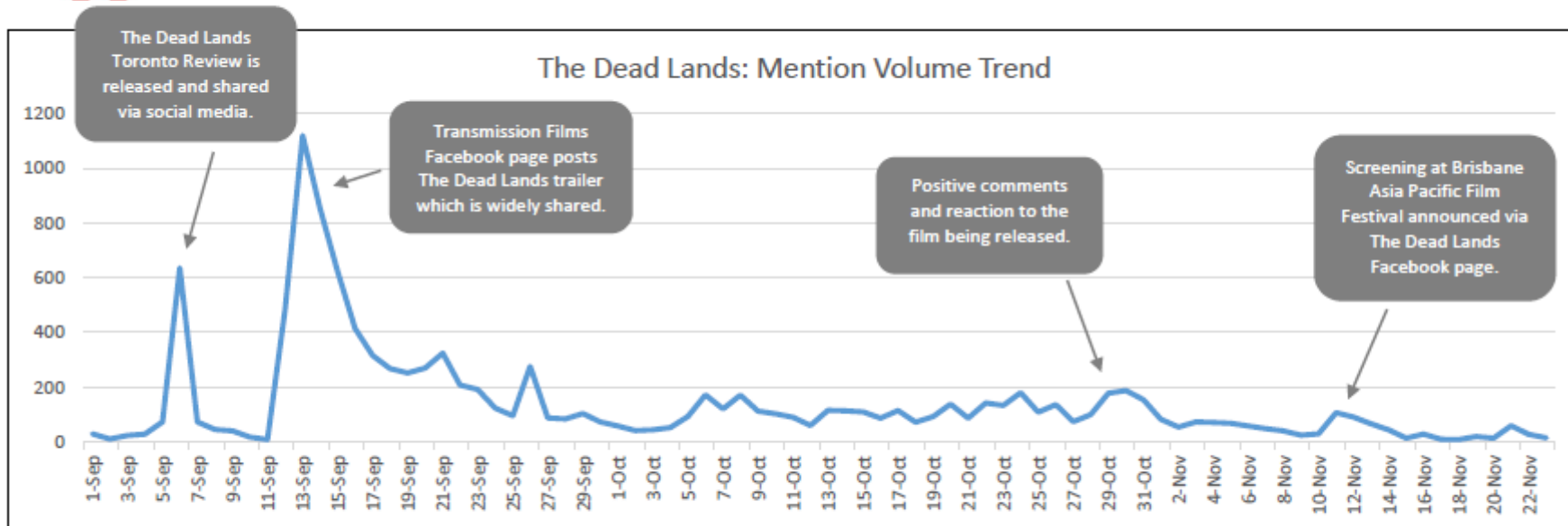
1 September – 23 November 2014





# Summary

The Dead Lands – Digital Media  
1<sup>st</sup> September – 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2014



The majority of The Dead Lands mentions can be attributed to the Transmission Films Facebook trailer post which was made on 12<sup>th</sup> September. This version of the trailer has been the core viewing point and to date has had a total of 654,515 views compared to the YouTube version which has 143,027. In terms of mentions, shares of this post account for a substantial 62% (7,265) of the recorded total.

Reaction to the release of The Dead Lands was overwhelmingly favourable, with 38% of recorded mentions for the period classified positive, 62% neutral, and .01% negative between film launch and 3<sup>rd</sup> November. Negative mentions were did not extend beyond basic news article shares from Maori news sources reporting academic interpretation of cultural aspects of the film; [Te Karere](#) and [Waatea](#) (click word to view article).

Since launch, trailer shares and positive reactions have continued with the only significant increase in mentions coming from the announcement of the screening at Brisbane Asia Pacific Film Festival.

