

within any one area of the media there are different markets and different ways of reaching these markets. The considerations in every case are exactly the same – media producers are trying to make a profit by selling their product to as many people as possible.

EXAMPLE

Boyzone/David Cassidy

This example shows the way that the market for young attractive male pop stars has been sustained over a number of years.

a Boyzone

Boyzone is an Irish band which made a major impact on the UK singles market starting at the end of 1994. There are five members of the band who all sing and dance. Boyzone's fans are mainly young girls. The band has been aimed at this market in Ireland and, more recently, in the UK.

The marketing of Boyzone

The marketing of Boyzone has included all of the usual areas – posters, T-shirts, records, and a carefully managed campaign using the band to promote these items. As a part of this campaign, the band makes appearances and gives interviews such as the exclusive interview given to the magazine *Live & Kicking* in summer, 1995. Part of this feature is included here (Fig. 10.1).

The responses given to the interviewer's questions present the band as thoughtful, caring and generally the kind of people that most teenage girls are supposed to want as boyfriends.

In terms of their music, Boyzone tends to play memorable melodic songs with catchy lyrics about love. Its first British hit 'Love Me For a Reason' had been a No. 1 record 20 years before for The Osmonds, a good-looking five-piece American band aimed at the same market.



What's the most dishonest thing you've ever done?

I lied to my mother and I hated that. When I was younger I'd tell her I was staying at a friend's house when I was somewhere else. I'm very close with me mam and to lie to her hurts.

Do you ever get lonely?

I do. Even though the guys are my best friends. I do get lonely and need a bit of affection, whether it be my mother or a relationship. I usually call home or try and take my mind off it by going to a movie or something.

How do you know when you're in love?

I don't think anyone knows, it just happens. It's just a feeling. Everything is right. Whatever the other person's wearing, you still love them. Whatever they do, whatever they say. It's just a feeling inside and words can't really explain what love is.

Would you like to be a dad?

Yeah, big time. I love kids. I have a nephew called Conal, he's a year and half old and he's my godchild and I love him to bits. He's the best kid

in the world. Every time I'm home I try to bring him something. He's cool.

What's your bedroom like?

An absolute mess! I'm not tidy at all. I know where everything is though, so if anyone cleans it I go mad. I just can't have a clean room. My mother's always giving out to me about it.

What's your favourite sleeping position?

I lie flat on my stomach and I don't have a pillow. I hate pillows. If there is a pillow, I put it halfway over my head. My head has to be flat when I'm sleeping.

What's the strangest dream you've ever had?

I don't have many dreams, to be honest. But I do have recurring ones like where I'm falling off a cliff and when I hit the ground I wake up. Or there's one where I'm climbing up stairs and there's a ghost behind me and my feet get stuck and I can't run. They're two dreams I always have. But I'm usually too tired to dream.

Fig. 10.1

An established market

Boyzone was launched into a market that had been established for years. The Osmonds had proven that 'Love Me For a Reason' was a good song to aim at this market, and many other acts had found success with the teenage girls audience.

Boyzone did not have to create its market or sustain it. Had the band failed to have British hits, the market would have continued to exist and found other stars. Boyzone did have to create a demand for itself within this market – a brief look at the magazine feature shows some of the ways that this was achieved.

The magazine feature: points to look for

- The name of the band is an obvious pun on the words 'Boys own' but putting the words together and adding a 'z' gives it another meaning. The suggestion is that there is an area or zone full of boys – the boys in the band. This is a trick that has been employed by pop bands for years.

Try listing as many pop names as you can that play on the sound and meaning of words to make another meaning. The most successful pop group of all time – The Beatles – had a name based on a pun.

- The photo of Boyzone suggest meeting the band in an intimate way. It is taken in a hotel bedroom and features the members of the band dressed in bathrobes. The picture manages to suggest a sexual quality about the band without really being explicit.

Once again, it is useful to examine posed pictures of pop stars of both sexes. If you look at the clothes they are wearing and the poses that they strike, it is worth asking how often people really dress and stand like that. It is also worth asking what these pictures are saying about the pop stars they feature.

- Finally we need to look at the responses that the band gives to the interview questions. These show the band as caring characters who think about other people's feelings. In the extract shown here, Ronan says he felt bad about telling a lie to his mother and that he is very close to her. The thing that hurts Ronan the most is people who deceive him. These answers are mixed in with other answers that give an intimate look at the band members and tell readers things like the favourite sleeping position of members of Boyzone.

Sustaining success

Boyzone's success in sustaining the market for their own records depends very much on how well interviews such as this actually work. Like most pop acts, the band's members want to continue to have success and attract an audience that will stay with them. This has proven very hard for most pop stars coming from the teenage pop market. Ten years before Boyzone, Wham! was the biggest teen pop sensation in Britain. George Michael did manage to become a respected artiste in the adult rock market after Wham! split, but many people who remember Wham! have forgotten Andrew Ridgeley who was the other half of the band.

b David Cassidy

David Cassidy was the biggest teen idol in the UK market in the early 1970s. If you are taking GCSE Media Studies in the mid- to late 1990s, you may well be the son or daughter of a David Cassidy fan!

