Analysing Magazines

NME Magazine

The title of the magazine

NME is easy to pronounce, and is an abbreviation for the New Musical Address. Young people who are the target audience tend to use more abbreviations and the use of ‘New’ assures consumers they are receiving the most up-to-date information available on the market. NME is connoted as a successful magazine as the masthead is covered up, showing that NME is so well-known that its audience does not need to see the entire masthead.

The publisher of the magazine

NME is published by IPC Media (International Publishing Cooperation), who are the ‘UK’s leading consumer magazine publisher’. IPC Media (founded in 1952) creates magazines that reach 70% of UK women and 50% of UK men, reaching over 28 million adults in the UK in total.

IPC Media covers a wide area of media literature, including IPC Newspapers; IPC Magazines; IPC Trade and Technical; IPC Books; IPC Printing and IPC new products. This reaches a large audience and gains recognition for them. IPC Media was founded in 1952 and publishes weekly issues priced at £2.50. NME magazine is aimed mainly at a younger audience due to the genre of music it is writing about (rock, progressive rock) although IPC Media also publishes books and trade magazines which cover other demographics.

NME has their own website, www.nme.com/magazine which broadens their online presence and targets younger audiences who frequently use the Internet as their primary source of information. Their website gives consumers the option to subscribe to their magazines online, again targeting younger demographics.

The target audience for the magazine

NME magazine is made primarily to attract an audience of 13-19 years of age and targets this audience because they are writing about and interviewing artists of certain genres of music (Rock, Progressive Rock) that this age group listens to the most. NME targets the teenage audience because there are special guests that feature for example James Buckley (Jay from The Inbetweeners). The teenage audience that watches the Inbetweeners will want to read this magazine as it is a sitcom set in a college, directed at the teenage audience.

The content of this NME magazine edition includes interviews with rock stars (old and new), singers, information on artists’ upcoming work, artist’s opinions, tips for amateur musicians and pictures of artists. The reader can interact with this magazine by reading other artists’ views and opinions so they can relate to them, reading interviews, phoning in and voting in various...
different competitions for example song of the week, buying DVDs recommended by artists and following artists’ tours across Europe/ the world, gig guides and a live stream of NME radio on the homepage of their website. This all provides a large amount of audience interaction, making them feel involved with NME.

NME’s website readership consists of 65% males, 50% 16-24 years and 23% 25-34 years. NME’s website attracts 3.5 million users a month overall. These figures show men as the dominant audience for the website, which could suggest NME’s website primarily, targets the male audience in terms of content and appearance.

The cover of the magazine

NME’s front cover features a picture of one of the main bands featured in the magazine and they are looking directly at the reader, creating a direct mode of address. This engages the audience as they are being looked at. The main body picture is positioned right in the centre of the front cover as it draws in readers connotes that they are the main focus. The front cover shows the three band members looking with a serious expression on their face, contributing to the direct mode of address this magazine is trying to create. They are smartly dressed with dark suits as they do not have to wear any bright/vibrant colours to stand out.

The teenage demographic see this picture and aspire to be in this band’s position. The front cover also features a range of coverlines that are inside the magazine for example ‘the 50 darkest albums ever made featuring Joy Divison, The Smiths and Radiohead’. This encourages readers to want to find out who these darkest bands are and by giving them some examples they may be drawn in by a band they see and happen to like. The use of ‘50’ connotes a larger amount of content by looking just at the front cover of NME. Teenagers will instantly see this number and think they are getting more for their money.

The front cover also features an ‘exclusive’ story titled ‘Josh Homme - I died in surgery’. This is a dramatic quote they have chosen from the story to encourage readers to want to find out what happened. This story also conveniently tells audiences what page to go to in order to find out more about this. Particular items in the magazine are featured because they are
specific to the target audience NME has in mind which is teenagers. NME know these teenagers will be interested in these bands, stories and features

The main picture of the magazine shows three band members dressed in black on a white background. This makes them stand out and attract audiences’ eyes when they see this magazine on the shelf, similarly, the writing at the top of the cover is black with a white outline which also makes this choice of font stand out to the reader’s eye. Yellow fonts are used for the coverlines as they stand out from the black and white colours that are being used for the rest of the front cover. These yellow fonts instantly draw the target audience’s eyes to the coverlines, encouraging them to find out more.

The title of the magazine ‘NME’ is partially covered by the main body’s picture of the three band members. This is because NME is a very successful and popular magazine and has made a name for itself, therefore does not have to clearly show the name on every edition. This magazine cover follows very similar conventions to other magazines for example, Kerrang. The title is covered up, there is a main body picture of a featured band and various features and interviews are dotted around this main body picture.

The ‘Style’ of presentation of the magazine

NME is presented smartly, with aligned fonts and smartly dressed band members on the front cover. This makes NME desirable as it is very neat looking. Band names are often written in yellow on coverlines to attract audiences’ attention to these bands and make them want to read what is written beneath this yellow writing.

Black fonts with white outlines are frequently used to make them look distinctive, contributing to the denotation of this magazine looking fairly expensive as it is neat-looking and is fairly thick. NME uses mainly the colour of black to convey the overall affect of successful bands and ‘cool’ clothing which the band members on the front are wearing.

NME’s front cover is seemingly less busy than that of Kerrang’s which makes all the information on the front easier to digest for the audience. NME follows similar conventions to other music magazines in some respects, for example there is always band names listed along the bottom so the audience instantly knows what bands this magazine will include. Kerrang also lists band names at the bottom for the same reason.

The ‘Mode Of Address’ of the magazine

A direct mode of address is present in NME’s magazine and is instantly recognised. The three band members from ‘White Lies’ who are featured on the front cover, are looking directly at the audience which entices them into wanting to interact with these band members as they are looking straight at them. Informal language such as ‘Jay bashes one out!’ is used in this edition of NME. This informal approach appeals to the target audience (teenagers) as they are likely to use similar phrases and types of language, and therefore
want to engage with this magazine.

Quotes from band members on the front of the magazine use language that targets the specific teenage audience for example ‘Nirvana pissed people off and so do we’ Cursing appeals to a teenage audience as many of them will be likely to use this type of language on a daily basis. Readers can address this magazine by reading the features that it contains, subscribing online to a free weekly newsletter which informs them about new music news, mp3s, music videos and by listening to NME radio on the homepage of their website. This cross-platform approach broadens NME’s presence in different markets.

Subjects of NME magazine include upcoming gigs, interviews with stars, drug usage and top ‘dark’ albums that have been released. This all appeals to the teenage target audience as they may want to go and see one of their favoured bands live, they may take drugs or they may want to find out more about their favourite singer/band. Features include ‘the 50 darkest albums ever made’ and ‘Glasvegas return’ and ‘new songs and line-up go live’. These features are relevant to the magazine’s genre and therefore attract their teenage demographic.