

## Strong online sales for new 'Potter' film

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The latest Harry Potter movie is casting a favorable spell for online ticket seller Fandango, which is entering the holiday season with strong sales generated by the young magician.

"Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire" doesn't premiere in the United States until Nov. 18, but advance sales are already brisk for the film, according to Art Levitt, president and CEO of Fandango.

The movie "has ranked among Fandango's top-selling movies since tickets first became available," Levitt said.

As of 5 p.m., "Goblet of Fire" tickets accounted for 30 percent of all tickets sold this week by Fandango.

Just behind that is "Chicken Little," which opened nationally Friday, at 20 percent.

"It's been a slow year at the box office aside from Star Wars," Levitt said. "So this is exciting news for us."

Fandango recently offered consumers a new service that makes use of wireless technology. Fandango Mobile, found at [mobile.Fandango.com](http://mobile.Fandango.com), allows users to search show times and purchase advance tickets through their mobile phones.

Levitt said the new mobile technology is user-friendly, calling it "completely intuitive and very easy."

In addition to browsing the Web site from Internet-connected mobile phones, users can send a text message to Fandango to get specific information about movie show times within a ZIP code.

This is not the first attempt Fandango has made to expand its service for customers. Over the summer it tested a service allowing customers to pre-order concession-stand snacks along with their tickets.

According to Levitt, the service went over well with customers, and the company is now deciding if and how it wants to implement it further.

"We are focused on giving our customers a better experience," Levitt said.

Cait Murphy, a 21-year-old college student and avid filmgoer, said she uses Fandango on occasion.

"I pretty much only use Fandango when I'm almost positive the movie will sell out," she said.

Murphy, who said she will be using Fandango to purchase advance tickets for the Harry Potter film, said she doesn't see herself making much use of Fandango Mobile.

"I would probably only use (Mobile) in an 'emergency,' if I were really desperate for tickets to a show that might sell out and I wasn't near a computer," she said.

Though Fandango is the biggest of the advance movie-ticket services, it is hardly the only one. Movietickets.com is owned by AMC Entertainment Inc., and Moviefone, proprietor of the famous movie information hotline 777-FILM, is owned by AOL/Time Warner.

Levitt said Fandango has not given consideration to consolidating with any of the smaller ticket-selling companies. Fandango already works exclusively with 70 percent of U.S. theatres that do online ticketing, Levitt said.

Levitt said that though ticket sales are the focus of Fandango's Web site, customers are using the site for other purposes as well.

"People generally come to Fandango for current movie information," Levitt said. "We are seeing people come for reviews, synopses, show times, and more."

However, Murphy said she uses Moviefone and 777-FILM more for show times and reviews. Nevertheless, she only buys advance tickets with Fandango, she said.

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