

'Pirates' Movie Premiered Friday

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After major studios turned it down, Big Idea self-financed *Jonah*, which made more than \$25 million in its theatrical run, according to . “We could barely get a meeting for *Jonah*,” Mike Nawrocki, who directed the *Pirates* movie, told the newspaper.

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But after the blockbusters *The Passion of The Christ* and *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Lion, The Witch and the Wardrobe*, doors began to open, Nawrocki said. Before those two films, “it was unheard of” for a studio to invest heavily in faith-based movies, he added.

Now, studios have embraced the potential of faith-based films. "If you can tell a story with a biblical world view well, I think there is a big audience for that," Nawrocki, the voice of Larry the Cucumber, told *The Tennessean*. "In a country where 90% of the people believe God exists, you are going to strike a chord."

In the summer of 2006, Universal Studios agreed to fund the new VeggieTales movie, which stars Larry the Cucumber, Mr. Lunt and Pa Grape (Elliot, Sedgewick and George) as three wannabe heroes.

Universal is also promoting *Pirates* heavily, which includes spots on network television and ads on billboards. "It's fun to make a movie when your house is not on the line," Phil Vischer, co-creator of VeggieTales and the voice of Bob the Tomato, told the newspaper.