



In Store Music

Maximising the impact of music to
enhance shopper experiences & sales



principles

Vision One Research Limited
85-87 Bayham Street
Camden Town
London, NW1 0AG

Tel 0207 692 0702

www.visionone.co.uk



New research from Vision One Research shows the extraordinary impact of in-store music on sales



Pioneering research from Vision One for fashion retailer Principles has proven that music can enhance retail sales... but that only the right music will do!

Britain is a nation of music lovers. 175 million CD albums were sold last year in addition to an estimated 9 million music downloads. TV programmes such as 'X-factor' regularly pull 10 million or more viewers and over 60 music radio stations and 30 music television channels are broadcast every day.

So what does this have to do with UK retailing?

Music can convey anything we need it to. We all have music we love or hate, which makes us laugh or cry. It enables us to cross time and space by taking us up and away from normality transporting us to anywhere imaginable. It really is that powerful.

Having such an effect on emotions, it's not surprising then that music is used so often to influence and change human behaviour – healing, relaxing, energizing and selling – these days music is used to help sell everything from cars to beer to mortgages.

Music as an in-store marketing tool

Increasingly, and in the current financial climate, retailers recognise that in order to succeed on the high-street and to compete with the internet and the expansion of supermarkets into non-food areas, they must do everything possible to create an environment that attracts and retains customers. In-store music has become a powerful marketing tool helping influence and change buyer behaviour at the moment it really counts - the point of purchase.

The question that remains unanswered (at least publicly) is the strength of impact that the right choice of music can have on actual sales. Anecdotal evidence and a strong client list support DMX MUSIC's view that music can have a significant impact but published research is thin on the ground.

To address this lack of hard evidence, Vision One Research embarked on a three month research programme in conjunction with leading women's fashion retailer Principles, to evaluate the impact of music on the shopping experience and more specifically, on sales.

The Approach - The customer research was conducted in two parts.

Stage 1

The first stage was used to identify what Principles' customers want from the Principles shopping experience. Vision One Research's methodology was designed to capture customers' music preferences in order that DMX could create the ideal music playlist which would meet their stated requirements. This was achieved by asking customers to listen to and to assess tracks from a broad range of music styles and types from classical music to the latest pop. In total, 650 in-store interviews were conducted which yielded 8,800 track evaluations.

Vision One Research's modelling techniques were used in conjunction with DMX's programming experience, to help identify which artists and music genres were most appropriate (e.g. rock, pop, classical), in addition to the optimal sonic characteristics; such as the number of beats per minute, music density and vocal arrangements.

Stage 2

The second stage of the research was to evaluate the impact of three new music scenarios on both the shopping experience and more importantly on sales.

Scenario 1 – 'Customer' scenario - The first scenario tested a channel that was based around 'ideal' characteristics derived from the modelling outputs of customer responses from stage 1. Tracks selected were designed to reflect the research, such as genre, vocal arrangements, artist, tempo etc. This is referred to as the 'Customer' scenario.

Scenario 2 – 'Brand' scenario - The second scenario introduced new elements designed to optimise and enhance brand values. The new tracks which were included were designed enhance the specific elements of the shopping experience and to make it appear more 'modern', 'refreshing' and 'new'. This is referred to as the 'Brand' scenario.

Scenario 3 – 'No Music' scenario - One of the main goals of this study was to establish whether or not music was having any impact on the shopping experience. For benchmarking purposes, scenario 3 had no music playing - allowing us to measure how much impact in-store music was having compared to having no music at all. This is referred to as the 'No Music' scenario.

Ten stores participated in the music trial over a three week period. Vision One Research conducted over 900 in-store interviews (i.e. 300 interviews per scenario) across the 10 stores to explore customer perceptions of the shopping experience and impact of music. In order to help remove any potential order effects or seasonal changes and to ensure direct comparisons could be made, each store played the music in different order. Principles monitored sales in these stores, against the total group, to provide evidence of any potential sales effects.

