Kayleigh Kee

Magazine Review

This unit consisted of the creation of my very own music magazine, which required a front cover, double page spread and single page article, featuring a music artist that I created. I had to think about the target audience and genre I wanted for my magazine, and how I would construct the article and images needed, for it to be significant of the selected style and audience. I decided to create a magazine based around the alternative indie genre.

Image Construction:

The images taken and used in my magazine, reflect the alternative indie genre. The images were taken in my building. I positioned my model in front of a white back drop, to give the pictures a more professional look. The image I used for my final magazine piece was a close up shot of my artist standing side on, looking directly into the camera. I chose to have my artist positioned like this, to enable a direct mode of address, which would connect more with the audience. To further construct my images, I used Photoshop to edit them. I used the spot healing brush tool to get rid of any blemishes, and then the blur tool to smooth out the look of her skin. I also used the healing brush and smudge tool, to smooth out any lines and uneven skin tones (for example, under the eyes). Furthermore, I adjusted the brightness and contrast of the pictures, as well as cropping, so the image looked more suitable for a magazine front cover. This editing was quite subtle, and so the final product does not look like it has been highly edited. These images represent my music artist, as well as the music genre, as they are very natural and real. This representation would also benefit my audience, as they would feel more connected to the artist, as the images used do not look extremely different. The images used in my article, are similar to the main central image, however they look more casual, and far less constructed. I have used a mid-shot of my artist laughing, not looking into the camera, and a close up shot of her standing on a roof with her hair in her face. These images portray a casual and laid back representation of my artist. For example, the mid-shot of my artist smiling, makes her look friendly which is inviting for the audience, and reflects the artist's positive energy.

Audience:

The target audience for my magazine, is young people around the ages of 15-20, particularly of the female gender, who have an interest in indie music. The title of my magazine is 'Indiependent', which is a play on the word, independent. I have done this to resemble the theme of independence in indie music, as it is quite a niche genre. The title also reflects the lifestyle and personality of the audience, as it is quite subtle, yet highly music based. The font of the title is also quite simplistic – it is not big and blocky, yet still stands out. The fact that the title is quite a thin font, also reflects the simplicity of the music genre, and gives an idea of what the music could sound like; The title is thin and delicate, which is foreshadowing the sound of my artist.

I have considered my primary target audience when creating my front cover. I used quite a basic picture with very natural editing as my central image, which ensures that the cover looks neat and tidy. I also have used a very simplistic colour scheme, the primary colour being white, with minimal amounts of pastel pink. The natural picture and little use of bright colours, makes the magazine appeal more to my audience, as it does not look busy and

therefore unattractive. I have also thought about the positioning and font of the text that is used on the cover. The font is clear and easy to read, which is beneficial for the audience, as they can read it and get an insight to what will be in this issues of the magazine. The positioning of the text around the main central image, also complements the layout and look of the magazine. I have ensured that the text is positioned around the artist's face, to not overpower and cloud the image. I have also used buzz words, such as 'win', on the cover, as well as competitions, which would appeal more to my audience, as they are of the younger generation, and so would be more interested in winning tickets to gig. Finally, I have also mentioned other artists of the same genre on the cover, such as 'The 1975', that my target audience would be more familiar with – the artist who I have created is a new and upcoming artist, so by mentioning a band with a similar music sound, the audience can familiarize themselves with them, and be more intrigued to find out more about my artist and her music.

Throughout the article, the simplistic pink and white colour scheme is continued, however with the added black font of the text. The title of the article is the name of the artist, in a big bold font, in the colour pink. I have used a bold font, so it is eye-catching for the audience, as it would be the first thing they would read. I have also used the colour pink, as it is bright and makes the article stand out more, and look less boring. The colour pink also has connotations to being girly, which is beneficial as my target audience is females. I have used black text, in a formal font, to make the article look more grown up and sophisticated, which is a contrast to the informal article. The questions are also highlighted in bold, so the audience can clearly identify which is a question and which is an answer. The pictures used in my article, have been positioned very carefully, in retrospect of my audience. I have used a complete page for one picture. I have done this to highlight that the article that follows is solely about this specific artist, as well as to give the audience something to look at; my target audience is young people – people who are more likely to idolise artists such as mine – so by having a big poster picture of my artist, my audience would be more attracted to the article, and therefore more likely to read until the end.

