

Music in advertising

The recent joint venture between a marketing company, WPP, and Universal Music is designed to create exciting new advertising campaigns. How? By matching songs and products.

1 Match the songs (1–6) with the companies (a–f) that used them in their adverts.

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|---|------------------------------------|
| (1) Start me up (Rolling Stones) | (a) Levi's 501 jeans |
| (2) I heard it through the grapevine (Marvin Gaye) | (b) Coca Cola fizzy drink |
| (3) We are made of stars (Moby) | (c) Motorola mobile phones |
| (4) Revolution (Beatles) | (d) Intel Pentium 4 computer chips |
| (5) Hung up (Madonna) | (e) Nike sportswear |
| (6) I'd like to teach the world to sing (New Seekers) | (f) Microsoft's Windows '95 |

2 Scan the article. Underline the names of any songs, artists or companies mentioned in exercise 1.

Bands and brands

BrandAmp is the name of the new, joint venture between an advertising company, WPP, and a music publisher. The link up aims to team up brands with music, or 'brands and bands'. This is no ordinary publisher, but Universal Music, whose groups include the Scissor Sisters and whose back-catalogue includes Stevie Wonder and Elton John. So, WPP's agency clients will have direct access to the catalogue; these clients include IBM, Ford and Nestle.

Music remains a powerful way to sell products. In the UK, few can forget the 1970's adaptation of the New Seekers song, 'I'd like to teach the world to sing' by Coca Cola, linked to a memorable film. The Beatles song 'Revolution' was used effectively by Nike. Sales of Levi's jeans soared with the revival of two 1960's classic songs, Marvin Gaye's 'I heard it through the grapevine' and Percy Sledge's 'When a man loves a woman'. The Levi's adverts were so successful that people in the UK went to the cinema just to watch them.

Every track on Moby's 'Play' album in 1999 was licensed to appear in one or more advertising campaigns. This is the moment when record labels really became aware of the commercial benefits of having their artists featured in advertising. Nevertheless, some bands refuse to allow their songs to be used like this – they see it as 'selling out'. It is reported that Franz Ferdinand turned down a deal which would have used one of their songs in an ad campaign. On the other hand, Bob Dylan promotes iTunes, while iTunes promotes his new album 'Modern Times'.

Classical music has long been a favourite in adverts. Hamlet cigars and Wall's ice-cream are both forever linked in the minds of UK consumers with famous pieces of music. Such arbitrary linking of music to a product is viewed by the cynical as media manipulation. The new London-based company will ignore this viewpoint and focus instead on creating what are described as 'compelling and imaginative music solutions'. Will your favourite song soon be linked to a totally unrelated product, in order to boost sales?

3 Read the article. Which other songs, artists and companies are mentioned? What do you learn about BrandAmp?

4 Find the following words in the article from their definitions.

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| (a) an agreement between two companies to work together, usually to any share risks | (Paragraph 1) |
| (b) a connection between two things | (Paragraph 1) |
| (c) quickly increased to a high level | (Paragraph 2) |
| (d) doing something which shows you do not have the same moral principles as you had | (Paragraph 3) |
| (e) interesting or exciting enough to keep your interest completely | (Paragraph 4) |
| (f) to help something increase or become more successful | (Paragraph 4) |

(Definitions from or based on: *Macmillan English Dictionary* Text © Bloomsbury Publishing 2002)

5 Work in small groups. You work for an advertising agency. Match three songs to three products, for use in campaigns by your clients. Present your choices and explain the rationale behind them to the class.