

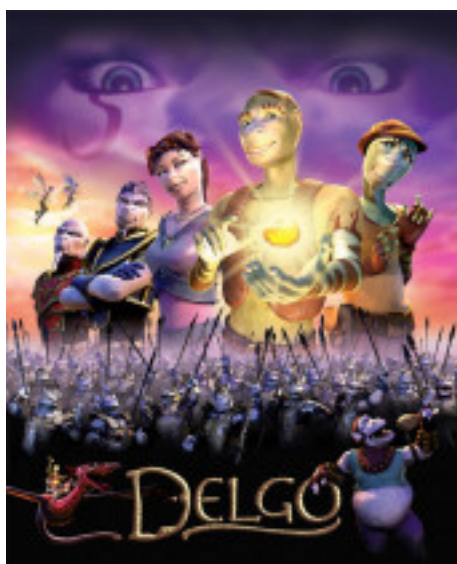
## Box Office Power Rankings: A Milk-Carton Movie

Written by Jeff Ignatius

Wednesday, 17 December 2008 04:20

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If you've heard of the animated *Delgo*, it's most likely for its infamy. Opening this past weekend in 2,160 theaters, it barely grossed \$500,000. Its per-theater revenue was \$237, meaning that with an average ticket price of \$7 and five screenings per day, a little more than two people showed up each time the movie was exhibited.

Needless to say, *Delgo* does not show up in this week's [Box Office Power Rankings](#), won once again by

*Bolt*

, which is feasting on weak competition such as

*The Day the Earth Stood Still*

, a bomb that looks like

*The Dark Knight*

compared to

*Delgo*

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Box Office Mojo notes that *Delgo* had the [worst wide opening](#) since at least 1982. The chart indicates that if you open in 2,000 or more theaters, \$2 million in ticket sales are pretty much guaranteed. (See: *The Adventures of Pluto Nash* [\$2.2 million] and this summer's *The Rocker* [2.6 million].)

So something went horribly wrong with *Delgo*.

At the movie's [Internet Movie Database trivia page](#), one learns that the independent production spanned six years and that the dailies were shown on the movie's official Web site:

"Fathom Studios made a highly progressive move by opening themselves up to scrutiny from the outside. They posted their progress online over a number of years, and not in the form of sanitized press releases or occasional images. They were actually using their site to post dailies, rough footage, fragments of animation as they were being scrutinized, polished, and reworked. This was a first for any active studio production."

Another nugget:

"Fathom Studios signed only recognizable, bankable actors for principle [sic] parts as part for [sic] their production master plan. They then rolled out their cast announcements gradually, thus maximizing the PR impact and addressing potential distribution concerns of the companies they needed to get the film into theaters."

Here we note the distinction between getting a movie into theaters and getting paying customers *into* those theaters.

And:

"The movie was scripted as the first film of a potential trilogy."

There are at least two people excited about the possibility: Freddie Prinze Jr. and Chris Kattan.

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### About Box Office Power Rankings

Box Office Power Rankings balance box office and critical reception to create a better measure of a movie's overall performance against its peers than gross receipts alone.

The weekly rankings cover the 10 top-grossing movies in the United States for the previous weekend. I assign equal weight to box office and critical opinion, with each having two components. The measures are: box-office gross, per-theatre average, Rotten Tomatoes ( [RottenTomatoes.com](http://RottenTomatoes.com) ) score, and Metacritic ( [Metacritic.com](http://Metacritic.com) ) score.

Why those four? Box-office gross basically measures the number of people who saw a movie in a given weekend. Per-theatre average corrects for blockbuster-wannabes that flood the market with prints, and gives limited-release movies a fighting chance. Rotten Tomatoes measures critical opinion in a binary way. And Metacritic gives a better sense of critics' enthusiasm (or bile) for a movie.

For each of the four measures, the movies are ranked and assigned points (10 for the best performer, one for the worst). Finally, those points are added up, with a maximum score of 40 and a minimum score of four.

For more Box Office Power Rankings, visit [CultureSnob.com/bopr](http://CultureSnob.com/bopr) . Culture Snob is the Web site of Reader Managing Editor Jeff Ignatius.

#### Box Office Power Rankings: December 12-14, 2008

Box Office Ranks  
Rank

Critics' Ranks  
Movie

[Last Week](#)

Gross

Per T

[Rotten Tomatoes](#)

[Metacritic](#)

1

*Bolt*

1

7 (\$7.5M)

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2	<i>Milk</i>	-	2 (\$2.6M)
3	<i>Twilight</i>	3	8 (\$8.0M)
4	<i>Quantum Of Solace</i>	4	5 (\$3.7M)
5	<i>The Day the Earth Stood Still</i>	-	10 (\$30.5M)
6	<i>Four Christmases</i>	5	9 (\$13.1M)
6	<i>Australia</i>	6	6 (\$4.2M)
8	<i>Madagascar: Escape 2 Africa</i>	7	3 (\$3.2M)

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<b>9</b>	<b><i>Nothing Like the Holidays</i></b>	-	4 (\$3.5M)
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<b>10</b>	<b><i>Transporter 3</i></b>	9	1 (\$2.4M)
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