Cultural Contexts:

When compared to other music magazines of the same genre, multiple similarities and differences can be seen. I have used a very simple layout, much like other indie music magazines. I have used the majority of the typical conventions when making a magazine. For example, the layout and construction of the front cover is highly similar to other music magazines – I have used a large central image of my artist, clearly showing her face, to immediately engage with my audience. A lot of anchorage text has also been included, so the reader can get a taste of what is inside. I have looked at many other music magazines of the same genre, to help me understand the style choices I would need and for inspiration. Although the layout and construction of my magazine is very typical, something I did different was use a lot of anchorage text and buzz words. Indie music magazines tend to use little anchorage text, to ensure a mature and professional look. However, my primary target audience is young people, and so I have used a lot of anchorage text, to immediately engage with the audience. In addition, I have applied a big circle at the bottom of my front cover, with the buzz word 'win' in it. The fact that I have placed the text in a shape, rather than just write it like the anchorage text, would catch the reader's eye, and promote the competition to them immediately.

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Front Cover Comparisons:

I looked at magazines, such as Clash magazine for inspiration. I wanted my magazine to look as professional as possible, and by taking and adapting ideas from professional magazines, I was able to do as much as I can. I think that Clash magazine was a good magazine to look at, as it follows the simplistic design layout I was aiming for.

Similarities	Differences
• Simple central image – both my magazine and Clash magazine use a simple shot of an artist. This helps to keep the layout tidy, and ensures the front cover doesn't look busy and unattractive. • Minimal colour – the minimal amount of colour on the front cover, makes the magazine look more professional, and less childish. • Anchorage text around the main image – simple anchorage text gives the reader an insight of what the magazine consists of. • Facial expressions – both magazines feature artists on the front with straight, serious faces. This is quite typical for this genre of music. • A date and barcode – by having this allows the reader to know when this issue was released.	• The title font – my magazine uses a thinner font for the title, whereas Clash magazine uses a big blocked title. • Buzz words – my magazine uses buzz words on the cover, whereas Clash doesn't. • Target audience – Clash is aimed at an older audience, so wouldn't use some of the codes and conventions (e.g. – buzz words), as they wouldn't appeal as much to the audience. • Anchorage text – my magazine uses a lot more anchorage text, as it is targeted at a younger audience.

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Article Comparisons:

I took inspiration of the layout from this magazine. The layout is simple, which follows the layout of the front cover. I followed the layout, by using a page just for a picture, however, I did not like the layout of the text. The text in the magazine was very crowded which made it harder to read, so I decided to space out my text a bit more.

Similarities	Differences
• Picture page – I used the same format of having a big picture next to a single page of text. • Simple colour scheme – both articles use a minimal amount of colour. • Columns – both magazines section the article/interview into columns, to make it easier to read.	• Text – the layout of my article is quite different, as I have spaced mine out more, so it is easier to read. • Images – my article uses more images, and my artist is posed to appeal to a younger audience. • Genre – my magazine is of the alternative indie genre, whereas this magazine features Lady Gaga, a pop artist. • Colours – the picture used in this magazine is black and white, for a more mature feel, whereas mine are in colour to appeal to my audience.

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 Production Progress:

The production of my magazine began with finding the right person to model for my magazine. I considered the style of my magazine, and ensured that the person who would model would best fit the genre. For my final decision, I chose my friend Anna to model for me, as I felt that her general style best fit the genre, as well as her age range being suitable for the magazine. The next step was to find a good location to take the pictures in. I decided to take the pictures on the roof of my building, as there was very good natural lighting, and white walls which made a good backdrop. I used a Canon 750D DSLR camera to take the photographs, to ensure that all images taken were of high quality. I also used trial and error when taking my pictures. Firstly, I photographed Anna on the roof without the backdrop, for a more atmospheric shot, however, these pictures did not look suitable for a magazine front cover. I then came to the conclusion that having her positioned in front of a white backdrop was the best solution, as it made the images look more professional and allowed me to edit a bit more. After looking through the pictures I had taken, I used the elimination process to pick the most suitable image for the front cover of the magazine, and the pictures suitable for the article page. After selecting the pictures that I wanted for my magazine, I used Adobe Photoshop to edit and manipulate the images. After creating the final magazine, I created a survey, and asked my teachers and classmates for feedback to gain a second opinion.

Sources of Information:

One source of information that I used was the internet. The internet provided me with examples of music magazines of the same genre, and allowed me to gain inspiration to develop my own magazine. For example, I was able to see how different magazines had different layouts depending on their genre. I was also able to identify the editing styles typically used for indie music magazines, which enabled me to decide on how I wanted to edit my pictures. Analysing different magazines helped me to realise the conventions I needed to include in my own magazine to ensure that the final product was well structured and of high quality, as well as show me what I should avoid. One magazine that I analysed and avoided was Kerrang magazine. Kerrang magazine is of the rock music genre, and so had many different conventions. For example, Kerrang used a lot of bright colours, and big bold fonts. This is efficient for the rock music genre, however, would not look good as part of my magazine, as it would look too busy and therefore unattractive to my audience. Furthermore, a magazine that I took inspiration from was Clash magazine. Clash magazine follows a very simplistic layout, much like my magazine, with a simple main central image, and not a lot of anchorage text. Clash is simple yet sophisticated, which is reflective of the genre.

