

AS Media
Foundation Portfolio
G321

Music Magazine
Practical
Research and Evaluation
Presentation

Progress and Objectives Each Week

PLANNING AND PREPARATION

- I researched a number of various different music magazines to get ideas for my own. I looked at magazines such as Kerrang!, RockSound, NME and Super Super, a magazine from East London. I took most of my ideas from Super Super, because I wanted my magazine to challenge forms and conventions of music publishings on today's market like NME. I wanted my magazine to look fun, quirky and bold - an ideal read for 15-25 year olds.

I used a fun, playful logo like this.



I liked the idea of using a female model so I used my friend on the front of mine.

I also used a masthead similar to this one, using a bold black outline and similar colours.



The masthead covers the whole width of the magazine and is overlapped by the band.

The colour scheme for Kerrang! is black, white and red which symbolizes this particular genre of music.

Pictures are used on the magazine to show the reader what is inside.

MAGAZINE PROPOSAL

- ◉ I plan on creating an underground live music magazine, specialising in the genres metal and alternative. It should be published fortnightly, have around 110 pages and will cost £3.40.
- ◉ My magazine will be similar to a North London magazine called 'SuperSuper', in the way in which colours and shapes are used.
- ◉ I aim for my target audience to be teenagers aged 14-21; any ethnicity or social background; male or female. I will attract my target audience by using fun, bold and lively colours and cover lines, and include the styles of music in which my target audience would like to read about.
- ◉ The images I plan to create and use will be modern and quirky, and visually pleasing.
- ◉ The style of my magazine is going to be fairly informal and fun. I aim for it to be a magazine that teenagers and young adults can relate to and will enjoy reading.
- ◉ The genre of my magazine - there are no magazines on the market that focus on urban and alternative underground music. I believe this is a huge part of the music industry so I aim to fill the gap with my magazine.

FRONT PAGE - RESEARCH

- My inspiration for my front page was 'SuperSuper' magazine. As the front cover is the first thing you see, bold bright colours are used such as yellow, red, white and pink. I liked the effect this had as it makes the page look funky, so I decided to use similar colours on my own front page.
- The 'RockSound' magazine below uses dark colours such as black and brown, with a splash of bright colour. I don't think this looks as effective as the other front covers and makes it look really dull and bland.
- Also, 'RockSound' follows the typical conventions for a front cover as it uses cover lines down each side of the page in horizontal lines. Whereas the 'SuperSuper' magazine has a more random look which I liked. This magazine uses text vertically down the side of the page which I decided to consider for my magazine as it challenges the conventions of magazines in today's market.
- A variety of different fonts and text sizes are used so this tells me to not stick to the same font and size in my magazine.



MY FRONT PAGE

- This image is of my completed magazine. My masthead uses a white, yellow and black colour scheme to attract readers. It is also outlined in a thick black line to make it stand out. It is placed on the right hand side of the page which means my magazine should be positioned at the front of the pile in a shop.
- I also used a simple bold logo similar to the one used on 'SuperSuper' magazine. It immediately draws in attention because of the bright blue colour and thick black lines.
- I used a black text box along the top of the page because I saw many magazines use this. I put white text inside saying 'EXCLUSIVE! THIS IS COLOUR REVEALS ALL!' The white text on black background immediately grabs the reader and is one of the first things the reader will see as it's placed at the top of the page. Also, the use of capital letters draws in attention. The word 'EXCLUSIVE' tells the reader that this is the only magazine the band has been interviewed by so they feel inclined to carry on reading.
- The headlines are in bright colours and some are on the side to make my magazine look different and challenge forms and conventions; not many magazines use text on the side.
- The main sell covers the width of the magazine and is in capitals, bright pink and a bold font. The leading has been kept to a minimum as I discovered this is how text is in magazines. Also, I used a vertical stretch to make the lettering look longer. I placed a quote from the magazine under the headline. The quote also overlapped the main sell text as I thought this looked quite effective.
- In the bottom right hand corner I used a yellow box with black text inside and turned it 45 degrees so it was on its side. This adds detail to the magazine and the the inside (FREE! Giant tour posters!) bribes the reader to buy the magazine because they would get free posters.



