

Introduction

YOU AND FILM

- How do you find out about a film?
- What makes you want to see a film?
- How do you know what to expect from a film?
- What are you paying for when you buy a cinema ticket?
- Are there some films that you just HAVE to see at the cinema or doesn't it matter?

CHOICE

When a film is being made it is unique, telling its own story in its own way. Once it is made it becomes a product which has to enter the marketplace and be sold to consumers (the audience). It will be '*coming to a cinema near you*' and needs to be turned into a '*want to see film*'. Attracting audiences to buy cinema tickets is one of the key things which will be the difference between financial profit and loss. The launch of a film in cinemas can help towards its future profitability.

Even when a film is in pre-production, if it has a distributor attached, the distributor will already be thinking: '*Who will want to see this film?*' Expanding this idea we could say '*Why will people want to see this film?*' And '*How do we make them want to see this film?*' To translate the who, the why and the how into actual cinema audiences is the costly, high-risk task of the professional film DISTRIBUTOR.

The Distributor

The role of a distributor is varied but includes: Acquiring a film.

- If the distributor is a 'major' and is attached to a studio (e.g. Warner Bros. or Universal) then they will normally work on the films made by that studio. A 'major' might also acquire the rights to an independent production (made outside the major studios).
- If it is an 'independent' distributor, unaffiliated to one of the major US studios, then the company will buy (license) the rights to a film which they may have seen at a film festival or at script stage, or during the production phase.

Either type of distributor might have the right to distribute the film in the UK only. Major studio distributors will often have the right to distribute the film worldwide.

WHAT

One key question when either acquiring a film or financing a film is what the distributor thinks are the best selling points of the film are - WHAT type of film it is.

WHO

In acquiring the film, the distributor will have considered that there is a viable audience for the film, i.e. WHO might pay to see it.

WHEN

They will also decide WHEN to release the film in cinemas and on other digital formats.

HOW

This will govern HOW they will market the film and how much to spend on advertising and promoting it.

Based on this they will create trailers and display materials to promote the film, create publicity through such things as interviews with the stars online (e.g. twitter Q&As giving public as well as media access); on TV, radio and in the press, premieres and news stories.

This will also involve developing promotions for the film with media partners - all to engage particular audiences as the release of the film approaches.

What?

In starting to plan a release, the film distributor has to decide how it will present a film to a potential audience. They need to decide what sets this film apart from all the other films that are on release at around the same time – they look for a film's 'selling points' or 'hooks'. If, for example, the distributor is handling an action adventure film, they will need to identify aspects which set it aside from other action adventure films.

SELLING POINTS

In deciding what the selling points of a film are, the distributor will consider many elements: how the storyline differs from other films and what the key elements of the story are, who stars in the film and what were their most recent films, where was it made, is it based on a well-known book, are there innovative special effects who is the director and what were his/her most recent films, is it a sequel to an earlier hit?

CONSIDERATIONS

Taking all of these into consideration, the distributor will then decide which elements to stress in the marketing campaign (advertisements, posters, trailers, online clips) i.e. how to position the film in the market place.

HOOKS

The 'hooks' of a film must help potential audiences come to an understanding of what they might expect when they go to see it. The visual campaign – the posters, trailers, online clips – will emphasise the hooks and give the target audience a 'narrative image' (an idea of the film's story).

GENRE

Genre can be a very useful tool in positioning and marketing the finished film. The understanding of genre is shared between the audience and the film industry, so if for example a company is marketing a horror film, the audience will expect certain elements to be evident, this might be settings such as woods, isolated houses, etc. The characters might include teenagers in a particular type of suspenseful situation. These elements are expected by the audience and drawn on during the production, writing and casting. However the promise of a genre film is not just to provide us with the familiar, but to also to provide something new. This might be in terms of new dangers, new settings.

CHARACTERS

Some genre films rely on audiences getting attached to the character or characters and wanting to see how a fresh situation challenges them. Audiences want to know what happens to well-liked characters such as Luke Skywalker or James Bond in their next adventures. In these types of genre films ('franchises') we see a return to familiar characters and settings but the narrative is disrupted in some way.

Part of the pleasure here for audiences is the familiarity of the character, their behaviour and attitudes being revisited as well as offering something new in terms of the adventure on offer. This is also challenging for the film companies involved, and can be very costly. They need to develop interesting storylines that will keep audiences coming back.

TASK: SELLING POINTS

Below you will see some information about three films. From the information you are given could you say what you think is the hook or selling point of the film.