I am satisfied with how my final product looks. However, in future, I would develop my photography and editing skills – I would use more advanced shots to portray the music genre a bit more, and would edit my pictures more creatively.

Finished Product:

It is important that I receive feedback for my magazine, so I can make any changes necessary to develop my magazine. I created a survey, and asked my audience questions about my magazine, and based on the results, can make any improvements needed, to make my magazine better.

Q2
Do you think the pictures used are appropriate for a niche indie magazine?
Answered: 16   Skipped: 0

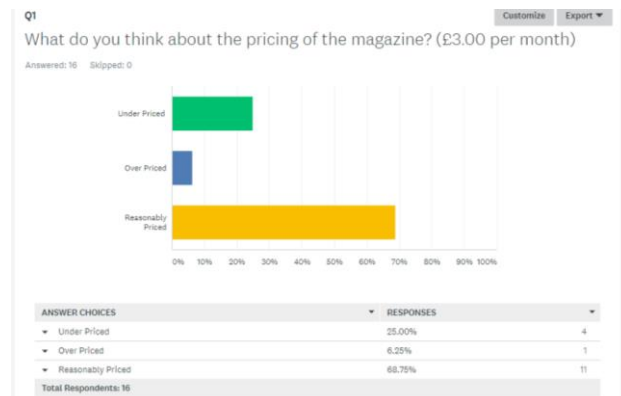| ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	81.25%	13
No	18.75%	3
Total Respondents: 16		
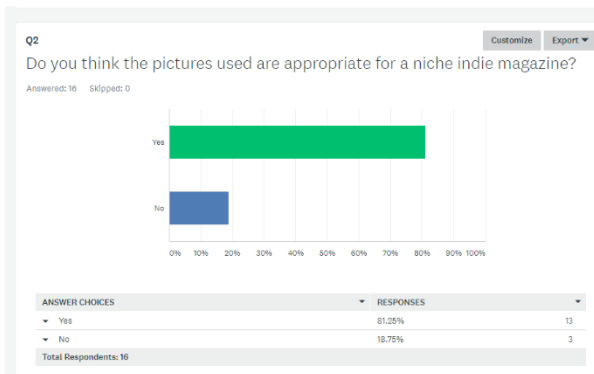
I asked my audience if they thought that the pictures I used, were suitable for a niche indie music magazine. Looking at the results, I can see that the majority of the responses believe that my pictures are appropriate, as 81% of people agreed. Overall, the pictures used for my magazine cover and article, were effective in reflecting the music genre.

Another question asked, was whether my magazine was accurately priced.

Q1
What do you think about the pricing of the magazine? (£3.00 per month)
Answered: 16   Skipped: 0

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Under Priced	25.00%	4
Over Priced	6.25%	1
Reasonably Priced	68.75%	11
Total Respondents: 16		

From these findings, it is clear that my magazine is reasonably priced, at £3.00 per month. 25% of the audience even believed that my magazine was under-priced. Overall, the survey results show that my magazine is being sold at a good price for my primary target audience.

In addition to this, the audience were asked if the pictures used in my article, were compatible with the main central image.

Q5
Is it clear that my front cover and article are from the same magazine?
Answered: 16   Skipped: 0

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	100.00%	16
No	0.00%	0
Total Respondents: 16		
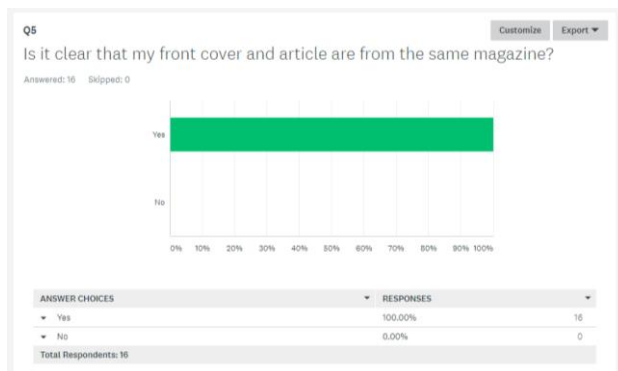
The results to this question show that 100% of people believe that my pictures work well together, and it is clear they are from the same magazine. This shows that the images I have chosen to use were highly effective.

