

# Movie Rating System II

- Entertainment retailers are the only businesses in America that routinely turn away perfectly legal business because of a **voluntary partnership with America's parents**. Voluntary ratings enforcement has become an integral part of movie theater culture—and movie theater operators take their role very seriously.
- In April 2011, the Federal Trade Commission issued its Report to Congress on marketing violence to children in entertainment. As it has done in five previous reports, beginning in 2000, the Commission conducted a **"secret shopper survey"** to probe whether children had access to restricted material at movie theaters, DVD retailers, video game retailers, and music retailers.
- The FTC's underage secret shoppers attempted to purchase tickets to "R" rated movies at more than 260 different theater locations across the country and were successful only 33% of the time. The FTC noted in its report there was no statistically significant change in ratings enforcement at the movie box office from the 2009 secret shopper survey.
- We can and will do better. Here is what we already do:
  - Adopt and comply with an **"ID-check" policy** for all movies rated "R" or "NC-17" by the Motion Picture Association of America;
  - Appoint a **senior executive compliance officer** to regularly review the company's ratings enforcement and education practices, and to join with other NATO member compliance officers for meetings twice a year to review policies and practices and to examine enforcement and education records;
  - Include ratings information in their **websites**, and/or to link with sites that contain additional ratings information;
  - Display **posters**, which NATO provides free of charge upon request, or other materials that explain the rating system in each theater complex; and
  - Program only **"trailers"** (advertisements for future movies) that are compatible with the main feature and meet certain established guidelines for appropriate placement.
- Americans are concerned about what their children see and hear. An April 2005 study by the Pew Research Center for the People and the Press confirms that concern. Another finding in that study, however, underscores the value Americans place on **liberty and the latitude to do right without government coercion**: by 48% to 41%, people were more worried about the government imposing undue restrictions than the industry producing material harmful to society.



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION  
OF THEATRE OWNERS

Talking Points