

Interviewee: Scott Koran

Interviewer: Brandon Koran

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Abstract:

Scott Koran was born and raised in Marshfield, Wisconsin, and works at Rogers Cinema as its CEO. Over the course of this interview, Scott Koran details the difficulties of running his family business during the pandemic including its effect on his life, his family, and on the overall local community. He discusses the difficulties of closing down his theaters and moving perishable food items from all his locals to a central location. Scott explains his attempt to pay the bills by running the popular curbside popcorn sales at his Marshfield theater location. He shares what the situation in his local community is like and allows people are reacting to Covid-19 safety measures created by local businesses. At the end of this interview, he discusses the uncertainty of the future and how the media and health organizations have been sending out conflicting and confusing messages regarding the disease.

Brandon Koran 00:00

Recording. Alright, it's recording now. So, we'll start the interview. This is Brandon Koran, the time is 4pm, December 29th 2021. The current number of cases in the US is 53,275,589. The deaths in the US are 800,018,444. In Wisconsin, there are 3869 current COVID cases, and 10,014 deaths, deaths. The percentage of the US that are vaccinated, this is provided by NPR is 62%. And if you wouldn't mind sharing your name and, and sharing some demographic information for this study, such as race, age, and gender.

Scott Koran 00:52

I'm Scott Koran, a 49-year-old white male that lives in Marshfield, Wisconsin.

BK 00:57

Alrighty, and then what are some primary things you do on a day-to-day basis for your job?

SK 01:03

I own a small chain of movie theaters; we have six locations. And in that job, I booked the film, I fix projectors, I act as human resources, I do bookkeep and accounting, tax planning. Pretty much any type of job in our- in our business market films. Pretty much anything, I wear many hats.

BK 01:31

Gotcha. And you're primarily located out of Marshfield, Wisconsin, which is where you live? Correct?

SK 01:36

Correct.

BK 01:37

And what does it like to live there currently?

SK 01:39

It's cold. It's- kind of adjusting to life with COVID. As I go around, town, grocery shopping and restaurants. It's almost like the COVID doesn't exist, because people generally aren't masking. It's just- it's almost like it was pre COVID.

BK 02:07

Gotcha. And are there any people that are that are masking in the town, if so, do you see any people having negative reactions to this?

SK 02:17

So, the places I see people masking our healthcare related our hospital clinic are mandating it. Walgreens, my pharmacy. When I- when I stop in there to shop, I would say a third of the people are masked employees, of course are but a fair amount of the customers aren't. And when I went in for my booster shot, I had to mask as a requirement to get the vaccine shot. And this was right before Omicron was announced. There'll be you know, became a big news story and an issue that we would have to face. And you know, there was one customer that kind of looked at me side-eyed like why are you wearing a mask? But I just went to you know, went on about my- my day. So.

BK 03:10

Gotcha. And what were your first thoughts and you learned about COVID-19?

SK 03:16

So back in March of 2020, we're about to be open every day. For matinees for spring break. It's a big time for us. You know, the kids are off school, movie going is a huge business in Wisconsin and Michigan, where we operate in because of the cold. And- and then Monday, there still wasn't a lot of information. There's a lot of fear. A lot of news reports of you know what this could be, but, you know, with there wasn't a lot of certainty about what was- what was going to happen. And I had one employee that had some- some breathing health related issues. And I knew I knew that they were going to work a lot that week. And I was worried, you know, what does COVID mean for them? And what does COVID mean for the rest of my staff? Yeah, and I really had a hard time. You're trying to figure out what we're going to do because the government hadn't given us there wasn't any- any- any blueprint of what was going to happen. And we elected I elected to close our theatres down that Monday. And then the state of Wisconsin ordered businesses are closed back Friday, just a few days later. And from that point on, we were closed.

BK 04:35

And related this, a lot of movie studios were actually delaying or postponing their movies. Some of them actually not even giving a release date. Some of them the ones I remember were Mulan and then the new James Bond movie, No Time to Die. What are your thoughts about this?

