

Marketing campaigns for theatres and productions

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Purpose today

- We have looked at 'audience development', including a case study of 'market analysis' and 'market research', for the Middlesbrough Empire Theatre
- We discussed 'demographic data', 'primary markets', 'secondary markets', etc
- Today, we look at marketing strategies in more detail:
 - **1. Direct marketing**
 - **2. Advertising**
 - **3. Promotional partnerships**
 - **4. Publicity**

In the course *Venues and Touring*, we will be looking at the important role of the Box Office in selling tickets

Direct marketing strategies

- These include plans that are targeted to specific people via mail, email and text messaging, and telephone

Direct mail

- What do you think are the processes for creating a direct mail campaign in the theatre?
- To whom might a direct mail campaign be targeted, and why? (Party-bookers +++?)
- How are mailing lists acquired?
- What is the importance of making sure a mailing list is 'clean'?

Email campaigns

- What is the process for creating an email campaign?
- What sort of responses can an email campaign track?

Telemarketing

- What is the process for creating a telemarketing campaign?
- For what sort of theatregoer is a telemarketing campaign most effective?
- What should a theatre consider before beginning a telemarketing campaign?

Advertising

New Ad Campaign Urges: See More Shows - New York Times, 30 January 2009

- <http://artsbeat.blogs.nytimes.com/2009/01/30/new-ad-campaign-urges-see-more-shows/>
- Fearing that a recession-driven drop in New York City tourism will hurt Broadway ticket sales, theatre industry leaders and city officials on Friday announced a new advertising campaign to urge people in Manhattan to see more shows – but they stopped short of any broad move to bring down ticket prices
- The city’s tourism and marketing body unveiled advertisements that read “Ask New York City about New York City Broadway”
- Theatre producers are contending that the economic fortunes of Broadway will rely to a large extent on New Yorkers and suburban residents going to the theatre in greater than usual numbers, given uncertainty about tourism
- Does the same apply to London’s West End?
- <http://nycgo.com/Broadway>

Advertising

- Does not target an individual in the way that a mailing or telemarketing campaign does
- Still designed to appeal to a specific target audience
- Consists of paid promotional announcements placed in various media
- Typically used in conjunction with other marketing strategies
- A single-ticket campaign for a touring show might include an advertising push four to six weeks before opening night, in conjunction with direct mail and email marketing

Theatre advertising

- You need to know the objective of the advertising campaign and its target market
- How does the target market use the media?
- E.g., student markets, which newspapers, radio stations?
- Project advertising costs a full year ahead for long-running West and Broadway shows
- Plan advertising show-by-show for a touring company
- Touring company plans advertising campaigns with venues
- Marketing costs: shared between the company and venue
- Some national advertising, more regional advertising
- Challenge of quickly changing markets for regional theatres with weekly (or nightly) change of productions
- The 'ladder' advertisement in mixed-programme venues..., short, arresting copy and sales lines needed, but I overdone it....?

2006-2007

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ENTHUSIASTIC RECEPTION!
VARIETY AT NIGHT
"AS BLACKPOOL AS ROCK"

INTIMATE CONTORTIONISM
PUPPETRY OF THE PENIS
FROM THE BOYS DOWN UNDER

CHEETAHS NEVER PROSPER
THE SAFARI PARTY
A THREE-COURSE COMEDY

HURRY FOR YOUR PARTY BOOKING
A TALE AS OLD AS TIME...
DISNEY'S AWARD-WINNING MUSICAL
BEAUTY AND THE BEAST

POSSESSOR OF THE MYSTIC EYE
DEREK ACORAH

SUPPORT V-DAY!
THE VAGINA MONOLOGUES
WHAT EVERY WOMAN KNOWS

CHRISTMAS TIME,
MISTLETOE AND RHYME
KATZENJAMMER
TWO PIANISTS, ONE GRAND PIANO

THE TEN THOUSAND MILLION
DELIGHTS OF A PANTOMIME
DICK WHITTINGTON

★ **BARRIE RUTTER** ★
TRAGEDIAN OF THE NORTH
NORTHERN BROADSIDES
NEW DRAMATIC COMEDY
**THE MAN WITH
TWO GAFFERS**

NEW YEAR'S EVE GALA!
A PRIOR ENGAGEMENT
GRAND FASHIONABLE NIGHT
ANDY PRIOR
AND HIS BIG BAND

2006-2007

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IT WOULD BE SUPERFLUOUS TO SPEAK HERE IN PRAISE OF THE MOST ELEGANT THEATRE IN THE NORTH

AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION
SING-A-LONG-A
ROCKY HORROR
PICTURE SHOW
RIFFRAFF WELCOME!