FILM 1: ALVIN AND THE CHIPMUNKS: THE ROAD CHIP

The Chipmunks come to believe that Dave is planning to propose to his new girlfriend in Miami and get rid of them afterwards. In an attempt to stop him, they go on a road trip, with a time limit of only three days.

FILM 2: JOY

A story of a family across four generations, centered on the girl who becomes the woman who founds a business dynasty and becomes a matriarch in her own right. Facing betrayal, treachery, the loss of innocence and the scars of love, Joy becomes a true boss of family and enterprise in a world of unforgiving commerce. Allies become adversaries and adversaries become allies, both inside and outside the family, as Joy's inner life and fierce imagination carry her through the storm she faces.

FILM 3: THE HUNTSMAN WINTER'S WAR

The fantastical world of Snow White and the Huntsman expands to reveal how the fates of The Huntsman Eric and Queen Ravenna are deeply and dangerously intertwined. Chris Hemsworth and Charlize Theron return to their roles in The Huntsman Winter's War, an epic action-adventure in which they are joined by Emily Blunt and Jessica Chastain, as well as director Cedric Nicolas-Troyan. Producer Joe Roth once again leads the team in a breathtaking new tale nested in the legendary saga.

Who?

At the same time as thinking about the hook or selling point of a film, the distributor will also be considering who the target audience for that film will be. The target audience is best defined as the specific largest group of people who might want to go and see a film.

Defining the target audience will affect the 'where' and 'how' of the marketing campaign -

Where to advertise and promote the film?

How to reach that defined target audience?

TASK 1: REACHING YOU



Although the cinema audience is broadening, 16-24 year olds are the segment of the population that goes to the cinema most frequently, so how could a distributor reach YOU?

1. Which websites/blogs/social networks/apps do you use most often?
2. Which TV programmes do you watch, whether live or on catch-up?
3. Which magazines do you read?
4. Do you read film reviews in newspapers or online?
5. Do you regularly travel on public transport?
6. Do you subscribe to any email or text services about films?
7. What makes you aware that a film is coming?

Each film has to be positioned through considering the selling points against an understanding of age, gender, lifestyles and activities of the audiences available – all of which inform the later decisions on how and where a film is promoted. Films have to compete for audiences' time as well as disposable income.

TASK 2: GENRE

Although the cinema audience is broadening, 16-24 year olds are the segment of the population that goes to the cinema most frequently, so how could a distributor reach YOU?

			age 0-12	age 12-16	age 16-24	age 24-35	age 35-45	age 45-60	age 60+
Action adventure films	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Adaptations of classic novels	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Romantic comedies	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Science fiction films	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fantasy adventure	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Subtitled films	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

The target audience can vary considerably from film to film, for example from families with young children to teenagers to older audiences. It is the distributor's job, through research, comparison with previous films and their audiences, commercial experience and professional judgement to define who the audience for any particular film is. Each film has to be treated as an individual product.

TASK 3: THE HOOK AND AUDIENCE

Read the synopses of the films below., then decide on their target audience.

FILM 1: TRUMBO

In 1947, Dalton Trumbo was Hollywood's top screenwriter until he and other artists were jailed and blacklisted for their political beliefs. Trumbo recounts how he won two Academy Awards and exposed the absurdity and injustice of the blacklist, which entangled everyone from gossip columnist Hedda Hopper to John Wayne, Kirk Douglas and Otto Preminger.



FILM 2: THE DANISH GIRL

The remarkable love story inspired by the lives of artists Lili Elbe and Gerda Wegener. Lili and Gerda's marriage and work evolve as they navigate Lili's groundbreaking journey as a transgender pioneer.



FILM 3: BROOKLYN

An Irish immigrant (Saoirse Ronan) in 1950s New York falls for a tough Italian plumber (Emory Cohen), but faces temptation from another man (Domhnall Gleeson) when she returns to her homeland for a visit.



FILM 4: IN THE HEART OF THE SEA



In 1820, crewmen aboard the New England vessel Essex face a harrowing battle for survival when a whale of mammoth size and strength attacks with force, crippling their ship and leaving them adrift in the ocean. Pushed to their limits and facing storms, starvation, panic and despair, the survivors must resort to the unthinkable to stay alive. Their incredible tale ultimately inspires author Herman Melville to write "Moby-Dick."



FILM 5: MR. HOLMES

Long-retired and near the end of his life, Sherlock Holmes (Ian McKellen) grapples with an unreliable memory and must rely on his housekeeper's son as he revisits the still-unsolved case that led to his retirement.



