



Case Study: Effective introduction of a new genre

An analysis, using data from Ormax Cinematix (OCX), on how Tamil film Amaran's marketing campaign helped the film open very well, by effectively introducing a new genre to audiences

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Summary

- Diwali release Amaran achieved the third-highest opening for a Tamil film in 2024, following only Vijay's The Greatest Of All Time and Rajinikanth's Vettaiyan
 - This analysis explores the marketing strategy that propelled the film's extraordinary opening
 - Ormax Cinematix (OCX) tracking reveals that the film saw an exceptional jump of 30 points in Appeal, from 46 to 76, over the course of the campaign
 - The authors examine how the campaign managed to build consistent momentum over the month of October
 - Using the film's example, they illustrate the importance of a thoughtful, consistent campaign in shaping audience expectations, especially when introducing a new genre
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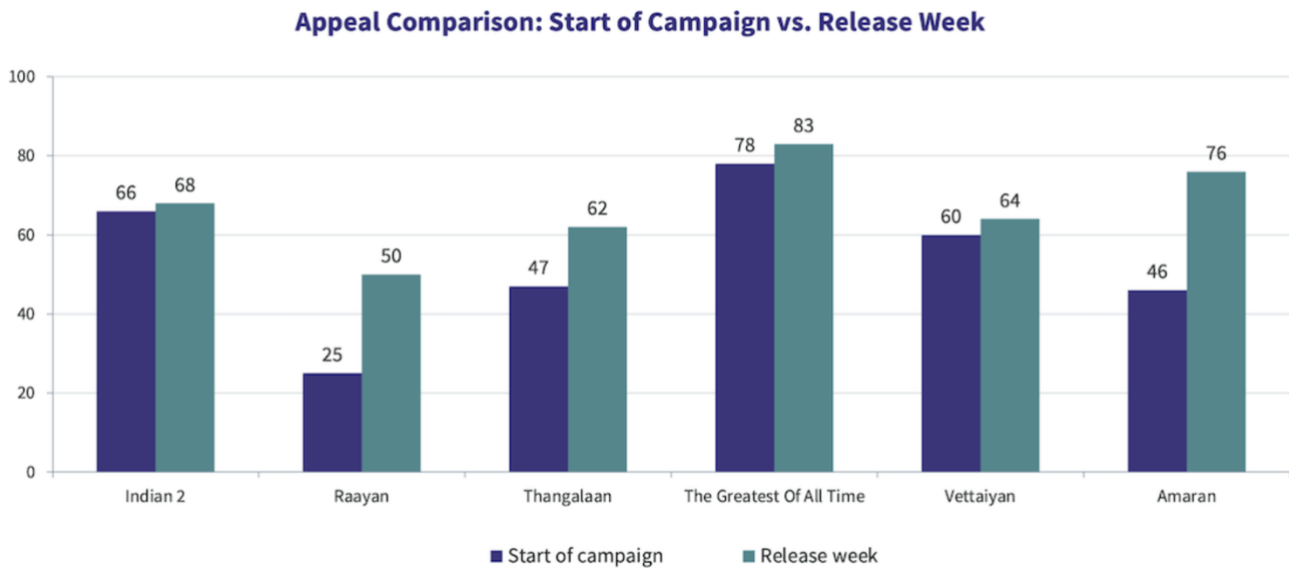
This Diwali, the Tamil film industry witnessed one of its biggest box office openings of the year with *Amaran*, starring Sivakarthikeyan and Sai Pallavi. The film achieved the third-highest opening for a Tamil film in 2024, following only Vijay's *The Greatest Of All Time* and Rajinikanth's *Vettaiyan*.

What's particularly striking is that with an first-day box office of ₹16 Cr (Tamil Nadu gross), *Amaran* outperformed several star-driven releases from earlier in the year, including Kamal Haasan's *Indian 2*, Vikram's *Thangalaan*, and Dhanush's *Raayan*. What set the *Amaran* campaign apart? This analysis explores the marketing strategy that propelled the film's extraordinary opening.

Amaran stands out by defying the usual expectations of a festival release, typically a mix of genres. Unlike the 'masala' template seen in films like *Sarkar*, *Mersal*, *Bigil*, *Vedhalam*, and *Annaatthe*, *Amaran* introduces 'Army biopic' as a fresh genre to Tamil audiences. While patriotic films with a military setting are well-established in Hindi cinema, mainstream Tamil cinema has rarely explored this theme. Even films with Army personnel, such as *Thuppakki* and *Vivegam*, focus on overtly commercial elements, where the military setting is secondary to the plot.

