

'Expelled' Has 'Robust' Opening

'Expelled: No Intelligence Allowed' finished at No. 9 in its opening weekend. The documentary-style film took in \$3.2 million from 1,052 theaters to crack the top 10.



[] *Expelled: No Intelligence Allowed* finished at No. 9 in its opening weekend, according to . The documentary-style film, which challenges Charles Darwin's theory of evolution and tapped into the Christian retail channel to help promote the launch, took in \$3.2 million from 1,052 theaters to crack the top 10.

Premise Media Corporation-the film producers-hired Motive Entertainment, which handled much of the grass-roots marketing of Mel Gibson's *The Passion of The Christ*, to reach out to faith-based communities.

Hosted and co-written by comedian, economist and author Ben Stein, *Expelled*-which generated media attention for its controversial topic-received mixed reviews.

"Expelled... fared better than prerelease tracking had signaled," The Los Angeles Times observed. "Its opening was robust for a documentary, though it was far from the Michael Moore-type blockbuster the producers had been hoping for. ... But it could dwarf forecasts with even a fraction of the faith-based crowd that turned The Passion of The Christ into a cultural phenomenon in 2004."

With production and marketing budgets in the single-digit millions, *Expelled* had the widest documentary release ever, the *Times* reported.

Gary Weyel, marketing and communications strategist for The Parable Group, told *Christian Retailing* that Parable "has been working with our stores to help promote the film."

Motive Entertainment sent all 190 Parable stores resource materials designed for students, teachers, pastors, youth leaders and organizations to help build awareness, said Weyel, noting that the resource kits included a leader's guide, poster, flier and video trailer.

“By providing some simple tools to help stores reach out to their community, we hope to both promote the film and provide a link to the local store for any related product sales in the future,” he said.—**Eric Tiansay**