

1. Record Nr.	UNINA9910255086503321
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Titolo	The British Cinema Boom, 1909–1914 : A Commercial History / / by Jon Burrows
Pubbl/distr/stampa	London : , : Palgrave Macmillan UK : , : Imprint : Palgrave Macmillan, , 2017
ISBN	9781137396778 1137396776
Edizione	[1st ed. 2017.]
Descrizione fisica	1 online resource (XI, 242 p. 5 illus.)
Disciplina	791.430941
Soggetti	Motion pictures - Great Britain Great Britain - History Motion pictures - History Motion picture industry Television broadcasting British Film and TV History of Britain and Ireland Film and TV History Film and Television Industry
Lingua di pubblicazione	Inglese
Formato	Materiale a stampa
Livello bibliografico	Monografia
Nota di bibliografia	Includes bibliographical references at the end of each chapters and index.
Nota di contenuto	1. Introduction -- 2. Capital -- 3. Constraints -- 4. Turnover -- 5. Suppliers -- 6. Conclusion.
Sommario/riassunto	This book examines why thousands of cinemas opened in Britain in the space of a few years before the start of the First World War. It explains how they were the product of an investment boom which observers characterised as economically irrational and irresponsible. Burrows profiles the main groups of people who started cinema companies during this period, and those who bought shares in them, and considers whether the early cinema business might be seen as a bubble that burst. The book examines the impact of the Cinematograph Act 1909 upon the boom, and explains why British film production seemed to decline in inverse proportion to the mass expansion of the market

for moving image entertainment. This account also takes a new look at the development of film distribution, the emergence of the feature film and the creation of the British Board of Film Censors. Making systematic and pioneering use of surviving business and local government records, this book will appeal to anyone interested in silent cinema, the history of film exhibition and the economics of popular culture. .