SK 04:52

Well as we as we progress further on into the pandemic, you know, the- the political parties within State of Wisconsin, were fighting that- and basically saying that the governor did have the legal right to close businesses down. And as this all played out, eventually we're allowed to reopen. But the product that we would have played, movies like you mentioned, move on, and no time to die. And some other ones, they had all moved off their dates. So, while we could open, there wasn't anything for us to play. So, some fellow theater owners, they played older, older films, you know, classic films. I elected not to do that, because I just I really didn't feel like there was any business there to be had by playing older films. And by looking at the grosses of these theaters that did- did, they weren't, you mean, they weren't even coming close to paying the bills.

BK 05:49

And I know one way, I was there for this during this was popcorn sales while the theater was shut down. Can you tell me a little bit about that?

SK 05:58

Well, you know, I had heard that other theaters were doing curbside sales and whatnot. And, you know, I had moved all of our perishable product, all of our candy and- and things with expiration dates back to our march for theater and looking at all this inventory. And, you know, fearful that is going to go to waste. So, what we- what we did kind of haphazardly is through an announcement on Facebook that we are going to be selling curbside popcorn. Starting in just a few hours, and I think we sold six or 700 bags of popcorn that day, there was up to 45 minutes to an hour wait. Cars were around the block, it was a great out show our outpouring of support for us. I mean, it was really the only revenue we had coming in. And that kind of created this idea that there was some potential with curbside popcorn, to just- just to give people some hours to help offset some costs, and to do basically the only thing we could do.

BK 07:04

And then you go a little more detail about you said, there were six theater locations and like you said you had to move all this nonperishable stuff to Marshfield were some of the other challenges with this. I know with electronics, you sometimes have to keep them on for certain points do like regular maintenance checks, because you leave them off for too long, they'll get damaged.

SK 07:29

Well, there's several aspects to that. One is the actual physical, building the facility. buildings don't like to be left. Alone, we had a water pipe break in one location we had, I mean, you- just you're constantly checking on your buildings to make sure that there's not a problem, anything going wrong. I mean, we had roughly we had- we had- we had a fair share of problems. And then on the equipment side, our projector, our digital projection equipment, wasn't really designed to sit without operating for very long. And, you know, as the as we reopened in September, after closing in March, we lost- they're called

kickboards that control the projectors. I think we lost seven or eight of them that malfunction, they were \$2,500 apiece, we lost a sound processor, which, you know, when we close, we just push the power button, and it turns off, and then when we decided to reopen, we push the power button. And it's- it's nonfunctional. It was a frustrating experience. And I mean it created- the reopening process was a lot more difficult because of it.

BK 08:49

And what are some of the biggest concerns that you have about the COVID 19 pandemic? Back when originally started versus now what- what are the bigger differences?

SK 09:02

Well, back in 2020, early- early on in March, I didn't know if we were going to survive. We- we were struggling. We had zero income we you know the motion picture exhibition business is very has a lot of overhead. Our buildings are huge. They take a lot of money to heat, cool. The electricity even when you're not running shows there's power that's consumed by just by the building being I mean, you have to leave your furnaces down you have to leave, and you have you have power that's it's going to cost you money. You have insurance because you still have buildings that are occupied. You have you have a lot of overhead. And every day it was I didn't know if we are going- going to exist any longer. This was going to be our last day as an operating business. PPE [Personal Protective Equipment Grant Program] hadn't had been funded yet. There were discussions of other grant programs. But at that juncture, we had been a month or two out with no income, yet a huge number of expenses that we had to pay. I mean, you had to pay your insurance. You had to pay your health insurance. You know, we had staff members, that were still coming [__?] I mean, we had to take care of our overhead somehow. Fast forward, you know, today. There's still there's fear and uncertainty. What is- what is Omicron? You know, what? I mean, if you've watched the news, it's- it's- it's- it's not as deadly, it's not as dangerous as delta. But, you know, it's still COVID. And how does that, you know, do people still need to be hospitalized? If they have it? I mean, you know, is it still going to overwhelm our healthcare system? Are people on our side of it? Are people still going to want to gather publicly to watch movies? You know, I don't know the answers to those questions. I mean, we- we have Spider-Man in release right now. And it's doing very well. It's, it's really the only film we've had that- that's- that's since we reopened back in September of last year that has acted like a normal, pre COVID movie release. So, once, Spider Man ends, what's next? You know, will studios move their films again will, you know, there's just uncertainty all over again?