Film 1: Trumbo			age 0-12	age 12-16	age 16-24	age 24-35	age 35-45	age 45-60	age 60+
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Film 2: The Danish Girl	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Film 3: Brooklyn	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Film 4: In the Heart of the Sea	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Film 5: Mr. Holmes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

TASK 4: THE TARGET AUDIENCE

Having defined the target audience for the five films you should now choose three of the films and decide how best you can reach those audiences..

FILM 1: TRUMBO

FILM 2: THE DANISH GIRL

FILM 3: BROOKLYN

FILM 4: IN THE HEART OF THE SEA

FILM 5: MR. HOLMES

1. On which websites would you place banners, clips or links?
2. Which magazines/newspapers would you advertise in?
3. Which magazines/newspapers would you try to get features/articles in?
4. Which TV programmes would you try to get features/interviews on?
5. What promotions could you run?
6. What sort of products appeal to the target audience?
7. What makes you aware that a film is coming?

While it is important never to lose sight of the target audience, the distributor will always try to attract as wide a range of people as possible. They will sometimes refer to films as 'cross over' or 'break out' films – those which attract more than just the main target audience.

Where?

As distributors review what kind of film they have, they will begin to form assumptions as to the type of release they need. In total, across the UK and Republic of Ireland, 740 cinemas with more than 3,900 screens are available.

How to reach that defined target audience?

SATURATION OR SELECTED

Different releases are managed in different ways. For example, a 'saturation' release at cinemas everywhere may open simultaneously on 1,000 screens UK-wide, playing at two or more screens per multiplex. This strategy, usually deployed for 'tentpole' titles also known as blockbusters such as large-scale sequels or star-led holiday releases, helps to accommodate mass audiences eager to consume a film at the earliest opportunity.

By contrast, specialised films offer a different cinematic experience. The UK release of, say, a documentary, foreign language film or revived classic may comprise 25 prints or fewer. Initially, it may play in selected locations where local audiences are known to favour such titles before potentially touring more widely in subsequent weeks. Very exceptionally, a film may be 'platformed' in a single location before rolling out. Most films released in the UK have what is termed a 'limited' release with fewer than 100 prints.

London, with an increasingly diverse population of 12.4m people, accounts for about a quarter of UK cinema admissions.

When?

A key element of a film's distribution plan is WHEN it is released. Traditionally, children's films are released around school holiday time. The big blockbusters often cluster around summer and Christmas too, while romantic comedies may appear leading up to Valentine's Day, and suspense films may come out for Halloween.

WINDOW

Each distributor will carefully track the competitors' release schedules, when they are publicly announced, aiming to ensure that they do not go head to head with similar types of film. They will look for a 'window' when their film may sustain a run in the very crowded cinema marketplace (in 2015 more than 700 feature films were released to UK cinema audiences)

ONE CHANCE

The distributor has only one chance of selling a film in its theatrical release. Once the film has opened in cinemas there is no possibility of completely changing the marketing campaign or changing the film itself if the audience is not coming to see it.

It's a one shot chance! And everything can depend on a film's opening weekend. The first day or two that a film plays in a cinema can quickly indicate whether it will be a box office success or not.

OPENING WEEKEND

In general it is the weekend when a film will earn the most money (two-thirds of cinemas' box-office takings are collected from Friday to Sunday). If box office is poor then the film will never recover and will be taken out of cinemas. If it is good, then the chances are that the film will generate positive word of mouth, thus attracting more audiences in the following weeks, and the film is more likely to be kept on screens.

SUSTAINING A FILM IN THE MARKETPLACE

The advertising has to hold the release as well as launch it. The reviews from critics and bloggers influence opinion too, of course. The distributor has a team who not only try to sell the film to cinema operators and persuade them to play it on screen, but also have to convince them to keep it on screen when, each successive week, a further batch of new titles are released.

This is why some films only play once or twice a day, rather than the 'full house' of four or even five showings – it is to try to accommodate the sheer range of titles in distribution at any one time. Thus, the opening weekend is vital to a film – the distributor can then argue that the film is popular and should remain on screen as long as possible.

How?

Once the distributor has decided on who the audience is for a film, and has also determined its market positioning, the next key decisions they have to make are HOW they are going to advertise and promote the film and how much to spend on these activities as part of a marketing campaign.

THE COST OF A CAMPAIGN

The cost of a marketing campaign is divided into above the line and below the line costs.

