-

MPC MAJOR RESEARCH PAPER

Sonic Branding: A Conceptualization of the Mass Media Audience

Mila Falkenstein

Professor John Shiga

The Major Research Paper is submitted
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Professional Communication

Author's Declaration for Electronic Submission of a Major Research Paper

I hereby declare that I am the sole author of this Major Research Paper and the accompanying Research Poster. This is a true copy of the MRP and the research poster, including any required final revisions, as accepted by my examiners.

I authorize Ryerson University to lend this major research paper and/or poster to other institutions or individuals for the purpose of scholarly research.

I further authorize Ryerson University to reproduce this MRP and/or poster by photocopying or by other means, in total or in part, at the request of other institutions or individuals for the purpose of scholarly research.

I understand that my MRP and/or my MRP research poster may be made electronically available to the public.

Abstract

This Major Research Paper (MRP) explores sonic logos, which are short sound bites used in commercial advertising to represent brands to the public. I discuss how these types of sounds are increasingly being used to attract audience attention in the current corporate and mass media landscape. My research is informed by scholarly debates about the role of the audience in contemporary media environments and traces key positions in this debate, including Celia Lury's (1993) suggestion that contemporary audiences are passive and Philip Napoli's (2010) suggestion that social media audiences now play a more active role in producing and sharing media content. Henry Jenkins (2004) provides a synthesis of these two views and states that while the audience has the option to be participatory on social media platforms, there is still an increasing trend toward concentrated ownership in the entertainment industry. I conducted interviews with advertising and branding professionals and analyzed the manner in which producers' conceptualizations of the audience shape sonic branding practices. One key finding of my study is that media producers believe that changes in technology have changed the way that brand and media institutions interact with their audience. Another key finding is that producers view the contemporary media audience as distracted but also more sophisticated due to their access and use of communication technologies.

Acknowledgements

Table of Contents

List of Appendices

Introduction

A sonic logo is a short sound bite that provides advertising and branding producers with a logo that represents their brand to the public. Sonic logos have been described as having the ability to cross cultural barriers and engage with audiences on a mental and emotional level. An example of a sonic logo would be the famous Intel Pentium sonic logo[1] played on commercial radio or television (Jackson, 2003, p. 57). The goal of my Major Research Paper (MRP) is to explain why brand and advertising executives are increasingly using sonic logos to attract audience attention. My MRP will focus on the advertising and branding executives' ideas about the audience, as they are directly involved with the production of the sonic logo. I will discuss how conceptualizations of the audience contribute to the increasing use of sonic branding in the advertising industry.

My MRP is concentrated on the sonic logo producers' conceptualizations of the audience. I draw from literature on visual branding since sonic branding is a new field of study with less academic research in this area. I have chosen to focus on the role of the audience due to the way that the audience figures strongly in the producer's discussion of sonic branding, when they develop a brand's sonic logo. I will explain that the overall creation of the brand and use of brand repetition, e.g. in the form of repetitive sonic logos, ultimately serves to maintain audience reception and the relationship that these producers have with their target markets (Lury, 1993, p. 3-5). In addition, I will explain how trademark law is set up in a way that the court's conceptualization of the audience of

---

[1] Intel Corporation (Sonic Logo Application 1579541) – Canadian Trade-Marks Data)

trademarks and in this case sound marks, actually determines whether or not a trademark or sound mark can be registered (Beebe, 2005, p. 2021).

Within my MRP, I situate sonic branding in current debates about the role of the audience in the current mass media landscape. I take into account two main theoretical frameworks. The first derives from Celia Lury's (1993) theorization of the audience in relation to technological developments over time, developments in the distribution of knowledge and changes in culture. Lury indicates that the audience has a more *passive* role, where they are targeted by mass media and states that the relationship between the producers of media content and their audience is not reciprocal (Lury, 1993, p. 5). More recent theories about the audience, as discussed by Philip M. Napoli (2010) and Henry Jenkins (2010), suggest that the role of the mass audience is *active* because of the opportunities that they have to participate on social media platforms. It is here that the audience can create and distribute their own user-generated content and also share the media content of the actual companies that produce the media content.