Based on the results from the survey, I have found that the majority of the audience believe that I have created a well structured magazine, as most of the feeback I received was positive.

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<u>My Final Product:</u>

HOWELLSY

BACKSTAGE, BOYS - AND A BAND?

I am backstage at the London O2 Arena, waiting for the one and only Howellsy. Yes, you heard me right, Howellsy!
Just two hours before her biggest show ever, I am here to get a little insight to her latest album, 'A Divine Intervention', and hopefully find out more about the indie sensation. Looking outside, there's rows and rows of fans – from small independent singer to global indie superstar, we're not kidding when we say we're jealous over here at Indiependent! The fans outside are itching for the doors to open, management is running around making sure everything is running smoothly. It's a wonder how the eighteen year old herself is so relaxed.
And here she is, the golden girl herself, Anna Martin, or best known by her stage name Howellsy.

How are you feeling with just two hours to go till the biggest show of your life?

H – "I'm good! I'm excited to finally get back out there and show them what I got!"

What have you been doing since your first album back in 2015?

H – "Netflix, *laughs*" No. I've been working on this album [A Divine Intervention], see a lot has happened in the last year. It's been crazy! And [first album] wanderlust was so successful, and I was only 15 when I wrote it! So now that more has happened and I'm that bit older, I've just been pouring my heart and soul into this album. This is the most personal album I've ever written, I mean I still have time for Netflix though *laughs*"

Really? What is it on Netflix that you've been so busy with?

H – "Stranger things! Honestly as soon as season two was released I sat in bed binge watching all day. It may have even inspired a song or two".

Relatable much? Just 5 minutes with this girl and she is a-maze-ing. Seriously – the look, the laughs, the music, what can't she do!
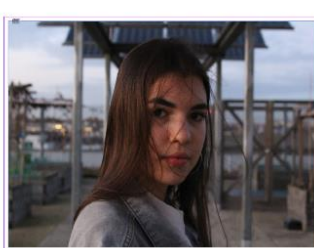
So, 'A Divine Intervention', what inspired it?

H – "Like I said, wanderlust was way more successful than I ever thought it would be, and I just wanted to like, replicate that feeling. But it's been two, nearly three years. I've grown up a lot and can actually focus on the music and give it all my time. Last year was a big year for me, it had some ups, some downs, but this is my year – I'm performing at the O2 for crying out loud!"

Tell me a little about last year, what were some of the ups?

H – "Well the album was being finalised, so I knew I was on to big things.

I turned 18 so could finally set up this tour. It was mainly the album, I hold it close to my heart this one"

What about some of the downs?

H – "Honestly, the downs have turned into ups! But it was just, teenage drama, I'm sure you know how it is - boys, breakups all that. But all of that turned into my favourite song on this album, Heartbreaker, which then turned into a number 1 hit, so who's laughing now?"

Me and Howellsy talked for ages until she let a little secret slip. Ladies and gentlemen, boys and girls, buckle up because you are in for some real gossip today.

We notice you have been working closely to a certain, Matty Healy from the band The 1975, any romance blossoming there?

H – "*laughing* no no no Matty is a good friend of mine, we've been working on a sort of project together that will be announced later on. but no. It's definitely nothing romantic. It's just working and producing for the band- oh no I shouldn't have said that!"

A new band? Your new band?

H – "Well I guess there's no harm in telling you now! Me and Matty are working together on a collab, and yes I did say band. We're both under the same management [dirty hit records], and well, yes there will be an up and coming band on the way, and me and Matty may be working alongside them"

Am I dreaming? Howellsy and Matty Healy working on a song together? Well I can safely say that I'm sure I'm not the only one who cannot wait

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for that song. And this mysterious new band? Wow, they sure kept that quiet!

What made you want to produce new music with Matty?

H – "He's a good friend of mine, and he and the band helped me a lot when I was first signed to dirty hit records, so now that I'm up there in the music industry I thought, hey, why not have Matty feature on a song".

How far along is the new song?

H – "well it won't be released until the end of this tour, so you'll have to wait *laughs* but I promise it's a good one – a little different, but good".

I'm sure it is. Well Howellsy, thank you so much for letting me into your little musical world today, it's been an honour, good luck out there tonight.

H – "No thank you for featuring me, the front cover of indiependent! Told you this was my year!"

Howellsy's hit album, 'A Divine Intervention' is out now, and available for download. You can get it from either Howellsy's or our website. Just whatever you do, listen to it – it is a life changer! She is also touring the rest of Europe and her UK tickets are selling fast, so don't be the one who misses out! Head over to our twitter or Instagram for exclusive footage of Howellsy's gig tonight!

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14th November 2017

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