

CHICAGO

MAGAZINE

Here's Just How Successful *Empire* Was

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It happened. It's done. Fox's hip-hop soap opera *Empire* aired its 12th episode last night, wrapping one of the most wildly successful first seasons in cable history. The show, filmed in Chicago and directed by Lee Daniels, saw unprecedented gains in viewership week after week, and with a successful second season could help Fox regain its dismal 18-49 viewership. As *Lucious*, *Cookie*, and the rest of the gang fade temporarily into high-drama memory, behold the monster numbers *Empire* racked up for both itself and Chicago.

9.8 million

The number of viewers the show premiered to in January, making it Fox's highest-rated debut in three years (the last record holder being *Touch*).

5.6 million

The chunk of those 9.8 million viewers who tuned in on VOD, a slick 2 million more than *Family Guy*'s previously held Fox record.

16.7 million

The number of viewers who watched last night's finale, up 69% from *Empire*'s premiere and second this year only to *The Walking Dead* in the 18-49 demo.

2.4 million

The number of tweets fired off during last night's finale.

595%

The increase in streams of *Empire* tracks on Spotify between January and now, including 1.3 million in January, 5.8 million in February, and 9 million so far in March with 4.6 million in the past week alone.

And as for the show's effect on Chicago...

75

The number of Illinois vendors who were patronized by *Empire*.

250

The number of Illinois workers employed by the show.

\$25 million

That's how much *Empire* spent filming its first twelve episodes in Chicago.

\$12.5 million

The chunk of that \$25 mil that went directly to Illinois wages.

\$12.9 million

The price tag on this insane penthouse the show filmed in.

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Cameo by local restaurant mogul and burgeoning actor Billy Dec.