During my analysis of interviews with industry professionals, I focus on their notions of the audience. I argue that there is both truth in the perspectives of Lury, Napoli and Jenkins. I explain that the branding and advertising industries are attempting to regain control over audiences in a media environment that empowers audiences to distribute media content or create their own. I also discuss how according to scientific research, sonic branding is proven to be an effective means of impacting the audience through their subconscious. This idea raises an important question that has not been addressed critically in the literature so far: How do advertising and branding producers

conceptualize the audience in a participatory and social media environment? My analysis attempts to answer this question.

Overall, I argue that there is an ongoing attempt for producers to manage and shape the way that audiences perceive of media texts (in this case, brands) through the notion of the "audience-as-consumer" discussed by Lury (1993, p. 145). In this way, the control and power of the audience is evident. In addition, producers of advertising content recognize the power of the audience in that they can both consume and distribute media content on social media platforms. It can be explained that the producers of advertising content have chosen to use sonic logos to effectively draw audience attention during a time where consumers of their brands exhibit even more power.

Research Questions

My research is guided by the following three main questions based on advertising and branding executives' perceptions of the audience:

1. What developments in the corporate environment (i.e. technology, culture etc.) have impacted the need to use sonic brands to engage with audiences?

   To understand why sonic logos are increasingly being used, I chose to include an explanation about how changes in the corporate environment may have impacted the choice to use sound to engage with the audience. I wanted to understand whether it was developments in media and technology or even culture that led to this decision. To address these questions, I included literature in mass media and communication studies such as Lury (1993), Napoli (2010) and Jenkins (2004) as well as the opinions of my interviewees who are from the advertising and branding industry (Appendix 1). Having an understanding of the current corporate environment is significant for understanding how the audience is conceptualized, which is the key question that my MRP seeks to address.

2. What value does the audience provide to the conceptualization of the sonic logo?

   This research question addresses why the audience is crucial to study in order to understand the reasoning behind the use of sonic logos in an advertising campaign. Given that my MRP is focused on understanding the role of the audience during a period of time where sonic logos are increasingly used in advertising campaigns, I feel that the value of the audience is an important idea that must be addressed. The literature that I collected highlights the significance of the audience, due to their role as the consumers of

advertising and branding content. In addition, without the audience, brands would not have a market that they could target. The significance of role of the audience from the perspectives of theorists in communication and cultural studies such as Lury, Jenkins and Napoli is discussed. The role of the audience from the perspective of trademark law is also incorporated into this MRP given that it demonstrates how crucial the role of the audience is for the process of protecting branding content.

3. Have changes in the audience triggered the use of a sonic logo to reflect a brand's image? If so, why?

       Lastly, this research question addresses whether changes in the audience, i.e. their role and actions and response to media content has triggered the increasing use of sonic logos. To address this question, I incorporated a number of views that discuss the characteristics of sound that make it an effective advertising technique. For instance, there is scientific reasoning that explains the unique ways that sounds interact with people, for example, as it will be discussed by a sonic branding industry professional, Daniel M. Jackson (2003).

Literature Review

As discussed in the previous section, my MRP focuses on the sonic logo producers' ideas about the audience and how those ideas contribute to the increased use of sonic logos to represent brands. In the literature review, I first discuss the historical context of visual and sonic branding, including the emergence of branding. Within this section, I provide an overview of the way that the audience is conceptualized within trademark law. It is important to understand how the audience is perceived by the actual brand producers and advertising executives due to the way in which trademarks and sound marks can be legally protected. The audience is the primary focus in trademark law because only once a brand is known and distinctive to an audience, will it qualify as a piece of intellectual property for a brand that can be registered and protected (Alcock et al, p. 1).

The reference to legal perspectives of the audience is related to what will be later discussed according to Napoli and Jenkins, who argue that the audience is participatory as opposed to passive. For instance, just as the audience is powerful in that they can participate on social media platforms and create and share media content, so too does the audience have a role in the acceptance of a trademark based on whether or not they recognize the trademark. In addition, due to the growing number of sonic logos currently being registered as the intellectual property of a brand, the legal conceptualization of the audience from the perspective of trademark law is another means by which we can understand how the sonic logo producers' conceptualize the audience, i.e. to the extent that they determine whether a sonic logo is distinctive.

Second, I discuss the trade/industry literature, which highlights the elements that make sound an effective branding strategy, such as the ability of sound to appeal to a diverse audience. I also explain scientific explanations about why sound effectively elicits positive responses from the audience and is therefore an effective advertising tool. For example, Daniel Jackson (2003) who works in the sonic branding industry and who has written one of the only book-length works on this topic makes reference to the emotional and subconscious interactions that a sonic logo can have with its audience. Here I will also point out that there are many uncertainties that may arise when producers create conceptualizations of the audience. I will discuss how producers actually come up with these conceptualizations and then later deal with their uncertainties about the audience.