MOST UNPRECEDENTED LAUGHABLE SUCCESS!
TRIALS AND TRIBULATIONS OF MOTHERHOOD
BERNIE NOLAN STARS IN
MUM'S THE WORD
TELL-IT-LIKE-IT-IS COMEDY

NATIONAL THEATRE OF VARIETY
UNDER THE DISTINGUISHED AUSPICES OF EQUITY
CAVALCADE OF VARIETY 2007
IN AID OF FUNDS FOR THEATRICAL RELIEF

DEED OF SELFLESSNESS,
OR FINAL ACT OF REVENGE?
THE WINGS OF THE DOVE
HENRY JAMES' MORALITY DRAMA

GOOD ORDER IS EXPECTED
AND WILL BE RIGIDLY ENFORCED

ROALD DAHL'S
FAVOURITE FOR CHILDREN
**DANNY, CHAMPION
OF THE WORLD**

1.7 TONNES OF URAL FUN
THE BIG BALLET
GLUTTONOUS GRACE
AND BIG-BELLIED BEAUTIES

"BAWDY HOUSE OR PLAYHOUSE?"
NO TRANSGRESSIVE BEHAVIOUR
PERMITTED ON THE PROMENADES

TOP INTERNATIONAL OPERA
DIE FLEDERMAUS
MADAMA BUTTERFLY
AIDA & TOSCA

CARRIAGES AT ELEVEN

PARKING OFFER AVAILABLE AT THE BOX OFFICE
WELCOME TO OUR VISITORS IN HEALTH AND HAPPINESS
SEATS MAY BE SECURED NOW AT POPULAR PRICES

Theatre advertising

- In a long run, set box office goals each week, then determine the type of media that you will need to reach these targets
- Newspapers, radio, television, online, transport, poster sites....
- Big organisations use advertising agencies
- Smaller arts organisations may schedule and book advertising campaigns in-house, with artwork produced by marketing department, using templates and the theatre's image
- Tension between a producer's show image and the venue's style
- Managers should write good advertising copy, just as much as good funding applications and business plans!
- Develop your writing styles, careful of distinctions
- In drama, we are partly marketing *language*, so we ought to know how to write promotional material – this will save our organisations lots of money!
- Is describing dance and music harder?
- Use the play....think laterally, read the script, attend first rehearsals and run-through

Theatre advertising

- Plan schedules ahead, but allow flexibility to change advertisements quickly – you might be selling better (or worse) than expected!
- Alter placements according to sales responses and patterns (seasonality etc)
- An advertisement should contain a CALL TO ACTION – in the form of a ticket purchase – Box Office Phone Number and webpage address, address of venue, date and time – all prominent
- Generic advertising for a venue is all very well, but....
- Show advertising must reflect the personality of the show
- Should the show director and designer be involved, and how?

Theatre advertising

- What other information should a theatre advertisement contain?
- What elements should a theatre website contain to make it an effective ticket sales tool?
- Is the theatre brochure obsolete? Why do most look like building society leaflets?
- Are flyers obsolete?

Promotional partnerships

- In addition to direct mail and advertising, we often create promotional partnerships to help sell tickets
- These are partnerships between the theatre and another organisation that allows you to reach potential buyers at a cheaper cost than mail or advertising
- The aim is to defray your marketing costs
- May look like sponsorship, but is different?
- Costs of media are shared, so reduced bottom line
- Ask, what does the potential partner bring to the table?
- It might be advertising, access to the company's core customers, or inclusion in its own advertising
- Common in hospitality packages – hotels, restaurants, transport

Promotional partnerships

- Your show may endorse another firm – can you think of examples?
- Can you sell a cast album on iTunes?
- Cast appearances at the partner-company, to endorse a product in a store? (Beware, actors might have to be paid extra)
- Can be difficult to manage your time handling promotional partnerships...