Despite record company backing and the help of many respected musicians, David Cassidy's musical career suffered for many years after his success as a teen idol. If you look at 'The Secret of David's Success' (Fig. 10.2) from the 1975 David Cassidy annual, you will see that many of the same kind of qualities that are contained in the Boyzone interview are also present here. For example, David is 'just as beautiful inside as he is outside!', he has a wonderful personality and he is really grateful to the fans who made him such a success.

A comparison of the two pop acts

This short study of two pop acts 20 years apart provides a useful look at some of the important issues at this end of the market. Both of these acts have sold millions of records and made a great impact on audiences of young girls.

The secret of David's success

Why has David Cassidy become the biggest superstar on today's pop scene? What is the secret of his remarkable success?

It's not really much of a secret why our David is first in the hearts of millions of fans – just look what he's got going for him:

Looks: That gorgeous smile, that lovely hair, that twinkle in his eyes, and that slim, trim, just-right build ... let's face it, when they made David, they threw away the mould!

Kindness: And he's just as beautiful inside as he is outside! Some people make it to the top, by ruthlessly treading on anyone who stands in their way on the road to success. Not so, David. He's a kind human being who genuinely cares about others. When he meets

someone who wants to become a pop star, David does what he can to help. And most of his kindnesses are eventually repaid, too.

Talent: David's got a double store of talent ... not only is he a fabulous singer, but he's a super actor as well. (He's even studied dancing too!)

Ambition: All the talent in the world isn't enough to turn a pop artist into a superstar. What's needed is drive, ambition, stick-to-itiveness and a commitment to working hard in order to achieve success. David has all those qualities and they've taken him right to the top.

Laughter: Though he's worked very hard to get where he is, and though he's had his own fair share of hard knocks, David has never lost his sense of

humour. You can always get a giggle out of him no matter how tired or involved with his work he may be. And when David laughs, it's catching!

Courage: The glamorous side of show business seems very appealing to most people, but it takes a lot of courage to plunge into the turmoil of the entertainment world ... and to hang in there when times get rough. It took David a long while to get his first break – a part in a Broadway show. Then he thought he was made – until the show closed down just four days after it opened! It was quite a blow to David, but he was determined to stay in show-biz. Little did he know that a talent scout had spotted him and lots of good parts were just around the corner!

Personality: David is a guy who makes

other people feel good – so naturally they like to have him around. Whether it's with a little joke, a kind word, or just a smile, he knows how to make people feel completely at ease. He knows when to be the life of the party and when to let the other guy be the centre of attention. He's confident but at the same time sensitive to another's needs ... and that's an unbeatable combination.

You: Yes, you're the best thing David's got going for him ... Because you appreciate his music and because you show your devotion to him in lots of ways. Knowing that you're there, knowing that you want him to go on making records and personal appearances, is what has given David the strength to climb to the top. He's depending on you ...

Fig. 10.2

We can see from comparing the two examples that creating and sustaining the market for each act depends to some extent on selling the acts themselves as the kind of attractive, thoughtful and sensitive boys that many teenage girls want as boyfriends. Acts in this market usually have these qualities. This is because the market itself is sustained by the demands of teenage girls.

This audience tends to want young and attractive boy pop stars. The reasons for this include the fact that the girls in the audience are taking their first serious interest in boys and these pop stars provide an ideal model. They certainly seem better balanced, more mature, etc than most boys that the same girls would meet at school or college or local discos. The proof of this last point is found on the problem pages of magazines like *Live & Kicking* where girls often write in to say that boys ignore them, make fun of them, etc.

For as long as this situation remains unchanged, the market for young male pop stars is likely to stay the same. It is quite likely that in 10 years' time students of media studies will be considering this topic but with a different example of a pop star or group.

Marketing strategies

Because the stakes are so high in this area, **marketing strategies** can be very complicated, but we can see here that one part of the overall strategy has stayed the same for years. Pop stars like Boyzone and David Cassidy have always been part of a strategy that tried to present them as the ideal boys so that teenage girls would find them attractive to look at and as personalities. This would make these fans more loyal and more likely to keep buying records.

EXAMPLE

T. Rex reissues

This example shows the way that a company worked to target and sustain a market that already existed. It also explains how a particular strategy was adopted to keep this market alive.

T. Rex was popular in the 1970s alongside David Cassidy and if you are taking GCSE Media Studies in the mid- to late 1990s, you may be the son or daughter of a T. Rex fan.

T. Rex and its leader Marc Bolan enjoyed four No. 1 singles, three No. 1 albums and many more top ten hits in both charts. The band still had a following when Bolan was killed in a car crash in 1977.

Since then there have been sporadic hits and the old recordings have stayed available. The last top ten hit came in 1992 when an old T. Rex single was used in a jeans commercial. In 1994 Demon records began a major programme to reissue most of Bolan's work on CD.

Demon specialises in reissues of old material and the company's catalogue – the music it has available at any one time – is usually around 75 per cent reissues. Record