

THE FILM

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5 COMMON  
MISTAKES

5 common mistakes  
a filmmaker makes



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## **5 Common Mistakes Independent Filmmakers Sabotage Their Own Films**

Independent filmmakers regularly make critical mistakes that jeopardise their success.

Deborah Rowland, CEO of We Are The Tonic, a London-based company providing distribution and marketing expertise to filmmakers and producers, says, "Many of the film makers we work with sabotage the distribution of their own films without even realising. Time and time again, I see the same mistakes and it breaks my heart, as these oversights can really affect the chances of their film being seen and ultimately being a success."

The five most common mistakes filmmakers make are:

### **1. They think their film appeals to "everyone"**

Getting the message of a film out to "all men and women aged 18-65" costs millions, and risks a great deal of wasted marketing. Building a more detailed profile of their audience - where they live, eat and socialise, what they read, watch, wear, listen to, etc. - means more focussed and effective marketing and a much better chance of reaching them.

### **2. They don't plan for distribution during production**

Not thinking of the audience during production wastes valuable opportunities to build an early following for the film, as well as creating quality assets to support the future sales and distribution, and making full use of the cast before they become busy with their ascending careers.

### **3. They create their own trailer and poster**

Having been immersed in the film for months if not years, film makers are often just too close to see what the audience will see in it. The poster and trailer are still the most influential marketing tools, and creating them requires a very different skill set to film making. To ensure a strong campaign that targets the audience effectively, they need to be produced by experienced editors and designers.

### **4. They underestimate the crowdfunding process**

An unsuccessful crowd funding campaign may mean a film doesn't get released at all. It's 4 weeks of solid work and each day needs to be planned carefully. Film makers need to consider: who will be targeted each week and how; what assets will be released and when; what are the key messages for each week; what really juicy rewards can be offered to encourage pledges. Covering all these areas will increase the chances of successful fundraising.

### **5. They misuse social media**

Just posting a trailer and telling people when the film is out is not enough. Social media can work much harder and be used to engage people in the film and its issues, involve them in its story, and convert them to seeing it.

#### Notes

We Are The Tonic Ltd, was founded by Deborah Rowland (ex- Curzon Artificial Eye, Icon, Twentieth Century Fox) to help filmmakers and film companies get their films seen by the right audiences, on the best platforms, and supported by strong marketing and release plans.

Deborah says, "Tonic provides much needed guidance and support to filmmakers and companies who have great films but don't know what to do to get them out there and seen by audiences."

The company offers bespoke consultancy services and mentoring programmes in all aspects of film distribution, and manages tailored distribution planning for direct films.

[www.wearethetonic.co.uk](http://www.wearethetonic.co.uk)

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