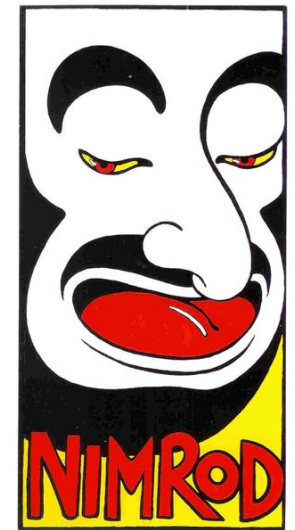
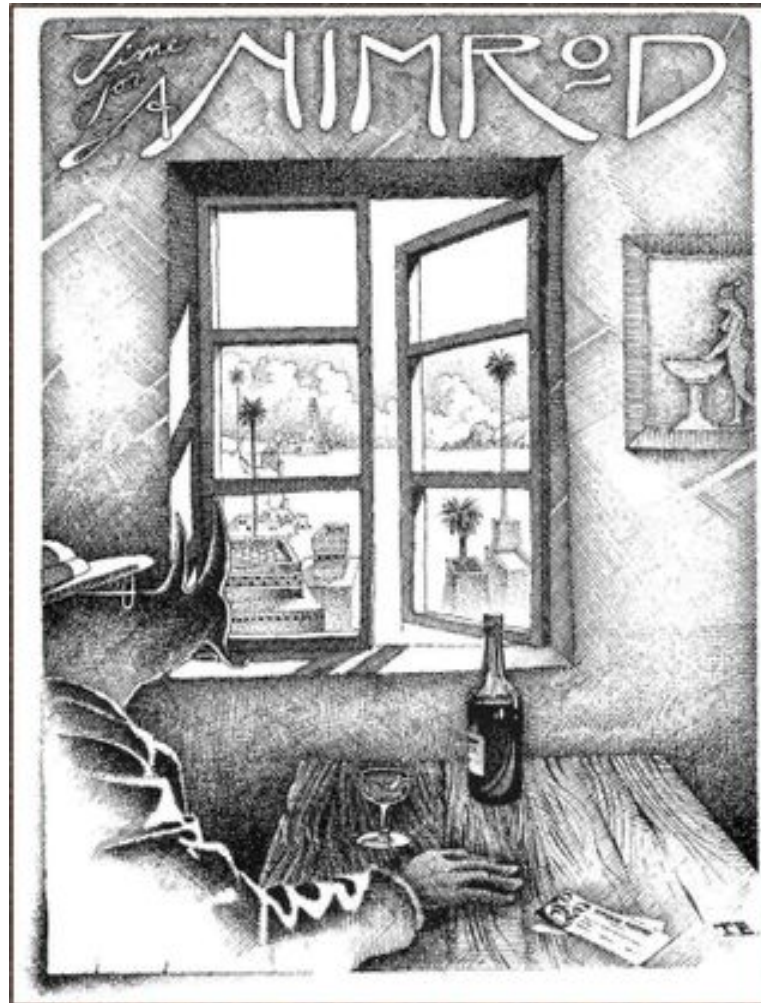
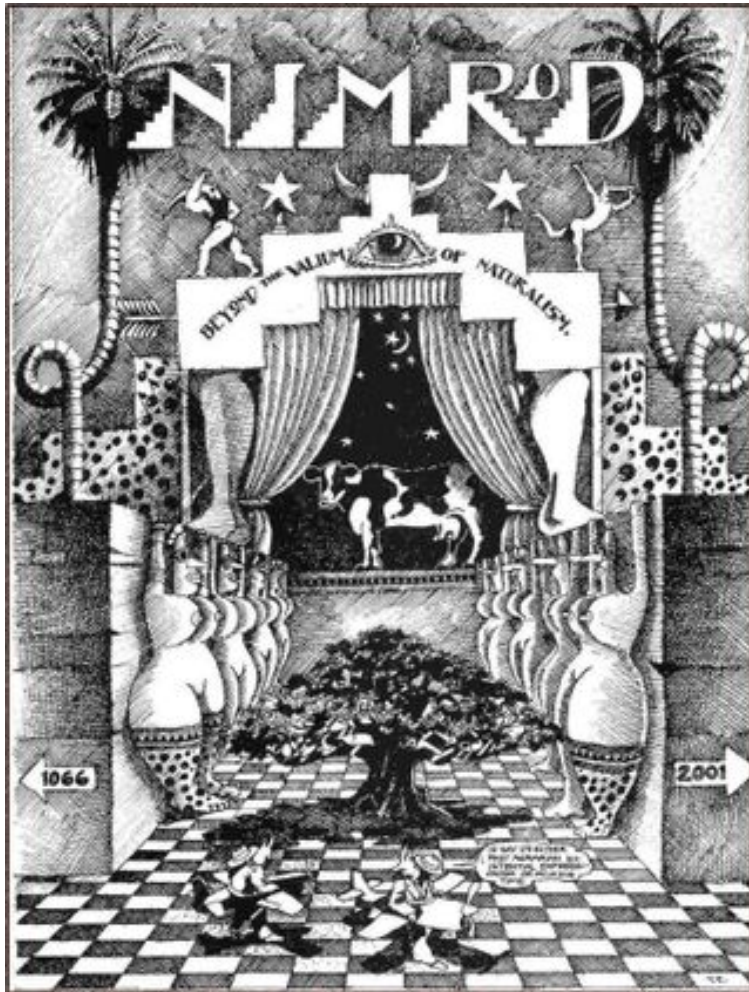
Affinity, Viral and Guerilla Marketing Campaigns

