

Making Private Home Theaters into Real Theaters

Written by Bob Snyder
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What's the most you ever paid to see a movie? Some people pay \$500 per film to see Hollywood's latest with a special first-run service (a service sold via AV dealers).

Is that incredible?

Prima Cinema movies cost \$500 each-- and require \$35,000 in hardware (using an encryption technology to prevent illegal copies of movies)--to be shown in private homes.

"We found the market is very acceptable to the price point," says Jason Pang, Founder. "You are paying for an event for friends and family, a first-run film. Some of our clients have spent as much as \$4 million on their home theaters. Our clients tell us their wine costs more than the \$500 screening."

The market for this Hollywood service is the affluent: Pang cites NBA legends, celebrities, actors, busy executives, hedge-fund managers—and says NY City's tri-state area is their best market. Seth Macfarlane, creator of the animated television hit *Family Guy*, is one publicly-disclosed user.

The PRIMA Cinema service operates by securely downloading licensed major Hollywood titles directly onto the secure PRIMA Movie Player in clients' homes ahead of a film's release date,

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which then becomes viewable on or after the release date.

As well as **Best Buy Capital** and **Universal Pictures**, **IMAX** is an investor: they paid about \$2.5 million to acquire up to 20% stake in Prima Cinema.

Under the agreement, IMAX uses Prima's service for its luxury private IMAX theaters, which cost \$2.5 million and have 20-foot-wide screens. The deal also made IMAX the exclusive distributor of Prima's systems for the next five years in China, now the world's second-largest movie market.

Due out in 2016, PRIMA Cinema's second-generation platform will include advanced audio and imaging capabilities including 4K and High Frame Rate (HFR) Digital Cinema Initiatives (DCI) playback, as well as support for theatrically released Digital Cinema Packages (DCPs) featuring the Dolby Atmos format.

"The use of Dolby's market-leading server technologies as well as support for Dolby Atmos in our next-generation platform typifies our desire to bring cutting-edge and immersive theatrical experiences to the home," says PRIMA CEO Shawn Yeager. "PRIMA has always stood for delivering the unmatched experiences our clients demand. Our initial platform was years ahead of the market in delivering 10-bit, 4:2:2 video, which is only now being adopted as the UHD 4K standard. By incorporating proven professional cinema technologies into our next-generation platform, we leap ahead again. This is critical to our mission of transforming 'home theaters' to a 'theater in the home.'"

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