Thirdly, I will briefly explain other ways that sonic logo's are unique from visual branding. This will be drawn from advertising, branding and sound studies literature composed by Daniel M. Jackson (2003), Jonathan Sterne (2012) and Marcel Danesi (2006). Given that conceptualizations of the audience were not addressed within the advertising and branding literature alone, I will also include media studies and cultural studies on the audiences and producers' conceptualizations of audiences, focusing on the works of Celia Lury (1993), Philip M. Napoli (2010) and Henry Jenkins (2004). I use this literature in subsequent sections of my MRP to analyze the reasoning behind the use of sonic logos by advertising professionals.

Finally, I will introduce my overall theoretical and conceptual framework, which has been developed to address gaps in the literature, including perspectives of the audience of advertising executives and brand owners' choice to utilize sonic logos and

forms of sonic branding and also how producers conceptualize their audiences. There is no current theory that specifically addresses how sonic logos impact the audience and why they act as an effective means of communication from producer to audience. Therefore, the literature review primarily focuses on the perspectives of Lury (1993), Napoli (2010) and Jenkins (2004) given that they each speak of the audience within their own theoretical framework.

My conceptual framework draws primarily from the perspectives of Lury, Napoli and Jenkins since these theorists focus on media audiences and changing ways of conceptualizing audiences. This will be used to analyze conceptualizations of the audience from the perspectives of advertising and branding executives, such as Daniel Jackson, which I have included in this literature review, but also those perspectives of my interviewees who work in the field of branding and advertising.

The Emergence of Branding & the Legal Perspective of the Audience

The beginning stages of brands emerged during the 1880s in the United States, due to the increase in competition between national and international markets (Lury, 2004, p.139). Moreover, late in the 1920s, "brands became the focus of advertising, linking the brand to a particular image, both rhetorical and visual" (Danesi, 2006, p. 13). Around this time, programming was created and broadcasted and commercials were made to attract the widest audience possible (Jackson, p. 56-57). It was on commercial radio where brands first used sonic branding in the form of musical groups such as "The Royal Typewriter Quartet", to advertise their products (Jackson, p.57).

A distinctive brand allows a business to stand apart from its competitors effectively and this begins with the selection of a trademark (Alcock et al., p. 1). Lucy Alcock states that according to Section (1) of the Trademarks Act (1994) in the United Kingdom, "The legal definition of a trademark is 'any sign which is capable of being represented graphically which is capable of distinguishing the goods or services of one undertaking from those of another'" (Alcock et al., 2003, p. 1). Essentially the trademark is the sign that represents the brand to the public. Trademarks become protected once they are registered in the country in which they are used. The ability of producers to register a trademark is dependent on the perceived ability of the consumer, as represented by brand owners and courts, to distinguish it from other brands (Alcock et al., p. 1). It is thus clear that perceptions of the audience are key to obtaining legal protection for trademarks. Barton Beebe discusses how trademark law is set up so that the audiences of these brands actually determine whether or not a trademark can be registered, stating, "The consumer, we are led to believe, is the measure of all things in trademark law. Trademarks exist only to the extent that consumers perceive them as designations of source" (Beebe, 2005, p. 2021). The legal conception of the audience in trademark law, as described by Beebe and Alcock et al., parallels Napoli's conception of an active and participatory audience on social media platforms, given that the audience according to trademark law actually determines whether a mark qualifies for registration (Beebe, p. 2021, Napoli, p. 505).

According to Josh Rubin (2012), MGM's Roaring Lion sound was the first sound mark to be registered in Canada in March 2012. Following the registration, after years of rejection due to the from the Federal Court and appeals from MGM, the Canadian

Intellectual Property Office (CIPO), sent out a practice notice stating that sound marks would be accepted as trademarks in Canada (Rubin, p. 1). Due to the lack of pictorial representation, the sonic logo was refused on the basis of the Canadian Trademarks Act, which necessitates "a drawing of the trademarks and such number of accurate representations of the trademarks as may be prescribed" for trademark applications other than for words (Bertosa & Pasztor, 2011, p. 1) The reason for its rejection was that CIPO felt that the "spectrogram, a visual representation of the sound, was not the trademark since MGM had clearly applied for a sound mark and not a design mark; therefore, the spectrogram was not considered to be an accurate representation of the trademark applied for" (Bertosa & Pasztor, 2011, p. 1). In this way, the MGM's lion's roar was rejected based on a technicality. This demonstrates the difficult process that companies have to deal with in order to have this protection for their sonic logos.