BK 11:40

Not sure. And with this, what are you- what are you afraid of? Like what concerns you have on the effects of COVID-19 year employment and the economy more broadly?

SK 11:56

It's- there- it's a- it's a difficult question. Um, I guess my fear is that, you know, we have to live with COVID. for a really long time, and how that affects. So, on my side of it, how does that affect people going to the movies? How does that affect gathering in public places? How does that affect our everyday lives? You know, will people go to- to restaurants and museums? And will they go out? Those are some lingering fears that I have. And I'm not really sure if they're going to resolve themselves anytime soon.

BK 12:38

And with this, I know a lot. There's a lot of business right now they're struggling to find employment, currently, is that an issue that you're currently having at the movie theater?

SK 12:48

We've had pretty good luck. As far as staffing goes, I know many other businesses are having issues. We've kind of escaped that- that problem. So, not sure what else to say about that.

BK 13:04

That's connected to this. A lot of plays have been fed up with how customers have been treating them related to COVID-19. And mask mandates and social distancing. Was that a big issue at the movie theater?

SK 13:20

So, when we first reopened, we had a mask mandate. And my first customer that when we- when we opened, I was- I was outside the martial theater, and I was going to check people for mass make sure that they were being compliant, and is very upset, said that “the Americans with Disabilities Act, I had no right to make you wear a mask in my building, that the governor, government cannot make him wear masks”. And I said, “this isn't a government regulation. This is our mandate to our customers, to protect our staff and to protect them”. And he's like, “Oh, so this isn't a governmental mandate”. And I'm like, no, he pulls a mask out of his pocket and goes right into the movie theater. He actually even had bought his ticket ahead of time. So, he just wanted to have that confrontation, you know, or let his voice you know, let his- his voice be known that he did not agree with this, this governmental mandate. But again, it's- in my mind, it's misplaced. There's nothing I can do about it. We're doing it to protect our staff. We're doing it to protect your customers. But yet, that's what he chose to do. And we over the course of the next month or so, we had people we considered our friends reach out to us and you know, one specifically said I hope you fail. You can't make me wear a mask. And it was frustrating that people would say such things.

BK 14:46

And were these met like, well these comments in person or were they sent through like messenger accounts to the business to your own personal accounts?

SK 14:56

Most of the comments were made through messenger, keyboard warrior. And they wouldn't say it directly to- to my face. Yeah, we- we did have someone basically told my manager in Wisconsin Rapids that, you know, I hope you go bankrupt and walked out of the theater. So, I mean, most of it was through social- social media, but it did happen in person.

BK 15:22

And I will say this that has been degrading on your mental health, and how do you like, like, deal with these situations? Like, how do you at the end of the day, like, try to relax and forget about these people?

SK 15:40

I don't know, if you actually get, he just he just tried to tuck it away and keep going. I mean, every day and that- that juncture in 2020 was a struggle, but we didn't know if we were going to survive as a business. You know, we had health fears, I had children I was- I was fearful that they would get sick, I was fearful, I would get sick. You know, other family members. And every day was, you know, this- this fear. It was it to have people say things like that. I mean, it was frustrating. It was demoralizing. I mean, it was- Covid's tough enough, you didn't have to pile on.

BK 16:21

And related to getting sick. I had COVID-19 when I came to visit you mom and the siblings, I accident- I inadvertently spread it to you guys, when I didn't at this point didn't realize I had COVID free for you in the family. How what was it like dealing with COVID-19

SK 16:41

My COVID experience was almost three weeks in a spare bedroom in our basement. Just suffering from headaches and wanting it to go away. It was kind of a scary, you know, situation, because you didn't know if you're going to go sleep and wake up sicker, or you know, or be in worse shape. I monitored my oxygen rates, you know, as we did for everyone in the house, who had- we had COVID we all kind of took our turn. So, everyone, you know, came out of it. Okay, I don't think we have any- any residual effects, you know, but yeah, we just don't know at this point.