CONTENTS - RESEARCH

- To get a vague design idea for my contents page I, once again, decided to look to 'SuperSuper' for inspiration as its design and style of magazine is the direction I am looking to go with for my magazine.
- The first thing that attracts your attention is the bold lettering across the top. The use of this in the magazine is eye catching and makes it clear what the purpose of the page is. I used bold bright colours at the top of my contents page. The pink and white of the lettering and the thick black outline stands out on the scheme of yellow which makes you focus on it. The colour scheme is once again restricted to three main colours (pink, white and yellow) which leaves the page looking neat and professional.
- The contents page of NME is following the typical convention of using columns for the actual page numbers and information. This suggests to me I should use the same sort of format. The right hand column uses black boxes with white text inside. This stood out to me so I decided to consider using something similar in my contents page.
- In the centre of the NME contents page is an image of the main feature used in the magazine. This is effective because it gives the reader a visual to help them understand the main feature of the magazine. This image has a small feature underneath giving more depth into what is going to be in the magazine and gives the reader something to want to read more about prompting them to continue reading.



MY CONTENTS

- I used two images on my contents page. The first is of the vocalist of the band I used as my main sell. This is only a small image on the left hand side of the page. The second is of another band included in the magazine called 'This Is Colour'. It is placed on the bottom left/centre of the page.
- On the left third of the page I have included an editors note. This gives more information on what is in the issue and updates the reader on any upcoming events, news, gigs etc. I have placed an image of myself above this because I saw this is what most magazines do.
- I got the idea of putting the date of the issue with the word 'Contents' from this contents page. I liked this idea so considered it for my magazine and ended up using it.



FEATURE PAGES - RESEARCH



- When I did some research of some feature pages I realised the most had one page of either a feature or interview on one side of the page, and was laid out in three or four columns, depending on the size of the magazine. On the other side was an image that took up the whole page.

- The first feature page looks effective, I like the use of the flag as the background and the props in the photo look good. However, the colours are quite dull and I'd prefer for my magazine feature pages to be brighter to go with the front page and contents page.

- The second feature page is more towards the look I am aiming for. I like the use of the bright yellow background and the random shapes. Although it is simple I prefer it to the first one. Once again, the colours are eye catching (pink, blue, white and yellow) so a reader would be drawn to this before the other feature page.

- For my magazine, I have considered using a bright yellow background like this one, and using stars and circles to add more detail.

- The text in magazine features is always quite small so this tells me I should use a small text size for mine.



MY FEATURE PAGES

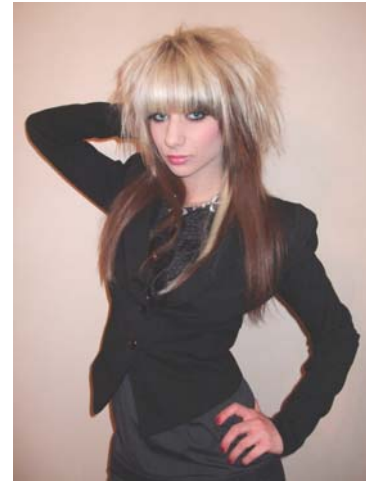
- My feature pages have a bright yellow background like the feature page I did research on. This instantly draws the eye in and the bold colours of the pink and black lettering and blue and white shapes make the page jump out and demand attention.
- The image on the left page is of the vocalist of Vice By Nevada and it is edited to her eyes are really blue to match the bright colours.
- I used bold text down the side and across the top of the pages which reads 'GREAT EXPECTATIONS'. This is a quote from the article itself. Similarly to the front page, I put some of the text on its side so it was vertical down the side of the left page. Originally, the word 'GREAT' was black but it wasn't readable with the image behind it, so I changed it to pink which I preferred anyway.
- Like in the other feature pages, I used a small blue star in the corner to add more detail and a white circle under the text.
- The feature is laid out in three columns as this is the average amount of columns music magazines use, and I decided to do just an article and not an interview. Because I did this I decided to add some quotes into the article.
- I put a pink box around the text at the top of the page to make it stand out more, as it is a summary of the feature to give the reader an idea of what will be included.