Trademark laws in many countries now protect sonic logos (McCormick, 2006, p. 1108-1109). Kevin K. McCormick states that in United States for instance, there have been "276 sound mark applications filed in the United States under the Lanham Act since 1947" (McCormick, p. 1108). As in Canada, demonstrating distinctiveness from other brands has been the main obstacle preventing the registration of sonic logos (Beebe, p. 2029). For instance, McCormick states that Nationwide, Pillsbury and AAMCO, despite having established use of their brands in the 1960s and 1970s, only applied for and were granted registrations for their sounds in the 1990s. In addition, NBC had to wait 20 years to register the chimes for radio and about the same amount time to register these chimes for their television station. In the United States, MGM had to wait over 60 years to register their lion's roar sound mark (McCormick, p. 1108). On the other hand, in

Australia, there has been fifty-six sound mark applications been filed in Australia since the passage of the Trade Marks Act in 1995, 25 of which have been registered (McCormick, p. 1114). Efforts have been made to harmonize the intellectual property laws across the world, leading to international treaties and conventions based on intellectual property, including trademarks, which are aimed at making international systems of registration as similar as possible (McCormick, p. 1109). It seems that sonic logos will get protection in more countries as a result of this harmonization of intellectual property law around the world.

Beebe explains that trademark law requires the ability of the brand producer to "think through the consumer and see the marketplace only as the consumer sees it" (Beebe, p. 2022). As we will later see, Beebe's view is similar to Lury's in that he states that the law requires producers to make claims about the audience based on the "consumer construct" internalized by these producers, since producers cannot predict with certainty exactly how the actual audience will respond to these brands (Beebe, p. 2022-2023 & Lury, p. 6). This is a key concept in my MRP that conceptions of the audience are key strategies for dealing with the uncertainty of actual audiences. To address such uncertainties, industry professionals utilize processes by which they can conceptualize suitable representations of the audience in order to create a sonic logo that is effective for the branding goals of a company.

"Universal" Elements of Sonic Logos

Moving away from media history literature, in the trade/industry literature it is discussed how sound acts as "common musical language" (Jackson, 2003, p. 1, Altshuler, 2007, p. 1). In film, a "rising minor second interval (the smallest gap between two notes on a piano), bowed on a double bass, means that a shark attack is about to take place" (Jackson, p. 1). In 2005, Marc Altshuler's worked at the company called Human, which produced a commercial for the brand, Sprite. The commercial was intended to run in Asia only, but it became unexpectedly popular in China, the U.K., Brazil and Denmark. The reason why it translated so well was because there was no copy utilized in the TV spot. The commercial consisted of several men playing basketball on a court and once one of them opened a Sprite bottle, the basketball court turned into a swimming pool (Altshuler, 2011, p. 1). The music in the background consisted of the same song for all of the commercials linking the music to Sprite.

Similar to movie music and commercials, sonic logos are, according to Jackson, recognized universally. Jackson provides an example of when he was listening to an Italian radio station and not following any of the other advertisements or broadcasts, yet he was immediately able to recognize the Intel Pentium sonic logo, one of the "most famous three seconds of music in the world" (Jackson, p. 2). This was the moment when Jackson realized the power of sonic branding and its ability to be understood by a diverse and globally dispersed media audience (Jackson, p. 2).

New opportunities for the utilization of sonic branding exist on the Internet, on mobile phones and even in the retail environment where music is commonly played in the background of the customer shopping experience (Jackson, p. 7-8). With the increased

use of mobile communications in our era, "everywhere has become point of sale and mobile phones and personal digital assistants (PDAs) are providing a range of opportunities for their users to interact with and engage with brands" (Jackson, p. 8). For instance, the music brand, Shazam Entertainment, produces a smartphone app that allows users to identify the name and artist of song in a club, radio or TV by dialing a number into their phone, which then displays a link to buy the song on *Amazon* (Jackson, p. 8).