BK 17:27

And then I'm curious, did you lose your- your sense of taste and smell as well? That was a very common symptom. How long did it take you regain that?

SK 17:38

Just a few days. My- my loss of sense of smell and taste was very fleeting, basically, I lost it for a day or two and then it came right back.

BK 17:50

And then with the pandemic, how has it affected you in the family's day to day activities, like running, grocery shopping?

SK 18:01

Which juncture? Early on in the pandemic, it was masks, you know, limited to just one person, we'd bring the groceries in, we would bleach wipe, you know what we needed, because there wasn't a really good explanation of, you know, what we needed to do, you know, they early on in the pandemic, pandemic, they said, COVID can let live on certain surfaces for up to 12 hours. And so there's that fear, we don't want to bring it into our house. So, we tried to take care of it as much as possible. Now, you know, we don't go out to eat as much we don't, ya know, we don't go in, you know, in public gatherings as much as we used to. We just we've kind of limited ourselves.

BK 18:49

And connected to the early days of the pandemic, the toilet paper shortage. I know that was a very big issue for many small towns and cities. I know in Eau Claire when I was still in the dorms, just walking into the local Walgreens, anything like paper towel, toilet paper, cleaning paper, it was completely cleared out. Was this also a big issue in Marshfield?

SK 19:11

I think it was, I mean, we bought in bulk. So, we were personally we were okay. Items that I feel like we couldn't get ahold of was Bleach Wipes and hand sanitizer. They took there was a lag between people are the company's manufacturing enough of it to go around. Because eventually it probably only took a couple weeks and all of a sudden, you know, stores were full of, you know, hand sanitizer.

BK 19:44

And there's a similar supply shortage right now and that was toilet paper necessarily, but with business supplies like cups, popcorn bag seed, and all the restaurants are currently this they have like, no that no decal white paper cup right now. They just can't get the resources they need. What's that, like right now with the movie theaters?

SK 20:05

It is a everyday struggle, it seems like every week, there's a new shortage of something. Right now we're going through an extreme shortage of cups, paper cups, hard to find plastic lids to go on those cups. And it's tough on our side, because what we- what we are as a business is we sell soda and we sell popcorn, that's the primary source of our revenue are in the box office revenue goes to the studios, we get a portion of it, but it's, it's a smaller portion, we really rely on our concession sales. And to find out that, you know, for a while I couldn't get popcorn sold, there's a shortage and the plastic bags that are coconut oil comes in. These are all issues that we had to go in and find new sources of this. These this this product, I mean, we source cups from- from Amazon from any place we could find them from- from bankruptcy, close outs. And- and just stop.

BK 21:06

And these issues with supply where they- just the warehouses didn't have it, they couldn't get drivers sent out to you. I know there's several labor strikes going on right now. Was there any specific reasoning behind the shortages?

SK 21:20

They were justified, it's a lack of there's too much too much demand and not enough raw product. Because, you know, on the cup side, we have NFL stadiums that are opening NBA stadiums. I mean, the demand for paper products is really high right now. Because the amount of businesses that are now open, and you know, that weren't a year ago, and the manufacturers still trying to ramp up to meet this this new demand, in my opinion.

BK 21:53

Gotcha. And just out curiosity, the greater marsh- community within Marshfield, how's this affecting the business community? Because I know Marshall is primarily small business owners.

SK 22:07

When you see signs on businesses, you know, we are going to be, you know, they trim their menus, because some, you know, on the restaurant side, because supplies are hard to get ahold of, you know, we're running a limited menu, because it's hard to- to bring in certain items. You know, we even- even affected some of the fast food restaurants. I remember, you know, one of them introduced a new bacon sandwich and they're out of bacon, they had a big sign that said, we're out of bacon, we cannot source it. And it wasn't, you know, it wasn't because the sandwich was so popular, at least more for more, we're told, it's just they didn't ship a lot of it. And then the cup side is difficult to get cups, certain sizes weren't available. I mean, I think everyone's doing the best they can, I can see, you know, in our small towns, I didn't see anyone shutting down because they couldn't get a hold of certain supplies. They just limited their menus, limited their hours, things like that.