PHOTOGRAPHY

- I have learnt a variety of photography skills that I did not know before the course.
- **Conception** - I made sure the images I developed were appropriate for my product. I spent time planning where I was going to take the photos and if I was going to use any props, which I decided not to. This helped me to construct the shot.
- **Shot distance** - I used the zoom function on my camera to take the close up I used on my contents page. I took a variety of shot distances for my magazine. Music magazines have many shots of bands or artists taken medium close-up, so I followed the professionals and took most of my images medium close-up.
- **Colour and resolution** - I edited the colour on a few of my photos once they were uploaded onto the mac. I changed the colour of the models eyes for my front page and feature to match it with the other colours used on the page. In Photoshop, I changed the resolution to 150dpi.
- **Framing and composition** - I took around one hundred shots all together and ended up using only seven. This helped me gain some practice and the shots got better as I carried on. For all of my photos, I asked the subject(s) to look towards the camera, and the focus of my images were people (bands/artists). I placed the focus of my image in the centre of the viewfinder. However, I used the crop tool in Photoshop to crop out some of the background in one of my images.
- **Mise en scene** - As all of my images were still, I constructed the mise en scene at the photography stage. I made clear decisions about my models clothing and appearance and decided to not use any props or background imagery. For one of my photos I used a black backdrop and used side lighting to create a shadow effect.
- I used a range of different photographs as no music magazines use the same subject throughout.

PHOTOS



PHOTOSHOP

- ◉ I have learnt a variety of skills in Photoshop since the beginning of the course.
- ◉ **Improve skin tone** - To improve my models skin tone I created a new layer and used the healing brush tool and spot healing tool. I held Alt to click the clean area and paint over it. Then I created a new layer and used a soft edge Paintbrush 40-80px with the opacity set to 20%. I sampled by holding the Alt button to set the colour, and painted over the desired areas once or twice. I did this to reduce lines under the eyes and to take off shine.
- ◉ **Sharpen the image** - Some of my images were a little blurry as they were taken with a digital camera. I chose Filter, Sharpen, Unsharp Mask then zoomed in on the areas with fine detail (eyes/eye lashes). Then I ticked Preview on so that I could see my whole image in the background. I also used the slider to improve the sharpness of the pixels.
- ◉ **Use effects** - I learnt to posterise an image using Image, Adjustments, Posterize. However, I did not use any effects for my images.
- ◉ **Crop edges** - I used the crop tool to crop away unwanted edges. To do this I clicked the tool, dragged over the image to keep, pressed the enter key to accept and saved my file.
- ◉ All images I edited in Photoshop and used in my magazine had to be changed. Before I sized the image in Photoshop I had to draw a picture box in InDesign and make a note of the measurements in the Control Palette. I then had to swap to Photoshop and open the image. Then I had to change the image size of the width or height depending on which was more important. The three tick boxes had to be on and the resolution had to be 150dpi. Then the Image Mode had to be changed to CMYK colour. Finally, I had to save the image in the same folder as my InDesign file and make sure the file type was .tif

AUDIENCE FEEDBACK

- I put together six questions and printed out copies of my magazine front cover, contents and feature pages. I then asked six people my questions about magazine to gain some feedback and some qualitative and and quantitative data. The six questions were:
 1. Are you male or female?
 2. How old are you?
 3. What type of music do you listen to?
 4. How much would you pay for my magazine?
 5. What type of magazines do you buy/subscribe to?
 6. Would you buy my magazine - Yes/No? And why?

Here are my results:

1. Male.
2. 43.
3. Bass, ska, rock, dance/hardcore rave.
4. £2.00.
5. Doesn't buy music magazines, subscribes to Angling Times and Anglers Mail.
6. 'No because I have no interest in music magazines. It looks more aimed towards a female audience'.

AUDIENCE FEEDBACK

1. Female.
2. 50.
3. Acoustic, soft rock.
4. £2.50.
5. Cooking magazines such as Good Food.
6. 'No because it looks like it is aimed at a younger market who are more into music/bands'.

1. Female.
2. 15.
3. Rock and pop.
4. £3.00.
5. Gossip and music magazines such as Cosmopolitan, More, Shout and Kerrang!
6. 'Yes because it's visually pleasing and they type of music I listen to'.

1. Male.
2. 14.
3. Rock and metal.
4. £2.00.
5. X-Box 360.
6. 'No because it's not the type of music I listen to'.

AUDIENCE FEEDBACK

1. Female.
2. 20.
3. £3.50.
4. Underground live music, alternative, post-hardcore.
5. Vogue, Grazia, SuperSuper.
6. 'Yes because it looks fun and quirky and it doesn't look like every other magazine on the market. Also, it includes the genre of music I listen to'.

1. Male.
2. 21.
3. £3.40.
4. All live music, metal, alternative.
5. Esquire and FHM.
6. 'Yes because it looks aimed towards my age group and looks pleasant. I have never seen a music magazine that looks like this so would be intrigued to purchase it. Also, it is an underground live magazine and I love live music'.