Total mentions: 11,675

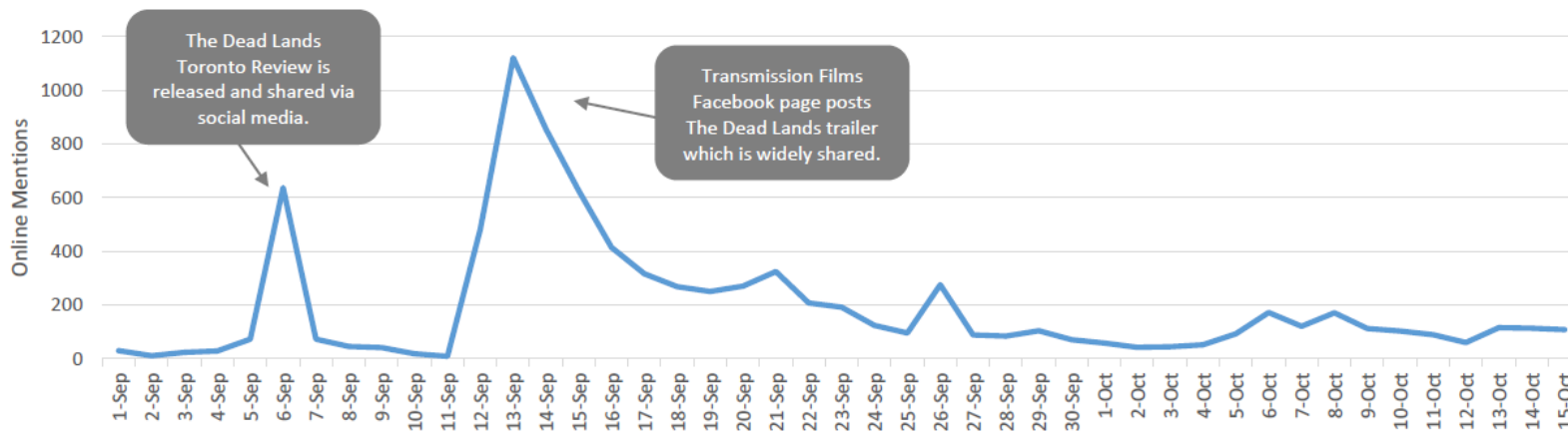


## Pre-Release

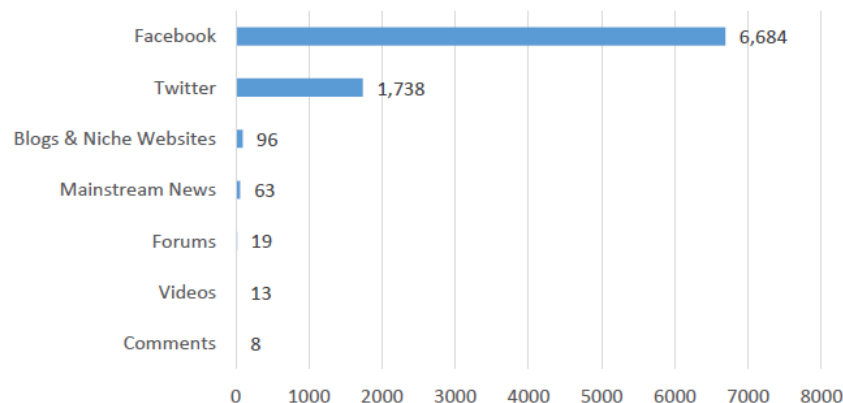
The Dead Lands – Digital Media  
1<sup>st</sup> September – 15<sup>th</sup> October, 2014



The Dead Lands: Mention Volume Trend



The Dead Lands: Mentions by Media



Mentions are dominated by international and domestic shares and reaction to The Dead Lands trailer posted on the [Transmission Films Facebook page](#).

Reaction to the post initially spiked over 12<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup> September and has continued steadily up until 15<sup>th</sup> October.

To date, the post has had 654,444 trailer views, 23,420 shares and 14,225 Likes. It is worth noting that in comparison to this, the additional online trailer housed on YouTube has received lower engagement with 67,665 views.