BK 23:02

And I've- in my profession as a server I found out with- with having lived in menus and limited supplies that customers aren't necessarily understanding about this. And they'll often lash out at you. Has- to experience anything like that with limited supplies?

SK 23:20

Yes, I mean, a lot of it is just from people telling me that it's happening in their restaurants. I mean, people are very forgiving, it seems for whatever reason, they get frustrated easily. And maybe, you know, this, this living with COVID. Living under this, this cloud of COVID for so long, has really made people impatient, but I mean, we see that in our businesses, we see signs going up, please be kind, you know, we're running a limited staff, we're running limited hours, please be kind to the people that showed up. I mean, we I see these signs all over town from almost any type of business. So it's- it's not subject- subjected to specific industry. It's all service industries across the board, from veterinary services to restaurants. I mean, everyone has to put signs that says be kind.

BK 24:18

With this, have you seen people within your life, seen their opinion change their day to day activities, change or like even like relationships with these people change from the start of that pandemic to now?

SK 24:33

I think yes, you've seen that especially, you know, when it when it comes down to political lines of, you know, the vaccine, the masks, whether they should wear whether they shouldn't. And over the course of time, these- these, these arguments become frustrating if you believe on one side or the other and, and you have someone that it's basically minimizing what you believe or almost making fun of what- what you think is what's- what's- what's in your best interest, it becomes frustrating, it's hard to, to look at those people the same way right now, because they're so adamant. And there's no gray area. I'm not going out on social media saying, "Hey, you should do this or that", but I'm seeing others do it and it is frustrating.

BK 25:26

Ah. Then related this, what do you think? How do you think COVID-19 is affecting people's mental health or physical health? Let's start with [____?], your employees right now.

SK 25:42

Well, that that those short fuses of customers, you know, make life difficult for staff. Yeah. And, you know, we don't offer refills anymore on our popcorn tops. And we sign it at the counter. We try to tell everyone that but there's still this frustration, you know, they don't understand why can I get my popcorn refilled? Well, it's because you're taking, you know, an item that you eat with your fingers and hands and touch the outside of this container, and you hand it to a staff member then takes it back to the machine. And, you know, there's safety issues with that. I mean, there's definitely contamination problems. So, you know, why- why would we offer it? I mean, it's, it's not a safe thing. You know, but that that short, fusedness of some customers are, it's just, it's challenging to deal with and it becomes frustrating, you know, on the employee side, and they might have a family member who, who they're worried about who, you know, who could get sick and, and maybe has underlying health conditions, and, you know, they're trying to be safe, and yet, they're being told, you know, why are you wearing a mask? You don't need to wear this mask; we've heard that a lot. You know, they would walk in, you don't really need to wear that. Well, what happens if I choose to wear or if I want to, you know, why? Why is your- your opinion, any more valid than mine? And I think that's, that's part of that frustration that you get when you- you, you hear that constantly.

BK 27:14

And I believe you said earlier that you were vaccinated. Like you're getting your- your booster shot, correct? Yes. What was your experience getting the original vaccine? What were your thoughts about it going in making an appointment?

SK 27:32

I wanted to get my vaccination as soon as it was available to me. And there was a little bit of frustration, because it- it took a while to get an appointment to get in. But beyond that I had good experience with- with my vaccinations and others, you know, had had fevers or, you know, ended up with some symptoms right afterwards. But, you know, I'm three shots in and haven't had any issues at all.

BK 28:00

And do you remember when? When was like the first time you got your Vax? Do you ever the date for your vaccination?

SK 28:06

I believe it was April, but I'm not 100% certain.

BK 28:09

Gotcha. What do you think about these people's opinions about getting a vaccine by like the symptoms, people are freaking out on not refusing to take the vaccine because of the symptoms, the headaches, the occasional fevers, the muscle soreness and fatigue?

