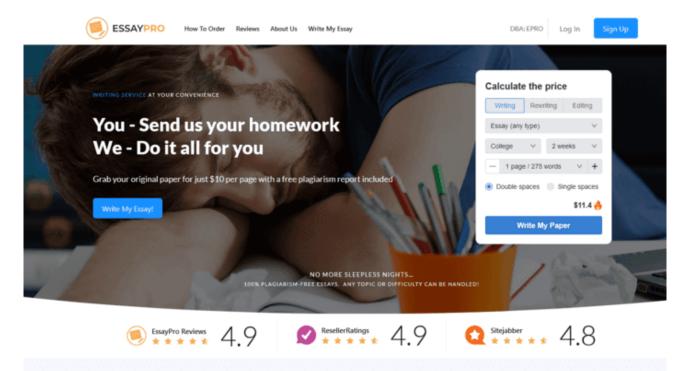
Overcoming the Giant



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Overcoming the Giant

"And he slung it and struck the Philistine in his forehead . . .

and he fell on his face to the earth" (1 Samuel 17:49b).

The Biblical account of David and Goliath is the most famous incident of the underdog defeating the giant. Since this event, history has seen giant after giant overcome by a seemingly insignificant underdog. Alexander the Great, before he was given his title, defeated a supposedly unconquerable Persian army, led by King Xerxes. In the 1960s, Joe Namath, quarterback of the New York Jets, predicted and delivered a shocking victory over the heavily favored Baltimore Colts. Even in fairy tales, the theme lives on in "Jack and the Beanstalk." And, today, in the heart of San Jose, another David-and-Goliath scenario has arisen between the Camera Theaters and the mainstream Cinemas. But this time, the hurdle is daunting. Can the Camera Theaters overcome this giant, or are the challenges too numerous and too great?

There is, of course, one main obstacle for the Camera Theaters to overcome if they are to

survive: they must draw more teens. Why are teenagers so important to the movie industry? When it comes to making money in the movie industry, it is statistically proven that the largest profit <u>contributors</u> are 16-20 year old males. While the art films in downtown San Jose draw educated, sophisticated 35 year-old audiences, they have not drawn the young moviegoers. This, in a nutshell, is the challenge the Camera Theaters must break in order to survive the tightening grip of the merciless cinemas. However, we must recognize the multiple pieces that makeup the nutshell before we can crack it.

To determine what the Camera Theaters need to do in order to overcome the lack of teenagers it draws, the writer took an unofficial poll that has laid out the biggest reasons for the lack of interest among teenagers. The poll taken showed that 60% of Prospect High School students have never been to either of the Camera Theaters, thus confirming the hypothesis that the theaters need to draw teens through their doors. But the poll went further: it also showed that 40% of students had never even heard of the Camera Theaters. Therein lies problem number one in drawing teens: lack of publicity.

For the Camera Theaters to survive they must find a way to gain publicity. In 1993, when it seemed like the Cameras were going to close, twelve art film theater owners wrote letters of support and thirteen newspaper editorials were written on the situation.

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