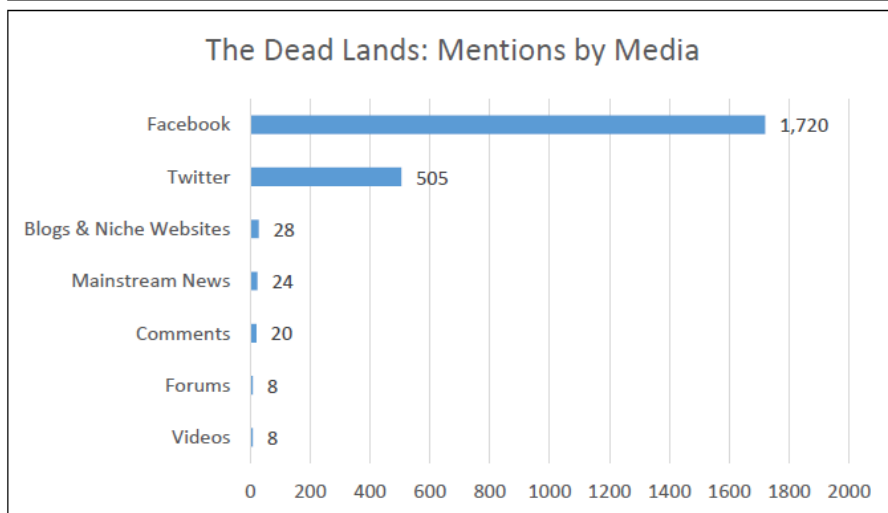
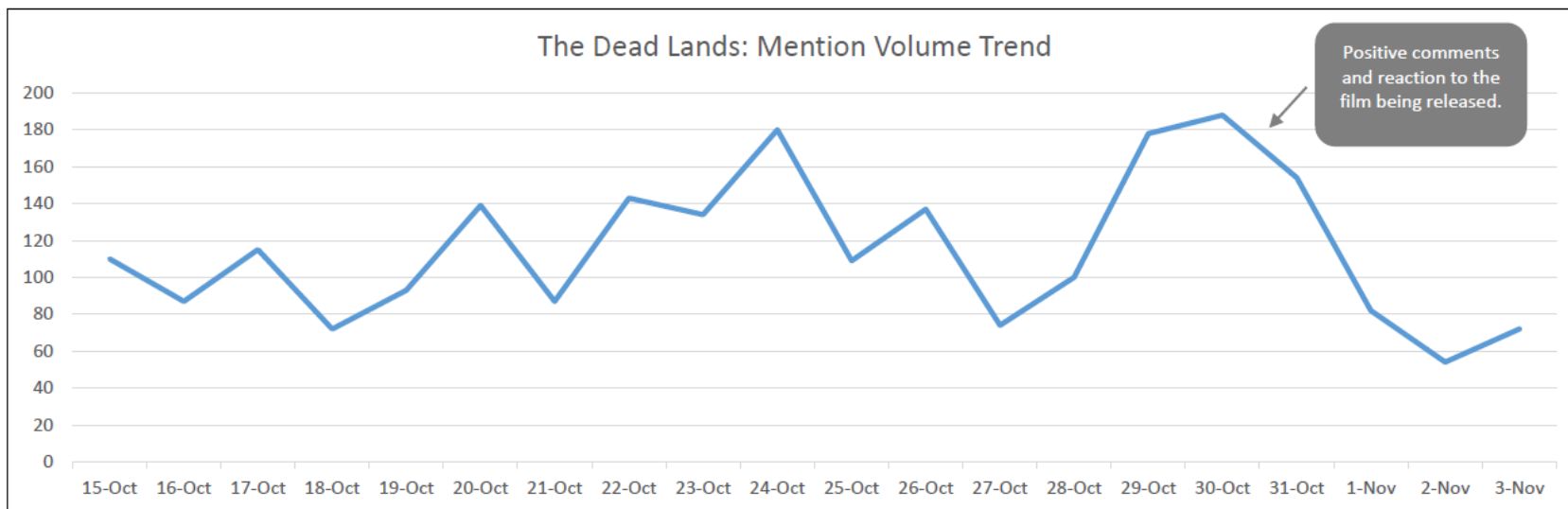
Outside of this, mainstream news reporting early international reviews and anticipation for the launch has been steady since 5<sup>th</sup> September. Sources range from global outlets such as Vanity Fair and Hollywood Reporter to all New Zealand news channels.

Total mentions: 8,621



Pre-Release

The Dead Lands – Digital Media  
15<sup>th</sup> October – 3<sup>rd</sup> November, 2014



Reaction to the release of The Dead Lands has been overwhelmingly favourable, with 38% of recorded mentions for the period classified positive, 62% neutral, and .01% negative.

Positive mentions have largely been exclamations via Facebook, endorsing the film. Neutral mentions are dominated by ongoing trailer shares from the Transmission Films post made on 12<sup>th</sup> September. For the reported period alone there were 1,001 recorded shares of this trailer, equating to substantial audience reach via Facebook.

Negative mentions for the period focussed purely on the academic interpretations of Te Reo use and well as negative Maori stereotyping. Mentions of this nature have not extended beyond basic news article shares from Maori news sources reporting the angle; [Te Karere](#) and [Waatea](#) (click word to view article).

