

'Breakthrough' Sees Major Success in Box Office

Breakthrough, the new faith-based film based on the true story of John Smith and starring Chrissy Metz and Josh Lucas, made a big splash when it premiered last weekend. The film came in third for the weekend box office, earning \$11 million and \$20 million internationally, and managed to hit the No. 2 slot during the first week of its release.

Producer DeVon Franklin (*Miracles from Heaven*, *The Star*), who brought the story to the studio and worked tirelessly in promotion alongside star Metz, said that although the film didn't take the top spot as many had hoped, he was happy with the first week results.

"Whenever you have a movie that grosses back its production budget during its opening weekend, you have to be happy with that," he said.

Franklin said with Easter falling later in the year, it made it challenging with all box office receipts, as not as many spring breaks led into the opening weekend.

"What we've seen is that a lot of times when Easter comes earlier in April, even at the end of March, it's the beginning of the spring and spring break," he said. "So, you're able to catch the tail end of families being out."

With the film drawing church groups and garnering an A on Cinemascore (indicating audience satisfaction), Franklin believes the film will continue to do well through its run, even with the "tsunami" of *Avengers: Endgame* releasing this week.

"People who see *Breakthrough*, they love it," he said. "Our hope is that definitely even with *Endgame* coming out, we're

going to do just fine and continue to play.”

One new connection *Breakthrough* and *Avengers: Endgame* has is that they both now answer to the same corporate studio, Walt Disney Pictures. After *Breakthrough* went into production, Disney’s deal to acquire 20th Century Fox was finalized. In a recent social media post, Franklin hoped for a good showing to send a good signal about faith-based films to Fox’s new parent company. Did it?

“They’re very happy with it,” he said, referring to the studio executives. “They think that it’s performing really well. They’re happy with the quality of the film. They’re happy with the grosses. They think that we’re in good shape and that we’re right where we need to be.”

Another interesting superhero connection is the film currently alternating the top spots at the box office with *Breakthrough*, *Shazam!* starring Zachary Levi, featured Franklin’s wife, Megan Goode.

“She had a nice little cameo in that film,” he said.

As *Breakthrough* continues to play, Franklin and the studio will be watching its performance. The accomplished producer and minister, however, is well aware that ticket sales are only a monetary indication of reach.

“There are testimonies about what this film is doing to people’s lives all around the world,” he said. “That truly, at the end of the day, is the greatest barometer of success.”
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DeWayne Hamby is a communications specialist and longtime journalist covering faith-based music, entertainment, books and the retail industry. He is the author of the book *Gratitude Adjustment*. Connect with him at or on Twitter, @dewaynehamby.