ABOVE THE LINE COSTS

These are known costs for creating marketing material (such as trailers) and buying media advertising (such as website banners, radio or TV spots or newspaper advertising) and creating an online presence for the film.

BELOW THE LINE COSTS

Publicity builds further awareness and interest in a film – and authored articles or editorial interviews are sometimes more 'trusted' than display advertising, which is paid for. With premières, the cost of getting the stars and director to attend and hopefully generate press coverage all have to be covered without any guarantee that the press will write about the film. Such events offer special access to film stars for fans waiting alongside the red carpet for selfies, short videos and autographs.

Cross-promotions are set up with partner companies outside the film industry (e.g. clothing companies, on-pack food and drinks brands) to promote the film and its characters in different environments and to a wider audience.

The distribution budget range, across all types of film released in the UK, is huge, varying from a few tens of thousands of pounds right up to several million pounds to build and sustain a high profile for the largest releases.

DIGITAL 'PRINTS AND ADVERTISING (P&A)

Having seen the film and decided on both the hook and target audience, the distributor is now in a position to decide on a marketing strategy. They must determine how much to spend on publicity and advertising and on digital prints of the film to send to cinemas.

How do they decide what they are going to spend? Firstly they have to predict how much they think the film will take at the box office. To do this they will use their own specialist knowledge as well as comparing their film with others that are similar and have already been released. If the film about to be released is, say, a romantic comedy, they will look at previous films from that genre to see how they fared in the marketplace.

If the film features stars then a similar exercise can be carried out. The larger the potential audience, the greater the amount of money the film could generate in cinema ticket sales, and so, in turn, the greater the amount that the distributor can afford to invest in digital 'prints', advertising and publicity. If the film has a wide appeal, it can be released in many, big cinemas (saturation release) or if the audience is smaller and more specialised, it can have a limited release. The UK has approximately 740 cinemas with 3,900 screens.

TASK 1: PRINTS AND ADVERTISING

Choose one of the three films below, by viewing the poster and reading the synopsis decide on: the hook, the target audience and type of release.

FILM 1: DAD'S ARMY

The film is set during 1944, when World War II was about to reach its end. In Walmington-on-Sea, Captain Mainwaring's Home Guard suffers from low morale. This is until a glamorous journalist arrives, to report on the platoon's exploits. Meanwhile, MI5 have discovered a radio signal transmitted from Walmington-on-Sea towards Berlin, apparently the work of a spy, giving the Home Guard a chance to make a real difference in the war.

What is the film's hook?

What is the target audience?

What type of release would you give the film?



FILM 2: SNOOPY & CHARLIE BROWN MOVIE

Life always seems complicated for good ol' Charlie Brown the boy who always tries his best against seemingly impossible odds. When the Little Red-Haired Girl moves into his neighborhood, Charlie Brown develops a crush on her. Meanwhile, his best friend Snoopy embarks on an epic adventure in a fantasy world. As a World War I flying ace, the lovable beagle pursues his nemesis, the Red Baron, while also trying to win the heart of a beautiful poodle named Fifi.

What is the film's hook?

What is the target audience?

What type of release would you give the film?



FILM 3: VICTOR FRANKENSTEIN

While searching for animal body parts at a London circus, radical scientist Victor Frankenstein meets gifted surgeon Igor Strausman. Not only does the brilliant doctor offer Strausman his friendship, but also a chance to work with him on groundbreaking research that could change the world forever. When Victor's experiments with life and death go too far, only Igor can bring him back from the brink of madness and save him from his monstrous creation.

What is the film's hook?

What is the target audience?

What type of release would you give the film?



TYPES OF RELEASE

Most films released in the UK are launched on fewer than 100 digital copies (and thus, as a 'limited' release will not be heavily supported by large amounts of advertising spend). Only 5% of films are released with over 500 copies (and accompanied by a large P&A spend).

In 2014, distributors spent approximately £350 million on advertising their films. Of this, around £190 million was invested in above-the-line media advertising, and the remainder on advertising production, cutting trailers, publicity junkets and materials, premieres, and producing and delivering DCP's to be projected on screen.

The more money that the distributor estimates will be taken by the cinemas in box office ticket sales, the more they will invest in marketing the film. Typically, the smaller the film, the smaller the spend.

