FRANCO DI CHIERA  
Game Of Thrones

On Sunday night in America, HBO aired the first episode of Game of Thrones season four, which means on Monday, Australians were sitting in front of their laptops savagely downloading it. We caught up with WA Screen Academy Director Franco Di Chiera to find out why the series, which according to BitTorrent, recorded more than one million downloads of the premiere in half a day, has audiences captivated.

Why has Game Of Thrones been so successful? For some time now, with the introduction of digital technology in screen production we have seen the blurring of lines. So in terms of the quality of production, creativity and originality of story, the difference between film production and TV production is becoming less discernable. And that’s reflected by the fact that some of the royalties of cinema, such as Martin Scorsese and Terry Gilliam are moving freely between those borders of film and television. When you consider how much money has been spent of Golf, compared to how much is spent in Hollywood, it is now clear that big screen productions have true competition.

Where does HBO get that budget from? The budgets are still not as big as a Hollywood budget but digital technologies have made it a lot cheaper to make impressive visuals using CGI and lighting. Also, the series is sold all around the world, it’s been HBO’s most successful show in its history. The episodes sell for millions, just one single episode.

Is there something about the freedom to download the show that has propelled Game Of Thrones into stratospheric popularity? It’s a complex issue about illegal downloads. There are some says producers who will let their product be cannibalised in that way because it gets people talking about their film, which can lead to attention from studios.

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