This demonstrates how audiences are intrigued and curious by sounds of the music they hear in their environment and are now using mobile technologies to repeat or prolong these sonic experiences. This can be paralleled to when the audience makes an automatic connection with the sound that they hear, to a specific brand that the sonic logo represents. This also illustrates that new technologies increase the opportunities for sonic branding and allow media producers to target their audiences and expand their advertising campaigns to mobile applications and Internet platforms.

Scientific ideas about sound are important for helping us understand how sonic logos aim to control things like memorability and recognition to make brand communication more effective. Scientific ideas also give insight into the way producers conceptualize the audience, for instance, the audience's capacity to remember certain brands and to have an emotional connection in response to the sonic logo's music and sounds. When developing their conceptualizations of the audience, brand producers draw from scientific ideas about the brain's processing and retention of sonic information.

Jackson discusses the science behind sound as a "call to action for the brain" (Jackson, p. 31). He states, "Sounds give our brains clues as to what is happening and our brains react by either ignoring the sounds if they are familiar and safe, or paying them

attention if they are either unsafe or familiar and associated with benefit" (Jackson, p. 31). Although both make use of sound, Jackson differentiates between the traditional jingle used on commercials, which is made "to be memorable", and a sonic logo, which is created as a "vessel for associations" (Jackson, p. 9). He explains that jingles are not as popular to use in marketing because the audience recognizes them as a sales pitch (Jackson, p. 9).

Jackson is an example of a brand producer who conceptualizes the audience in quite specific ways; here the audience is conceptualized as sophisticated in the sense that it is increasingly capable of identifying and blocking out traditional forms of sonic advertising like jingles. Producers perceive of sonic logos as a way of responding to this capacity of the audience, enhancing memorability and emotional engagement. It also demonstrates how brand producers, such as Jackson, conceive of the audience as intelligent or sophisticated as well as active.

In addition, Jackson references Charles Darwin and Edmund Gurney who explain that "the origins of music are ancient and tied up in passion, emotions and arousal" (as cited in Jackson, p. 31). Jackson supports this discussion by explaining how science has proven that music creates physiological stimulation in people and is received by the human subconscious (Jackson, p. 32). In the same way that brand names are designed to have emotional appeal, as "signs standing for ideas" it is also clear that sonic logos have the same role (Danesi, p. 137). It is thus the goal of brand managers to provide the audience and stakeholders with the sonic brand experience in the most appropriate way.

Given the ability of sound to reach audiences emotionally at both physiological and subconscious levels, it is important to make sure that a sonic logo is not overplayed

in order for it to be effective. The maximum number of times an audience can hear a sonic logo before "listener fatigue" sets in is not yet known, but Jackson states, "The relationship is as follows: a sonic logo made up solely of a simple melody line, played on one instrument, will be very easily remembered and understood" (Jackson, p.141-142). Sonic logos can be understood as a strategy used by producers to engage with a participatory audience using a more subtle form of branding than jingles. In this way, the producer is not bombarding their audiences with visual logos or musical sales pitches (jingles), rather they are using music and sounds to create memorable sonic logos that will be drawn upon by the audience when the time comes that they seek a new product or service from a particular brand.

Jackson's "Sonic Branding Engine" is the model that he and other brand communicators use which outlines the exact process by which a sonic logo can be created to target specific audiences (Jackson, p. 99). This takes into account, a *brand brief* which encompasses the big ideas and values of the brand; the *creative learning* which refers to the audits/mood board and positioning of the brand; the *identity*, which is made up of the sonic language/sonic logo & guidelines; and finally the overall brand *experience* for the audience (Jackson, p. 99). The sonic branding engine allows the producer to come up with workable representation of the audience in order to effectively create a sonic logo.

Jackson's Sonic Branding Engine neglects to include the fact that there are different ways of listening, which reflects a gap in both the scholarly and industry-oriented literature on sonic logos. Neither cultural nor mass communication studies theorists discuss the different ways of listening discussed by sound studies theorists. Michel Chion's discussion on the three types of listening modes fills this gap in the branding

literature that I have discussed thus far. Chion's three modes of listening including casual listening, semantic listening and reduced listening are related to the potential ways that audiences respond to the sonic logos (Sterne, 2012, p. 48-50). For instance, Chion explains that causal listening is when we listen "to a sound in order to gather information about its cause (or source)" (Sterne, p. 48). Chion explains that "semantic listening" refers to a code or language in order to interpret a message (Sterne, p. 49). Lastly, "reduced listening" refers to the traits of the sound whether it is created using an instrument or an independent noise (Sterne, p. 49). It would thus be the role of the sound producer to effectively come up with their reasoning for using certain types of sounds to attract their audiences.