The strong opening of *Amaran* demonstrates the impact of well-crafted marketing in introducing a new genre to audiences. For this analysis, we examined the six highest-opening theatrical releases in Tamil Nadu in 2024 so far. We compared how their 'Appeal' grew from the start of the campaign (beginning with the first video release or seven weeks prior, whichever came later) to the release week. Appeal, a key metric in our campaign tracking and first-day box office forecasting tool, Ormax Cinematix (OCX), is a measure of percentage of the audience with a definitive intention to watch the film in a theatre, among those aware of the film. It's an indicator of campaign strength, reflecting the pull of the film's cast, theme, genre, music, and other campaign elements.

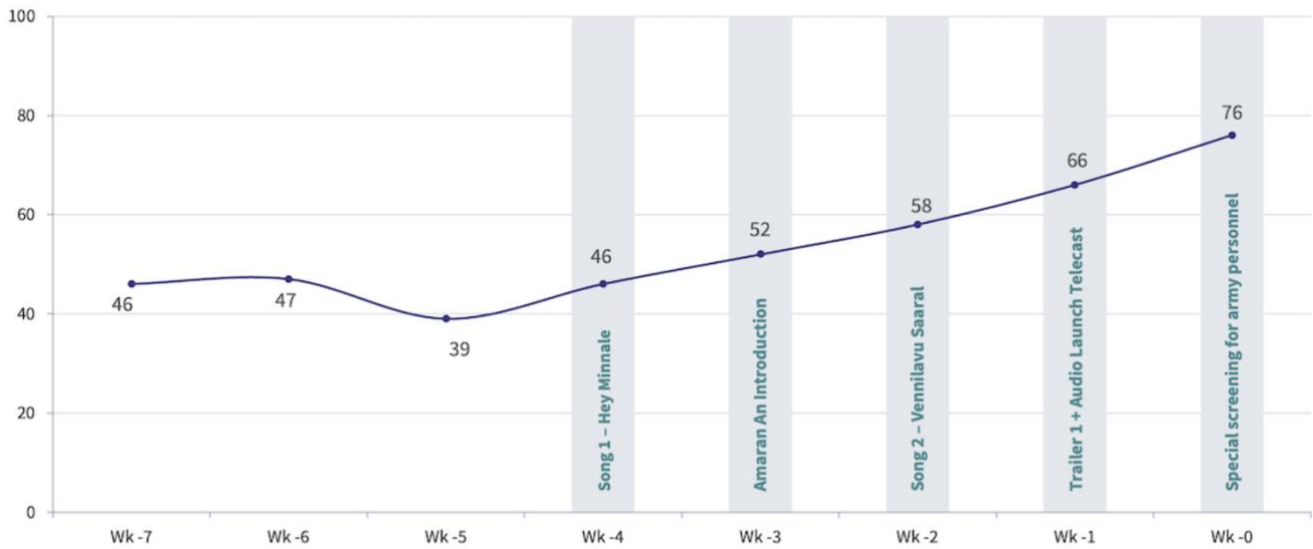
The chart below illustrates the Appeal shift for these six films, from the beginning of their campaigns to release week.



Amaran saw an Appeal increase of 30 points, from 46 to 76, the highest for any Tamil release in 2024. In contrast, big-budget films like Indian 2, The Greatest Of All Time, and Vettaiyan witnessed minimal Appeal growth over their campaigns. Thangalan and Raayan saw notable Appeal, but Amaran outperformed them in both the growth (30 points) and the absolute Appeal in the week of release (76). The only other Tamil film in recent years to achieve a similar Appeal increase in Appeal was Kamal Haasan’s Vikram (2022).

Understanding how Amaran’s campaign influenced Appeal requires examining the effect of each asset. The chart below tracks Amaran’s Appeal trajectory from early September, seven weeks before release, to the release week.

Amaran: Week-wise Appeal Movement



The first teaser, released in February, set the tone for the film, highlighting its unique setting and tonality. When OCX tracking for the film began in September, the Appeal was at 46. Momentum grew with the release of the song Hey Minnale, and an introduction teaser for Sai Pallavi’s character, four weeks before release. These assets established Amaran as an Army film with an emotional offering.

The campaign continued with interviews about the real-life figure on whom the biopic is based, alongside behind-the-scenes footage - elements that distinguished Amaran’s marketing strategy. These assets introduced audiences to the film’s unique narrative, emphasizing its depth and universal themes of family, duty, love, and sacrifice, resonant themes for Tamil audiences.



For lead actor Sivakarthikeyan, *Amaran* is notably different from his previous box-office hits like *Seemaraja*, *Don*, and *Doctor*, which were comedies. The marketing consciously set expectations by highlighting the film's distinctiveness from his earlier works.

In summary, *Amaran's* marketing strategy underscores the importance of a thoughtful, consistent campaign in shaping audience expectations, especially when introducing a new genre. It highlights the power of aligning the tone and narrative style to prepare viewers for a fresh storytelling experience, beyond star appeal or festival timing.