This thesis develops a rigorous yet a practical approach for solving the media planning problem in the medium of cinema. In the Indian scene, the medium of cinema is important for two reasons. First, TV and cinema are the only media which offer the advantage of audio-visual effects. Currently the penetration of Television is not very deep and hence the importance of cinema. Second, because of the low literacy rate in India, communication through the medium of cinema to a large majority of the population is comparatively easy.

The approach developed in the thesis is such that it strikes a balance between the requirement of fidelity, analytical rigour and practicality.

Two distinct but inter-related problems are the focus of the study. These are: (1) Problem of Evaluation, and (2) Problem of Selection. In the problem of evaluation, we are concerned with the evaluation of a given plan in terms of reach, frequency and the OTS (opportunity-to-see) distribution the plan generates. In the selection problem we are interested in preparing a plan which is optimal in some sense. Two different criteria of optimality have been suggested.

The concepts developed in the theory of probability and the mathematical programming are the foundations of the approach developed in this thesis. Computer software and systems have been developed so as to facilitate the use of the formal methods in the resolution of real life problems in cinema planning. The empirical work shows that for the first time in the Indian scene the practitioners have at their disposal a practical tool for evaluating a cinema plan. The approach developed for preparation of optimal plan shows that at least 20-25% savings in costs are possible to achieve.

The method developed in this thesis will be useful to all organizations that have a message to convey in the mass media. With minor modifications it should be possible to extend this approach to the medium of TV. Finally this thesis can become a foundation for the development of an approach for selection, where the interest is to maximise the response the advertisement will generate.