Total mentions: 2,313

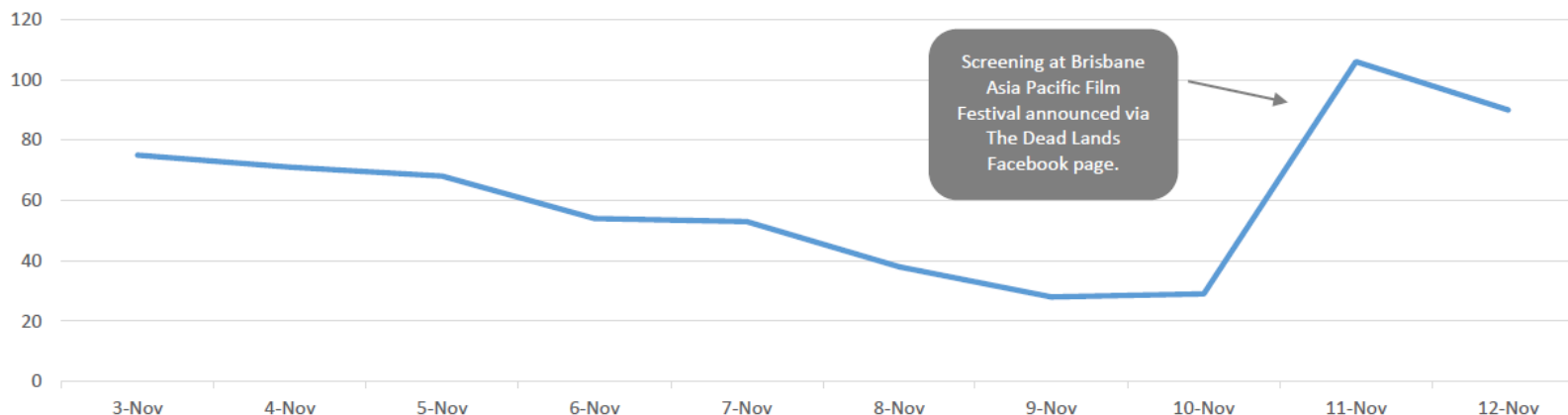


Pre-Release

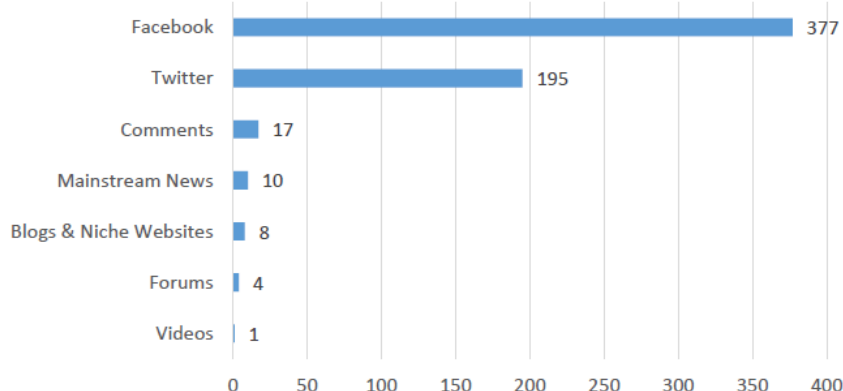
The Dead Lands – Digital Media  
3<sup>rd</sup> November – 12<sup>th</sup> November, 2014



The Dead Lands: Mention Volume Trend



The Dead Lands: Mentions by Media



For the reported period trailer shares remained prominent, accounting for 27% (168) of the total mentions recorded. These were largely driven by the continued presence of the Transmission Films trailer post which to date has had 654,570 views.

11<sup>th</sup> November saw The Dead Lands Facebook page make a [post](#) regarding a screening of the film at the Brisbane Asia Pacific Film Festival. Recorded shares of this particular post generated a mention spike, accounting for 11% (68) of total mentions for the period.

There were also 2 additional prominent mention trends with a [parody trailer](#) emerging on YouTube. Shares and comments on this accounted for 11% (65) of mentions. To date the parody trailer has had 9,860 views. As well as this, the films box office success generated conversation with 49 (8%) of mentions referencing the fact The Dead Lands had topped the New Zealand box office.

Total mentions: 612



# Appendix:

## *The Dead Lands* Audience Research: Objectives & Method

- To further enhance our understanding of New Zealand film audiences, the New Zealand Film Commission has undertaken audience exit interviews during the opening weekend of *The Dead Lands*. Ahead of the opening weekend, social media listening was in place from 1<sup>st</sup> September in collaboration with OMD.
- Exit Interviews: A total 326 interviews were completed during the opening weekend (30 October – 2 November 2014) in Auckland, Wellington, Christchurch and Rotorua. Interviews were undertaken by Angus & Associates, an independent research consultancy. The following cinemas were included:
  - Event Manukau
  - Rialto Newmarket
  - Event Albany
  - Hoyts Sylvia Park
  - Reading Courtney Place
  - Embassy Wellington
  - Reading Palms
  - Hoyts Riccarton
  - Readings Rotorua