

Hello. It looks like you're using an ad blocker that may prevent our website from working properly. To receive the best experience possible, please make sure any blockers are switched off and refresh the page.

If you have any questions or need help you can email us

because people don't like musicals any more, that the presentation of "human oddities" like a bearded lady, Tom Thumb, and others, is exploitive and inappropriate.

Gail Perry • Apr. 16, 2018

Hello. It looks like you're using an ad blocker that may prevent our website from working properly. To receive the best experience possible, please make sure any blockers are switched off and refresh the page.

If you have any questions or need help you can email us



I have to admit, I'm obsessed with the movie, "The Greatest Showman." I'm not

Hello. It looks like you're using an ad blocker that may prevent our website from working properly. To receive the best experience possible, please make sure any blockers are switched off and refresh the page.

If you have any questions or need help you can email us

it in the theatres, going back multiple times, bringing their friends and other family members, and even attending sing-a-long versions.

To put this in terms accountants will appreciate, a movie is released and typically stays in theatres about four to five weeks. The ticket sales start to drop and the theatre manager or booking agent knows it's time to pull the movie and replace it with something else in order to keep people in the seats at the theatre. As of this writing, "The Greatest Showman" has been in first run theatres for sixteen weeks. Revenues have started to drop measurably so the run is about to end.

The critics complain that the storyline isn't true to fact, that the movie is "square" because people don't like musicals any more, that the presentation of "human oddities" like a bearded lady, Tom Thumb, and others, is exploitive and inappropriate. Critics say the characters aren't fully developed, the story is melodramatic and shallow and it's not true to the facts. I could go on and on and on because the bad reviews are endless. And they all miss the point.

So what is the point that the critics are missing? The obvious point is that a grandiose musical based loosely on the life of P.T. Barnum was not ever meant to be a factual biopic – it is a crowd pleasing musical splendor that you can enjoy with children and grandparents, and the songs are infectious. But I wanted to dig a bit deeper and see if there are lessons to be learned here that we can use in our lives. [These might seem like a stretch, but I wanted to get some mileage out of the movie in addition to my incredible joy at each viewing.]

1. The audience will decide what it likes. The critics lambasted the movie, but the crowds decided on their own what they liked. You can tout your accounting services and your education and your experience and your skills and the state-of-the-art software that you use, but at the end of the day, your clients have to *like* you. And if they do like you, they will stay with you. They will keep coming back. They will tell

their friends and colleagues about you because they will want to share what they like

Hello. It looks like you're using an ad blocker that may prevent our website from working properly. To receive the best experience possible, please make sure any blockers are switched off and refresh the page.

If you have any questions or need help you can email us

goal was to exploit them and make money, but in the movie portrayal, the result was this safe place where the misfits felt like they had a family.) As accountants who are introducing financial planning techniques and new software services to your clients, you are that bridge, you are the person making it okay for the clients who don't understand to make the connection with the tools they need to operate their businesses more effectively.

3. We learn as we go. Life is messy and obstacles come from unexpected directions. Bad press, building burns down, great ideas fail, you lose everything you thought you had. The true success stories are the ones of perseverance and friendship.

And so, the haters will hate, but I loved the movie and will see it again. And again.

Firm Management

CPA Practice Advisor is registered with the National Association of State Boards of Accountancy (NASBA) as a sponsor of continuing professional education on the National Registry of CPE Sponsors.

© 2024 Firmworks, LLC. All rights reserved