Marketing Theory - Special Issue Call for Papers

UBIQUITOUS MUSIC

Guest Co-Editors: Steve Oakes (University of Liverpool), Douglas Brownlie (University of Stirling) and Noel Dennis (Teesside University)

The apparently ubiquitous nature of music in contemporary society means that it is inextricably entwined with marketing activity. This special issue encourages submissions that contribute to marketing theory in broadly examining the relationship between marketing and music. Analysis of the marketing literature highlighting music as a focal point reveals multiple themes and perspectives. For example, the digital era has witnessed an explosion in legal and illegal downloading of music, but while digital transmission of music as an intangible product has transformed consumption, new behavioural models are required to understand and explain consumer behaviour within this evolving market (Kwong and Park, 2008).

A variety of studies have viewed music reverentially as an art form of value in itself. This strand of literature has also identified the need to introduce audience development strategies for music (e.g., Tajtakova and Arias-Aranda, 2008) that break down exclusive barriers of traditional elitism, but without making excessive artistic compromises. It considers the trade-off between product-orientated and market-orientated approaches to music making and its dissemination. Research is encouraged that examines key issues from the commercial perspective of arts organisations, but also from the consumer perspective by identifying the liberating pursuit of aesthetic experience (Bradshaw and Holbrook, 2007) and examining how music consumption is linked to emotional self-realisation in ways that shape self-identity (Hesmondhalgh, 2008).

There is an extensive literature that views music as a basic marketing tool capable of influencing consumer attitudes and behaviour in retail and service environments. Studies have stripped music down to its individual components, revealing how its tempo can be manipulated to influence the speed at which consumers push supermarket trolleys and eat restaurant food (Milliman, 1982; 1986). It can impact upon perceived waiting times and satisfaction levels for consumers in queues or ‘on hold’ on customer-care telephone lines. As such, the service environment musiccape (Oakes and North, 2008) becomes merely another servicescape variable (Bitner, 1992) at the disposal of marketers along with décor, lighting, scents, and colours. The advertising literature also regards music as a tool of persuasion through which consumers are exposed to sonic branding, earworms and jingles (Scott, 1990) that can enhance brand attitudes, recall of key benefits, and subsequent purchase behaviour (Oakes, 2007). While most of the existing literature involves quantitative studies, there is a need for more diverse modes of data collection. For example, research is encouraged that examines how music triggers memories of events in earlier life that may elicit emotions and subsequently influence perceptions of the advertised brand or servicescape within which the music is heard.

A further strand of the literature has viewed music as a metaphorical target domain that can provide valuable insights for marketing management. It has examined the metaphorical value of various musical genres for marketing management theory and
practice (e.g., Dennis and Macaulay, 2007). Musical metaphors encourage the interpretation of reality by allowing the identification of niches and repositioning opportunities (Oakes, 2009). The metaphorical juxtaposition of ideas enables observation of a problem from a musical perspective in order to stimulate theoretical development and creative problem resolution for marketers. In this context, research is encouraged that identifies new and alternative musical metaphors.

The above themes are indicative but not exclusive. While research is encouraged that builds upon, questions, or reconciles the frequently conflicting musical perspectives that emerge from existing research, pursuit of new directions in marketing and music research is encouraged. Where appropriate, submissions may also include website audio links (e.g., Bradshaw and Brownlie, 2009) in order to illustrate key themes. The three guest editors for this proposed special issue have published numerous articles examining the relationship between marketing and music, and have extensive experience as performing musicians (guitarist, baritone saxophonist, and trumpeter) at a wide range of venues ranging from small functions and restaurants to international academic conferences and major music festivals:

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Submissions:

The publication of this Special Issue is scheduled for late 2013 or early 2014. The deadline for papers is 31st July 2012.

If you have any queries regarding the suitability of your potential contribution please contact any of the guest co-editors:  
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Submissions should be sent electronically as Word documents to Steve Oakes (email: soakes@liverpool.ac.uk).

For specific manuscript submission guidelines, please go to:  
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Indicative references