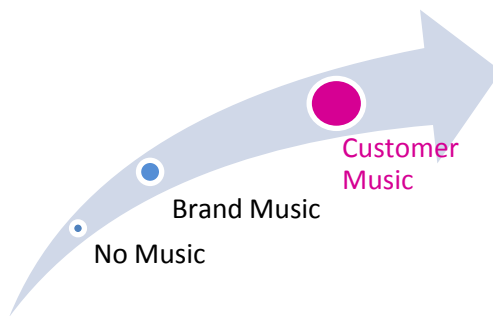
The Results

Initially we were looking for small anecdotal evidence to support the hypothesis that music does have an impact on the shopping experience. However, this soon changed when the results of the trial were analysed – the findings of which far exceeded initial expectations. The result showed conclusive evidence that music can and does have a significant positive impact on both the shopping experience and sales.

The research revealed that 90% of customers like having music in-store and 60% said music made them stay longer in store. The research also showed that the ‘customer’ scenario created a dramatic improvement in customers overall shopping experiences. Indeed one of the most important attributes “Welcoming” showed a strong increase in ratings from a base level of 100 (no music) to 140 compared with music.

Sales

The real highlight of this phase, however, was the impact that music had on sales. Whilst sales can fluctuate from week to week due to local market conditions, on average the ‘Customer’ approach showed double digit sales increases in the weeks where ‘No music’ was playing. Furthermore, the sales growth of the ‘Customer’ approach out-stripped the Principles estate average.



By comparison, the Brand Enhancement scenario which sought to drive brand image had much less on the store experience scores. It was clear that it had failed to engage customers and overall only showed a marginal improvement in sales and store experience compared to having no music at all. It was clear that the new tracks (although sonically very similar) had simply diluted the potential of the music.

This raised another very important finding, and indicated that there isn’t much room for error! All the music tracks have to be absolutely ‘right’, otherwise any potential sales affect will be diminished or negated - buyers will leave a store within a matter of minutes if they do not find items they like or are looking for – so the ‘right’ music has to hit them from the moment they walk through the door if it is to make an impact.

Key Conclusions

The main conclusion drawn from this study was that music is a very powerful medium that can have a dramatic impact on the store experience and sales – but only if it is harnessed correctly. The study has also illustrated the benefits of Vision One’s unique customer centric approach to in-store music. In the current climate, where retailers are striving for modest growth, it is clear that retailers can generate significant sales growth by getting their in-store music right!

For more information contact Tony Lewis or Jas Gidda – Tel 0207 692 0702



About Vision One

Vision One Research is a leading and innovative independent full service research company delivering quality research and planning solutions across a wide variety of sectors. We specialise in retail and shopper behaviour and undertake all aspects of qualitative and quantitative research and also provide analysis and consultancy services.

Vision One Research operates a quality management system. We are members of the [Market Research Society \(MRS\) - MRS Company Partners](#), which provides reassurance to clients of our commitment to quality and adherence to the code of conduct of the MRS. Vision One Fieldwork is ISO 9001:2000 and ISO 20252:2006 accredited and a member of the Interviewer Quality Control Scheme (IQCS).



In addition, Vision One is committed to meeting the requirements of:

- UK Data Protection Act 1998
- European Directive EU 95.46/EC
- ICC/ESOMAR (The World Association of Research Professionals)
International Code of Marketing and Social Research Proactive

Vision One is dedicated to superior quality research and is continuously looking for new ways to improve. As part of this programme, we track our client's satisfaction on every project we do. For the past two years, since tracking began, we have managed to achieve a remarkable 100% satisfaction with all our clients.

Feel free to contact us to discuss this study or any research requirements you may wish to discuss

Telephone 0207 693 0702

Post 85-87 Bayham Street
Camden Town
London
NW1 OAG

Email tony@visionone.co.uk (Tony Lewis, Director)

Web www.visionone.co.uk