This deeper comprehension of the three types of listening provides insight on the audience exposed to sonic logos. For instance, the sound that is played to the audience can be seen to have three different opportunities to attract audience attention, even if they are not purposely listening. When Jackson described the Intel sound that he recognized, this sound was semantic because it represented the Intel brand. It may also be seen as reduced listening as the sound that was played stood out to him even though he was not intentionally listening to the radio; it was simply by chance that he heard it as background sound (Jackson, p. 2).

In addition, casual listening is part of the act of hearing sonic logos given that audiences may pay attention to certain sounds in order to gather further information about for example, the Intel brand, and what the brand offers to them as a consumer of the Intel products or services advertised. The role of the audience in this case is participatory to the extent that participation with a brand is based on the act of listening and reception to a

brand. To the extent that participation involves actually creating, posting or re-using a sonic logo, the audience in this instance is passive and not necessarily as active as they would be if they were participating on social media platforms.

Lastly, the de-institutionalization of mass media seems irrelevant in this case given that the audiences are merely being receptive to the sound they hear, rather than actively engaging with the sound by sharing what they hear online. The shift back to the control of mass media in the hands of the producers is instead relevant here because the producers of sonic logos can target their audiences effectively when using Chion's three modes of listening.

Unique Characteristics to Sonic Logos

The term, "brand", embodies the actual company and the social image that it uses to represent itself and its products (Danesi, p.14). Both visual and sonic logos are what companies can use to represent a brand name and social image of the company and its products to the public; however, a sonic logo has certain advantages over exclusively visual logos. Despite the fact that there are only a few well-known sonic logos, while there are thousands of popular graphic logos, Jackson argues that sonic logos would provide companies with a competitive advantage (Jackson, p. 3 & 9). Many other authors would likely agree with Jackson. For instance, Chion states, "sound works on us directly, physiologically (breathing noise in a film can directly affect our own respiration)… sound has an influence on perception: through the phenomenon of added value, it interprets the meaning of the image, and makes us see in the image what we would not otherwise see, or would see differently (as cited in Sterne, 2012, p. 53). In this way, a

brand's sonic logo allows the brand to be recognized outside a strictly visual context. It can also alter the meaning of visual logos in specific ways. As we will see in subsequent sections of this MRP, brand producers believe that there are a number of unique characteristics belonging to sound that make sonic logos a highly effective branding strategy.

Perspectives of the Audience in Media and Cultural Studies

Countless authors in various fields discuss the role and importance of the audience as a target for brands. Lury draws from cultural developments mainly within the USA and other Western European countries (Lury, 1993, p. 111). From a cultural studies perspective, Lury explains that cultural works are mediated through technical media such as television and radio by a "one-way flow of messages from the producers to the recipient" (Lury, 1993, p. 5). In this way, Lury argues that mass media changed the relationship between producer and audience from reciprocal communication to non-reciprocal mediated communication. She suggests that the media actually "fabricate communication" since it is very difficult for the audience to actually respond to the technical media and producers of cultural works (Lury, 1993, p. 5). In this way, the audience is conceptualized as passive according to the creators of cultural works in the mass media. This model suggests that the mass media have the ability to transmit messages while the audience has no actual power because they cannot actively respond.

Furthermore, Lury highlights the importance of producers' perceptions of the audience since it is impossible to precisely measure the reaction of the majority of their target audiences. For instance, Lury describes how producers cannot rely exclusively on

audience feedback for many key production decisions and that, as result, producers usually develop their works according to a model or construct of the audience. Lury refers to this process as the "internalization" of audience, whereby the audience is perceived of as a "public, as market, and as consumers" (Lury, 1993, p. 6).

The first instance of understanding the "audience-as-public" started with the introduction of the printing press in the mid-fifteenth century, which transformed the relationship between the market and state by allowing open access of literature to the public (Lury, 1993, p. 100). However, the conception of the "audience-as-market" emerged with the introduction of "modern cultural technologies" (Lury, 1993, p. 40). For example, modern cultural technologies were mobile to the extent that media transmitted information to the audiences in a "one-way flow" of information from the producer to the recipient, which was not reciprocated (Lury, 1993 p. 5). The audience was internalized and conceptualized as a potential market, which encompassed new social groups as part of this market. For instance, "the development of video for home use helped to constitute children as a market for commercial cultural production" (Lury, 1993, p. 41).

