

## **10. Halloween (1978)**

**Secrets Of Its Success:** Shot in Cinemascope to make the most of the screen, Carpenter made a horror movie that looked the part - and his nerve-wracking synth score helped.

## **9. The Rocky Horror Picture Show (1975)**

**Secrets Of Its Success:** Audience participation - just because the story's being told on a flat screen, doesn't mean the audience can't heckle, sing along and throw toast in the air at appropriate moments.

## **8. Easy Rider (1969)**

**Secrets Of Its Success:** It's not enough to be in the right place at the right time - Hopper and Fonda lived it, and the scuzzy authenticity is there to see. Oh, and you have to credit Hopper's foresight in bagging rights to a brilliant 1960s rock soundtrack before record companies realised they could make a fortune in licensing.

## **7. Mad Max (1979)**

**Secrets Of Its Success:** While tapping into a punk aesthetic and the renewed interest in science-fiction in the wake of *Star Wars* helped, the film's biggest asset was Mel Gibson's charismatic, take-no-prisoners performance.

## **6. The Passion Of The Christ (2004)**

**Secrets Of Its Success:** In a word, religion. Gibson bypassed obvious distribution routes to generate buzz amongst evangelicals, busloads of whom brought the film into profit before mainstream audiences had even cottoned on.

## **5. My Big Fat Greek Wedding (2002)**

**Secrets Of Its Success:** Nardalos' easygoing, uncontroversial charm received a boost from the film's A-list producer (Tom Hanks) and catchy title.

## **4. The Blair Witch Project (1999)**

**Secrets Of Its Success:** The online campaign levelled the playing field with blockbusters by cheap but piercing viral marketing. It helped that the film's then-unusual 'found footage' gimmick and rawness divided audiences - don't forget, *Blair Witch* was nominated for a Razzie.

## **3. Paranormal Activity (2009)**

**Secrets Of Its Success:** Despite the involvement of Steven Spielberg, the film thrived on building word-of-mouth for its scares with a viral "demand this film" campaign.

## **2. Deep Throat (1972)**

**Secrets Of Its Success:** A quirky premise that required something approaching a plot. A half-decent actress, notwithstanding Lovelace's later accusations of off-set abuse. And the fact that the title was purloined as the pseudonym for the Watergate whistleblower couldn't have hurt.

## **1. Night Of The Living Dead (1968)**

**The Movie:** George Romero rewrote the rulebook for low-budget filmmaking with offal, pessimism and an army of the undead that grows and grows with every passing year. Too bad a cock-up on the copyright front meant that Romero and his crew never saw a dime of the film's \$30 million global take.