SK 28:24

Bah. I mean, I think it depends on- on what their- their- their reasoning is. I mean, it's not because Bill Gates is putting a microchip into the vaccine, which I saw on social media quite a bit. I mean, if it's a reasonable explanation, I guess I'm willing to listen to it. But when it's unreasonable goes into the land of conspiracy theories. That's where it becomes a little frustrating.

BK 28:51

And what important issues do you think are being covered in the media? Or should be covered more?

SK 29:00

I would like a more clear and concise no work thing concise information about cope when they release the Omicron data. It's like, well, the vaccines might not work, but they might. But yet they announced it. I mean, I would have liked them to gather some information, because I fear- I feel it's almost fear mongering and they release the news of this new- new variant, but without any explanation of you know, is it going to be bad for us as it is, you know, what are some preliminary test results? I mean, give us some type of information because it's more uncertainty, it's more- more, you know, we just don't know and then how are we supposed to react to that?

BK 29:46

And then as a business owner, I would assume it's you're trying to figure out what's best to do for your business and for your employees using this information. And when it's some back and forth it must be extremely hard. Have you found like you changing your requirements now based on the media, just like kind of going back and forth on stuff?

SK 30:05

With the new variant, we were not sure. I'm not sure what to do. There's, you know, some school of thought that says, well, it's more contagious. It's more like the, like a cold or flu, or is that the case? You know, you know, right now, we have lots of employees that are masking, but, you know, we want them, you know, to wash their hands and take steps to, you know, protect themselves. But beyond that, you know, we're still waiting for more information about what this new variant is

BK 30:41

Gotcha. And has there been any like, discussion about reinstating the social distancing, the theater had? So, I know, that was a big issue, the very beginning of the pandemic? How exactly do you do social distancing within a movie theater?

SK 30:55

There's, there's obviously some discussion of it nationally. How there hasn't been a lot of information within the state of Wisconsin. So, I really don't have a good answer on that question right now.

BK 31:08

And I know there's the association, NATO, the National Association of Theater Owners, do you get a lot of feedback from- from them? Are they giving you any listings or rules that theater should be following? Are they giving you any new information?

SK 31:25

What NATO is doing is working with all I mean, basically, the 50 states there, I mean, municipalities, I mean, an individual county or a city could have a different set of rules than the state. So, at this point, we're trying to keep track of everything to- to know exactly what the what the procedures and policies are. And they're also following you know, infection rates, you know, where we're- like the Midwest seems to be getting hit pretty hard, or the cold weather states are getting hit much harder than the warm weather states right now, which makes sense, because people are, are indoors and closer together. So.

BK 32:01

And then with the different [clears throat] counties having rules about COVID-19, you find that difficult at owning six different movie theaters that are spread out throughout Wisconsin in the Upper Peninsula.

SK 32:15

Yeah, I mean, in earlier on in the pandemic, Michigan wasn't allowing concession sales, but Wisconsin was, I mean, they're- they're definitely different rules that differentiated between the two states. You know, we tried to have, you know, earlier on in the pandemic, we match the CDC guidelines as close as we could.

BK 32:38

And it just, you brought that up, the Michigan wasn't allowed sell concessions. Was that a big issue? I would assume it is. Because like you said, that's how theaters make most of their money since box office sales go to mostly to the studios.

SK 32:52

Yeah, I mean, it's- it's a very difficult, you know, it's hard to be in business without selling concession in the theater business. You know, we tried, we we followed suit and did not sell concession. A lot of times, our customers were extremely angry with us, you know, they see the popcorn machine, they see the soda and like, you can't sell us anything. I'm like, No, we can't. So it was a little tough on our staff, because they're getting, you know, yelled at for something they can't help. And that's truly beyond the reach of our even our company. It's it's a governmental order.

BK 33:26

And is that he just opened currently is at the restrictions changed all in Michigan?

SK 33:32

In Michi- yea the restrictions are in Michigan are very close to Wisconsin, you know, we can sell concession and that theater is.

BK 33:39

Gotcha. And for your- your tears Within Wisconsin, what are some the biggest issues they're- they're facing currently?