- **Affinity marketing** is 'peer-to-peer' marketing
- You form a partnership with an individual to bring information into the targeted community, e.g., community leaders, tastemakers, hairdressers, taxi-drivers, concierges
- Affinity marketing was a great success in the Volksbühne ('People's Theatre') movement in Germany – factory representatives sold 'workers' theatre' to workers, especially under Adolf Hitler's cultural policy
- **Viral marketing** messages are spread voluntarily by fans, including MySpace and Facebook sites for productions; includes photo blogs and video submission contests
- **Guerilla marketing** is grassroots marketing, typically flyers to targeted individuals (as at Edinburgh Festival Fringe); fly posting in targeted areas, magazine or newspaper inserts, hanging cards in shops (for free, or comps)

Affinity, Viral and Guerilla Marketing Campaigns

- How should you determine if a potential promotional partnership is right for your show or theatre?
- How can you evaluate the success of these marketing methods?

Generic advertising in the theatre?



- (e.g.,
Use of
famous
artist)

The timeline for a marketing plan

- Create the marketing plan about one year before the start of the season
- Provided the artistic director, producer or manager tells the marketing department what the shows are!
- Spend time to determine ticket prices and concessions
- Takes about eight weeks to create a season marketing plan in a big arts centre like the Barbican or Southbank, London
- Season is usually announced in the form of a press conference, with press release and print, closely followed by advertising campaign
- Timelines will vary, depending on the programming (another reason why marketing should be involved with programming – they are *inseparable!*)

The marketing budget and estimating ticket sales

- The goal of the marketing plan is to increase ticket sales, therefore you must estimate the ticket sales (number and money), as well as the costs of implementing the plan
- So, sample marketing budget headlines.....

Marketing budget headings/checklist

1. Full and part-time personnel costs and fees
2. Translation of marketing materials (for overseas touring)
3. Postage: season brochure mailings, single-ticket handbill/brochure mailings, postcard mailings, (x each show)
4. Printing: season brochures, single-ticket handbill, posters, hanging cards, 48-sheeters, banners, etc
5. E-commerce: online advertisements and email campaigns
6. Advertising: major news ad (season launch), show-specific ads, other info ads
7. Photography, including rights for photography, photographer fees
8. Graphic design and 'creatives' fees
9. Telemarketing expenditure
10. Mailing house expenditure – season brochure, single show flyers/letters
11. Radio advertising
12. Print advertising – national newspapers, regional newspapers, magazines
13. Television advertising – percentage deals? Can this occur in the UK?
14. Brochure expenditure – season brochures, single show leaflets/postcards
15. Distribution expenditure – poster sites, insertions in magazines
16. Mailing list expenditure – maintaining you mailing list

The more specific your budget, the more useful it will be!