ADVERTISING

The largest 'spend' of any P&A budget will be on advertising a film. In the UK, media advertising is very expensive. The main advertising avenues open to any distributor are:

- Posters
- Trailers
- Press advertising
- T.V. advertising
- Websites
- Outdoor
- Radio advertising
- Merchandise/Cross-promotion
- Online social media

EXTENSION ACTIVITY

Choose two or three forthcoming films and track how and where they have been advertised. Look at what you think is the selling point of each film. Look at how you think each film has been positioned and is being sold to its audience. Considering where the films have been advertised, what would you say is their target audience?

The amount of money spent on marketing will depend on who the distributor thinks is the target audience and how big that audience is. In the same way, how it is advertised will depend on the positioning of the film and the 'narrative image' that the distributor thinks will attract the target audience.

THE POSTER

How do you sum up two hours of exciting dramatic action in one image that people might look at for two or three seconds? The film, the stars, credits and often a tagline. The image on the poster must make us aware of the existence of the film, must make us want to see the film, and put across ideas of what the film could be about.

The iconic image or design in a film's poster – the so-called 'key art' – is central to the film's identity and an essential feature of its release campaign. A great poster catches the eye, tempts the mind and touches the heart, arousing viewers' interest in the experience that's promised.

Imagine it's you starting with a blank sheet. Should the poster's style be teasing or informative; dark or dazzling? Should it convey fun or foreboding? What kind of fonts and colour palette would be most effective? The graphic designer's challenge is always to find a focus, a clear distinguishing concept that can faithfully encapsulate – even immortalise – the feeling, atmosphere and promise of the individual film.

If that film is a sequel, its poster must immediately make it recognisable as part of a continuing saga; if it's an original work, the poster has to be bold enough to cut through, from scratch, the competing designs, messaging and branding that are increasingly ubiquitous online, in print, on outdoor panels, in fact everywhere we look.

Whilst evoking a strong sense of what a particular film offers – its genre, key characters and setting – the poster must generate interest, or even excitement, without revealing too much. It may transport the viewer into a key scene from the film, conjuring up the tension felt by the characters involved. Or it may largely be a montage of the principal cast with their costumes giving clues to their particular roles. And of course all the mandatory credits must be incorporated in their due proportions.

Illustrations or paintings were commonplace in film poster artworks up to the 1980s. In our digital media age, posters are often created using sophisticated software such as Illustrator or Photoshop. In any event, film posters are well established as a genre of commercial 'pop art' in their own right – copyrighted designs to cherish, savour, remember for a lifetime, collect and even share.

The poster gets its message across in a number of ways:

- The image or images used on the poster
- The use of 'star' names/faces
- The size of specific words on the poster
- The use of colour
- The graphic style of any words used on the poster
- The certificate

TASK 2: POSTER ANALYSIS

Your task is to analyse the film poster on the interactive poster analysis tool in terms of image, colour, composition, etc. Click and drag the orange pins to your areas of interest (you can drag up to three pins per category), then write your comments in the boxes provided. Once you have done this, present your thoughts on the overall message to your classmates.

THE TRAILER

The film trailer is probably the most cost effective advertising technique available to the film distributor. Showing in cinemas to a captive audience and on websites and T.V spots, a trailer can reflect, through the medium of moving image, what people might expect to see at the cinema. By using extracts from the finished film, the trailer can excite an audience, create awareness and also develop a 'want to see' attitude amongst cinema and T.V. audiences.

The trailer works through a combination of moving images, graphics and voice over to give audiences a sense of the 'narrative image' of the film. It can give audiences a sense of genre, what the story is about, who is in the film and when it opens. Shown in a cinema, and before a film which might be attracting the same target audience, the trailer is a powerful medium which reaches committed cinemagoers and persuades them to return to the cinema experience.

Trailers can be classified in three ways:

- The teaser trailer
- The full trailer
- The T.V. spot
- On-set blogs posted by key cast or crew

Teaser trailers might start to appear in cinemas anything up to a year before a film opens. The full trailer will probably appear between one and two months before a film opens. TV spots tend to be on screen a week or two before the opening of a film or just after a film has opened.

TASK 3: TYPES OF TRAILERS

Look at the teaser trailer; full trailer and TV spot for the film **Mr. Holmes**. Try to decide how each is different whilst at the same time looking at how each reflects the selling point of the film. What is the 'message' behind all these trailers? What do they say about the film?

TASK 4: TRAILER ANALYSIS

Watch the four trailers online and for each answer the following questions.

How does the trailer show that this film is worth coming to see?

