

How Hunting Matthew Nichols used usheru Select to Power a 900+ Screen Self-Distributed Theatrical Release

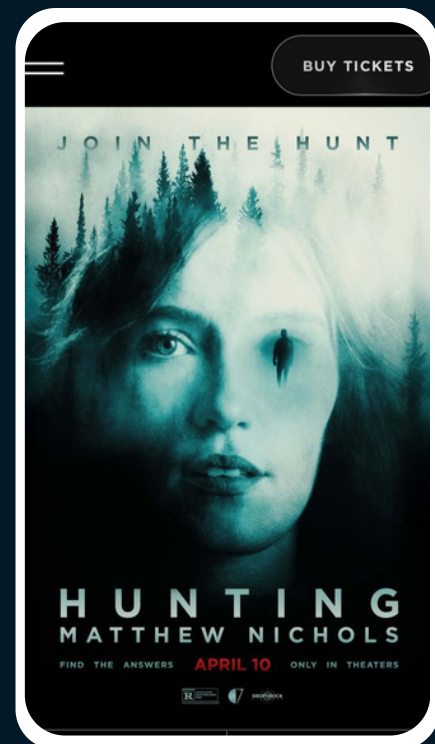
Overview

Hunting Matthew Nichols is a micro-budget horror/mockumentary feature directed by Markian Tarasiuk and produced outside the traditional studio system.

Shot in just 12 days on a budget of approximately \$275,000, the film went on to achieve a North American theatrical release across more than 900 screens, following an ambitious self-distribution strategy led by the filmmaking team.

Rather than relying on a traditional distributor, the team built a campaign around direct audience activation, organic social engagement, geo-targeted advertising and a low-friction ticketing journey.

To support this, Hunting Matthew Nichols used usheru Select to connect audiences directly from campaign activity to local showtimes and ticket purchase.



Campaign Approach



Marketing built from day one

Because the film blurred the line between true crime documentary and horror fiction, the campaign was designed to extend the world of the film beyond the screen.

This included:

- In-character social content
- A fictional town with its own online presence
- Organic “rage bait” and conversation-led social clips
- An online investigative game linked to the film world
- Paid media concentrated in the final days before release



A self-distributed theatrical push

With support from The Fithian Group and Moon Seven, the filmmakers pitched directly to major exhibitors, including AMC, Regal, Cinemark, Marcus and B&B.

The campaign was originally expected to target 200–300 screens, but exhibitor interest expanded the release to more than 900 screens on opening weekend.

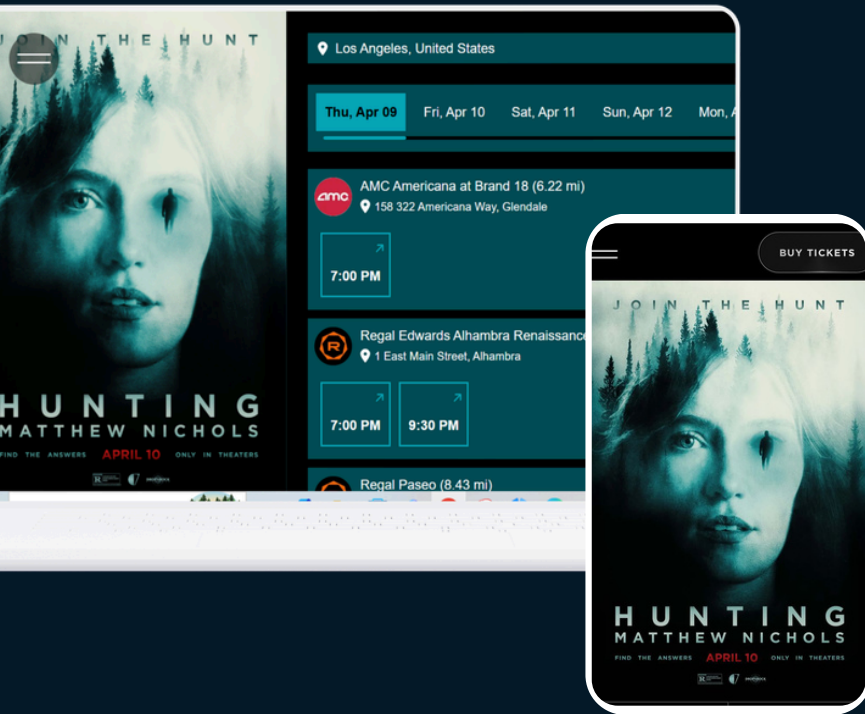
This created a major operational challenge: how could a small independent team help audiences find the right cinema, in the right location, at the exact moment intent was highest?

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usheru was vital because when you’re on a thousand screens, that’s a lot of locations. How do we create a robust marketing campaign around this? Everything has to be geo-located. When someone clicks through on the ad, it needs to show the closest theatre so they can buy tickets within two clicks.

Markian Tarasiuk
Director, Producer and
Distributor
Hunting Matthew Nichols

Solution



Key Takeways

1. The filmmakers prioritised marketing from the outset

The team had already created audience-facing assets, lore and social content, ensuring the campaign already had momentum.

2. Wide releases create unique operational complexity

Without geo-located showtimes and simple ticketing paths, audience intent can easily be lost.

3. Conversion infrastructure matters

The ticketing layer is not just a technical add-on. It is a critical part of the campaign's ability to turn awareness into cinema visits.

Solution

usheru Select provided the ticketing and showtimes layer that enabled the campaign to convert audience interest into action. While the marketing campaign generated awareness and demand, usheru Select helped ensure audiences could quickly move from discovery to purchase.

In particular, it enabled:

- Geo-located showtimes across a wide theatrical footprint
- A direct path from digital ads to the nearest available cinema
- A simple ticketing journey designed around high-intent traffic
- Support for a small team managing a large-scale theatrical release
- A flexible widget that could handle significant campaign traffic

Results

 **1.8**
million
sessions

The release opened on more than 900 screens across North America.

Across the campaign, usheru Select handled 1.8 million sessions, helping audiences move from awareness to action at scale by connecting them to local showtimes and ticketing.

The film ultimately generated more than \$720,000 at the domestic box office, following an opening weekend of over \$600,000.

For a micro-budget feature handled by a small independent team, this demonstrated how direct-distribution models can be supported by the right conversion infrastructure.