The marketing budget and estimating ticket sales

- Who estimates the box office income? The general manager, programme manager, finance manager, box office manager, or marketing manager, the board?
- Who sets income goals for targeted audiences?

Remember the factors to be taken into account, when pricing a show:

- The capacity of the theatre x number of performances
- The potential market size
- The type of performance being priced
- Competitor pricing policies
- The costs of the production
- Investors' agreements in London West End theatre
- Allow for estimated potential of reductions for discounts.....

Publicity

- Publicity is a critical part of the marketing campaign
- The media relations side of the business
- Publicity is part of the overall public relations effort
- Public relations is the instilling of a point of view about your theatre or production
- Publicity gives the theatre or the production greater visibility and helps to brand (position) you in the marketplace
- Public relations campaigns might be for fundraising, government/town hall relations/recruitment – all things to do with positive images
- Publicity differs because it not paid for (or not supposed to be....!) – editorial coverage originates from the media itself, helped by you; do the journalist's work for them...
- Does publicity have greater credibility than advertising?
- What is the cost of that credibility? No guarantee of results...

Publicity

- Who creates the publicity campaign?
- Researching the production or theatre....familiarise yourself with what is going to appear on stage; read the script, go to the read through, attend a production meeting, know a lot about the art of the theatre! (Or music, or education.....)
- Research the media markets....read newspapers, listen to radio....(two hours daily media fix?)
- Create you own press list; study media directories
- [You have had a class on press releases.....]
- How do you pitch to the media? Telephone, email, short/succinct letter accompanying release? Compelling information not in the press release, offered exclusively to a journalist/editor?

Photography and video images for distribution

- In touring, production companies supply photographs to the theatre
- Front of house displays
- Website images and video
- The theatre photographer – we plan to welcome a masterclass visitor next term

Managing interviews, press conferences and media appearances

- When your pitch to the media is successful, you will need to arrange interviews for artists or a member of the show's creative team
- If you market a touring theatre, the general manager must be able to give authoritative interviews about all shows
- More reasons why managers must study the art of the theatre (or music.....)
- What is the process for setting up and following up an interview? – importance of liaison between marketing counterparts in production company and the venue

Compiling the programme

- Arguably, the programme is the only tangible thing that the spectator takes away from any performance
- They are often hoarded for a lifetime, an aide-memoire for elusive titles, parts and names, usually thrown away during a house move or after a death - so that very few are preserved
- The programme is an important document, sometimes the main record of a show
- Hence the importance of compiling programmes with editorial accuracy - they contain a wealth of information and opinion, and it is probable that you will be editors in future
- This can be one of the best parts of your job, because programmes reflect the different tastes of producers and managers. They are also an important part of the marketing of shows, telling friends and family what *will* happen in the show, enabling us to discuss the performance afterwards
- Selling advertising space

What are the components of a programme?

- Which programme have you brought today?
- Is it a good one?

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HOSTED BY TONY JO

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RAF BIG BAND SOUND with Musical Director **Greg Francis**

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Gossip over the garden fence to boost your morale

BERYL JOHNSON The Singing Wren
MO MORELAND Blackpool's Bombshell

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Cultural address from the tragedian of the NORTH

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TIPTOES DANCE SCHOOL Brimming over with shining talent
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THE ANDREWS SISTERS

ENSA Celebrities in person
WYN CALVIN The Welsh Prince of Laughter
MARK RAFFLES Magicologist

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SPLENDOUR & MORALE-BOOSTING TONIC!

Working with the critics and organising press nights

- What strategies help you to ensure a successful press night?

Summary

Today, we have looked at:

Direct marketing

Advertising

Promotional partnerships

Publicity

How do you handle bad publicity?

Selected references

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