Whilst the marketing campaign uses genre to gain our interest it must also show us how this new film is different to others in the same genre category. The trailer must make clear the hook of each film. The hook might be linked to the genre in that it is an unusual mix – say a musical horror, or a star who usually plays a different role or it might be something distinct like the innovative use of special effects.

Look closely at the four trailers included here. What do you think is the hook of each of the film trailers?

What are the features of a trailer?

Trailers are not 'mini-films'. They are a genre in their own right and have their own set of easily recognisable conventions. Trailers are designed to capture our attention and hold it for a short space of time. They give us just enough information to raise our curiosity but not enough to spoil the story of the film. They create a mood or atmosphere and heighten our anticipation of what is to come. In short, they tease but they don't tell.

In some ways watching a trailer is like doing a jigsaw puzzle - we're given some information as to plot and character and our task is to fill in the missing pieces in the time available. The style in which the information is conveyed is fast-moving and requires our attention one hundred per cent of the time. To watch a film at this pace would be impossible - we could not cope with the input and would 'switch off'. However, we enjoy the roller coaster effect of a trailer and the mental challenge it presents.

The sound is very important in a trailer, particularly the music, which swiftly manipulates our emotions and creates an atmosphere. The voiceover, a feature of advertising, is used to summarise the story and emphasise credit information where appropriate. Like every other element of the trailer, the voiceover also looks to promote the film by building our anticipation.

Here are some of the more recognisable conventions of a trailer:

- They highlight the 'best bits' of the film; the very funny, the very sad, the action-packed, the bizarre
- We are not shown the story in narrative order
- They showcase the stars of the film
- Some visual images stay on screen for only just enough time for our mind to realise what we are seeing
- Conversations between characters usually consist of one line each
- Unusual angles are often used to show events or characters
- Action is interspersed with credits on screen
- Voiceovers are used to tell the story and give credit information

- Music plays an important role in creating atmosphere
- The title might not appear until the end
- The trailer builds to a climax, where it ends

Can you add any other conventions?

Try watching two or three of the trailers without the visual images (i.e. close your eyes!) What mood does the music create?

We are all familiar with the traditional man's voice used on trailers. What effect does this have and why do you think the voice was chosen?

How do the trailers you have just seen use these conventions?

What kind of ideas do they give about the films?

How do they stress the genre of the film as well as various other hooks that might attract an audience to want to go and see the film?

TASK 5: THE TRAILER MAKER

You have been looking at trailers and how they function. Now it is your turn to make a trailer but before you do, listen to Chris Besseling explain what they look for when creating the original trailer.

ON-LINE MARKETING

On-line marketing of a film allows distributors to access an increasingly fragmented audience. 16-24 year-olds have more and more calls on their "entertainment" time. The majority of this important market group are online using mobile devices to listen to music, play interactive games, using a multitude of apps and engaging with their online friends through social media. This is an audience, a generation that moves seamlessly from one thing to the next, and being online and connected is so important to them.

They may not pay attention to more traditional methods of advertising – television, radio, newspapers and magazines.

So a digital campaign will look at lots of different ways of engaging this age range – from specific websites to games for mobile devices to special Facebook or Instagram pages – feeding on the hunger to find out more and more about movies.

There is a need to interlink these various digital platforms. Thus, on a mobile device there might be a clip or trailer to download, and at the end of the clip it might say 'To download more of these' or 'To win the chance to do something, visit the website', thus using viral approaches to spreading the word about film.

Social networking platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp, Snapchat, YouTube, Google+, Pinterest, Tumblr and Instagram (to name but a few) enable digital campaigns reach specific audiences. When marketing a film the distributor involved may use the account and bulletin facility to provide information such as the release date, images, trailer. Facebook, for example, offers fans the opportunity to discuss an upcoming film or talk about stars etc.

These platforms also allow users to share their experiences and thus share with their friends and connections. A significant multiplier effect for a digital campaign.

In essence the distributor is trying to build a 'digital world' for the film to exist in, and to create what are called 'digital touch points' with as many different entry points for audiences to find out about a film as possible.

Look at the following websites for four films:

<http://www.foxsearchlight.com/brooklyn/>

<http://www.thedanishgirl.co.uk>

<http://thenoblemovie.com/media/>

<https://www.facebook.com/VictorFrankensteinUK>

What information do they give about the film?

How do they relate to other aspects of the film's advertising campaign? How do they try to ensure that you revisit the site?

The most heavily used film website in the UK is IMDb.com. Look at the film's page on IMDb.com. How does this differ from official sites produced by the film's distributor?