HOW DOES MY MAGAZINE ATTRACT THE TARGET AUDIENCE?

My target audience is 14-21 year olds and the audience demographics are C2DE.

My magazine attracts my target audience by the way I have presented it by using bold eye catching colours, and big lettering with thick black outlining which is what the audience will be looking for and the images are visually pleasing. I also attract my target audience by including free tour posters and free downloads.

My magazine uses a fun, informal tone to address the readers and attract a bigger audience. Most magazines use a more formal tone such as Q and NME, so as mine is different it might attract more readers.

DROWNED INSOUND includes information that the target audience would be interested in and would make them more likely to buy the magazine.

HOW DOES YOUR MAGAZINE USE, DEVELOP AND CHALLENGE FORMS AND CONVENTIONS?

‘DROWNED INSOUND’ uses the forms and conventions of real music magazines as it informs it’s readers of the latest reviews of Underground music, albums, gigs, bands, and it also has the latest news about the music industry and interviews with musicians. Another way my magazine uses forms and conventions is because the models I use are facing the camera and are posing typically how bands/artists pose in photoshoots.

My magazine challenges the forms and conventions of lots of popular music magazines on the market today. Magazines such as ‘Kerrang!’ and ‘Rock Sound’ mostly use a white, red and black colour scheme. The red represents danger which could be linked to rock/metal music. This colour scheme is typical of a rock magazine. My magazine uses the forms and conventions of an East London magazine called ‘SuperSuper’. Bright, bold, clashing colours are used to attract readers and make the cover look fun and funky. My front cover uses white and yellow for the masthead, outlined by a thick black line. This makes it stand out on the cover. The masthead is placed on the right hand side of the cover; however I could argue that this means my magazine should be placed at the front of the stack in a shop. The logo on the magazine is bright blue which clashes effectively with the masthead. Other colours used are bright pink, black and orange.

HOW DOES YOUR MEDIA PRODUCT REPRESENT PARTICULAR SOCIAL GROUPS?

My magazine represents people who want to read a fun, informal and quirky style magazine and who enjoy live alternative and metal music. The music in the magazine is not one specific genre (live, alternative, metal) so the social groups can be mixed. The purpose of my magazine is to inform and entertain young adults from 14-21, which I think I have achieved by using different techniques on my front cover.

WHAT KIND OF MEDIA INSTITUTION MIGHT DISTRIBUTE YOUR MEDIA PRODUCT AND WHY?

I believe my magazine would either have to be published with a popular media institution or an educational publishing group specifically for music. If my magazine was published with a institution like Bauer Media it would ensure that my magazine was seen as having a really high standard, as Bauer has a great reputation for the magazines it publishes.

Bauer publishes magazines such as Kerrang!, Mojo and Q magazine. Although I think Bauer Media would be a good institution for my magazine, it already publishes many music magazines and it would not necessarily publish another music magazine.

Bauer uses cross media convergence to maximise the impact of it's media products. The institution has been around since 1953 and it's target audience is all ages and all interests. It has Kerrang!, Kiss, Magic and Q TV Channels to maximise it's impact.

FUTURE PUBLISHING

Although Bauer is more popular than Future publishing, Future publishes more music magazines than Bauer Media. It's list of music magazines it publishes Metal Hammer, Total Guitar, Classic Rock, Rhythm, Future Music, etc...

I think this institution would publish my magazine as it publishes all types of music magazines. At the moment it does not publish any live underground music magazines so my magazine would be a good idea to publish.

EVALUATION OF SKILLS

Overall, the skills I have learnt since the beginning of the course have developed dramatically whilst I have been working on my music magazine. My ability to use InDesign and Photoshop shop has increased as I have edited my images and put together my front page, contents page and feature pages.

In Photoshop I have learnt how to even out skin tone, hide spots/marks, crop out edges, sharpen images and use different effects. I used these techniques on my images for my music magazine.

In InDesign I have learnt how to place images and text onto my pages, use different colour swatches and a variety of other techniques. Learning these skills helped me to produce my final music magazine.

WHAT I HAVE LEARNT SINCE PRELIMINARY TASK

It is obvious that I have learnt a lot since my preliminary task by looking at my college magazine and my music magazine. The college magazine is basic with a white background, same fonts and a bland colour scheme. However my music magazine has an image that fills the whole cover and a variety of different fonts and text sizes, as well as different colours and magazine traits. This is down to the skills I have learnt in Photoshop and InDesign this term.

