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# NEW YORK PULSE

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## Loews' new megaplex: Miracle on 34th St.?

By LOU LUMENICK

**I**f you build it, will they come? That's the question posed by a \$20 million, 14-screen megaplex opening Friday in highly unlikely territory: 34th Street, just west of Eighth Avenue.

Starting tomorrow, Loews 34th St. — the nonresidential area's first movie palace — will try to lure customers by giving away three days of free movies, commuter discounts, dry cleaning,

gym memberships and other prizes.

"We expect to pull audiences especially from the south, all the way downtown, where there are a lot of older theaters," said Michael Norris, executive vice-president of Loews Cineplex, Manhattan's largest movie-theater chain.

"Older theaters" means venues without the popular stadium seating, oversize chairs, larger

screens and soundproof auditoriums showcased at Loews 34th St. and other state-of-the-art megaplexes built in the last few years.

Norris said he also expected business from commuters who use nearby Pennsylvania Station.

"We've noticed that at our E Walk theater on 42nd Street, which draws from the Port Authority Bus Terminal," he said.

Customers who log onto [enjoytheshow.com](http://enjoytheshow.com) will receive an invitation to sample as many

movies as they want between Tuesday and Thursday — recent films like "American Pie 2," as well as classics like "The Godfather."

Norris acknowledged it may be the last megaplex built in Manhattan for a while by Loews, which filed for bankruptcy protection earlier this year and has closed a number of older theaters — most recently, the landmark Baronet Twin on Third Avenue last month.