SK 33:50

Well, you know, right now, the biggest issue I see going forward is, in the short term, the number of films, there's only a couple films being released in January. You know, January is typically our slow time already. But with a lack of releases, it makes it a little more challenging. I mean, we're really hoping that some of the Christmas product has what we call legs in the business that actually brings in customers in the January. And that's the challenge if films get moved, if if release dates get shuffled, and there's not product to play. I mean, at some point, everyone who wants to see a specific film will have seen it. And what do we do that?

BK 34:33

Have you seen a lot of movies recently changed their release dates, kind of similar dial was the very beginning of the pandemic?

SK 34:39

No, right now. I mean, their- their release dates are pretty much locked in. I haven't seen a lot of shifting of dates yet. We're also, you know, we're kind of at the early stages of Omicron. I mean, we're in some of the larger cities in New York City, I think set a record for the number of cases in a day. How does that affect you know, movie going, how does that affect release dates? You know, what, what is the city's reaction going to be to this this record setting number of cases? You know, right now we don't know yet.

BK 35:13

And then with your experience from the pandemic, how do you think it's transformed? How you think about your family, friends, community and your theater business?

SK 35:23

Well, I think I worry more about everybody. I'm more I worry more about my family, my staff, I worry about the business in general. I am very hopeful that, you know, I don't think life ever combos returns to normal, as it was pre COVID As far as business levels, but, you know, what level? Does it come back to what I always hear what the what is the new normal going to be? I don't know. You know, it's- it's, you know, there's some worry and concern, you know, what, you know, what the future what the future holds. And I think I will continue to worry about that until, you know, till at least the healthcare systems aren't overrun. And that's something we see in the news every day that the hospitals are full ICUs are full, well, if I get sick, or my family member gets sick, will they be able to get a bed to take care of themselves? If they have, you know, in a car accident, anything, you know, will they have the health care system, you know, there to help them? Or will it be overrun by COVID? Cases? That's a huge concern I have.

BK 36:31

And then what about for your- your business, Rogers Cinema?

SK 36:36

Same case, what is the new normal going to be, you know, what level of business will- will theaters returned to you? You know, what is the- the- the streaming aspect of studios, I mean, in my opinion, you can't make a two to \$300 million Avengers film or, you know, comic book movie and send it right to streaming the economics don't work. You know, the movies I see that are that are on streaming services right now, that were that were written specifically for streaming services, their production value just doesn't match what a theatrical film is. I've seen very few films that were released direct to streaming that I liked that I thought were even very good. You know, I want the I want the large production, you know, films, just that from an entertainment standpoint. But we need those films theatrically to survive as an industry. But I also think, you know, in the end, they need those films to help prop up their streaming services and create demand on them. To go forward,

BK 37:48

And I've noticed as well that a lot of studios when they're leasing movies currently, and in the current world of COVID, that they would usually release through streaming media, mainly once a day opens. But now with more current movies, like in Encanto, for example, they've like, waited a couple of weeks, they've done the theatrical opening first, and then they release the streaming later. Do you think what you just said as any, like, say on that?

SK 38:17

I think what happens in the future is a 45-day window. They were those released the film theatrically, and then 45 days later, they'll release it on some type of streaming platform. And I think that makes sense. The whole the new variant is concerning, though, because will they feel like they need to go back to this day and date streaming methodology where like Warner Brothers did in 2021, they released all their films theatrically and on the same day, and their streaming service. Will they go back to that? I mean, that's where we just don't know what I'm a crime leads to we don't know if that's going to be the case or not.

BK 38:58

And then my final question for this interview, knowing what you know, now, what do you think that individuals, communities, or governments need to keep in mind for future?

SK 39:08

I think they need clear messaging; I think. I really feel like we received mixed messages, you know, throughout this entire, you know, pandemic. And I think waiting to get the right information or good information, instead of saying, well, it's going to be, you know, the virus lives on this surface for 12 hours and then defined out, you know, just a few weeks months later that it doesn't- there's not a concern. I think we have to be very cautious in our messaging and be very clear.

BK 39:44

Well, thank you very much for your time today.

SK 39:47

Thank you, Brandon.

BK 39:48

Have wonderful day.

SK 39:50

You too.