Lastly, Lury discusses how audiences were later perceived of in a "consumer form" given the pressure for commercial television stations

> …reliably to produce audiences to which advertisers are willing to purchase access, that has been a crucial drive in the determination of standards of commercial broadcasting. The suggestion here then is that the audience internalized in commercial broadcasting is the audience-as-consumer rather than the audience-as-market (Lury, 1993, p. 145).

In this way, when advertisers targeted audiences, they internalized the "audience-as-market", which took into account unique segments of the population, which they wanted to target with their branding campaigns (Lury, 1993, p. 145). On the other hand, an

audience in consumer form was meant to address how the audiences "consumed" or participated in the role of internalizing what was presented to them online. The "audience-as-consumer" is in other words placing the audience in a participatory role (Lury, 1993, p. 145). This is because the audiences consume commercial television. At the same time, television spots began to attract advertising agencies that saw commercial opportunity by placing their advertising on commercial television.

Furthermore, this shift to the "audience-as-consumer" can be explained by what Lury discusses using the idea of "audience power" through Dallas Smythe (1981) who claims that the "transformation in the internalized audience has resulted in the creation of what he calls 'audience power' as the audience is constructed in a commodity form in the consumer market" (As cited in Lury, 1993, p. 145). Smyth also contends that:

> …until the 1880s the principle product of the press was news and other non-advertising content, but that since then, the ostensibly non-advertising content of the mass media has been produced – not as the principle product – but as the lure with which to create an audience whose power is sold by the mass media to the advertiser (Lury, 1993, p. 145).

In this way, the "power" of the audience refers to purchasing power of the audience and not necessarily the power of the audience to interact and control media platforms, which is suggested by theorists such as Napoli and Jenkins. The audience is therefore still passive in the sense that its activities are guided toward consumption. From this perspective, sonic logos extend the control of advertisers and media producers rather than empowering audiences. However, as Lury suggests, "the commercial success of cultural production is crucially dependent upon the nature and extent of reception" (Lury, 1993, p. 6). This helps explain why it is crucial for producers to come up with a conceptualization of their audience in order to know how to target them effectively through sonic logos.

Thus, according to Lury and Smythe, the audience responds to sonic logos in a passive manner. This further explains why having a well thought out conceptualization of the audience is significant to effective branding strategies in order to draw consumers to purchasing certain branded products or services.

Lury's conception of the audience, reflecting the early 1990s mass media environment that she was studying, is passive compared to Napoli's and Jenkins notion of the participatory media audience (Napoli, 2010 p. 510 & Jenkins, 2004, p.33). Napoli discusses how audiences are active users who can participate on social media platforms through creating their own "user-generated content" (p. 505). He states that on websites such as YouTube, Facebook and MySpace, which provide a place for audiences to generate their own content, audiences promote brands by means of "producing commercials to engaging in online word-of-mouth endorsements, to integrating brand messages into their own commercial platforms (e.g. their MySpace or Facebook pages)" (Napoli, p. 512). This supports Napoli's discussion in regards to the "de-institutionalization of mass communication" in which the power of communication technologies is no longer just in the hands of the media and advertising owners, rather it is shifting to the audience (Napoli, p. 510).

Two perspectives of the relationship between sonic logos and media audiences can be drawn from the foregoing discussion. First, although not directly stated by any of the authors, the use of sonic logos on participatory platforms might be understood as a way of facilitating and adapting to the audience's use of brands when, for example, Internet users search for their favourite television commercials which feature a brand's sonic logos or when sonic logos are posted and re-used by online audiences. Second, sonic

logos might be part of the evolution of producers' strategies for internalizing concepts of audience, which render advertising and marketing more effective. These two perspectives can be synthesized: audiences are becoming more sophisticated in their uses of media content but producers are also becoming more sophisticated in their conceptualizations, measuring and tracking of their audiences. This suggests that a conceptual framework for research on sonic logos is needed to address the ways in which the increasing sophistication of audiences leads producers to develop new marketing tools such as the sonic logo to impact the audience in unique ways.

Jenkins and Altshuler outline an approach that synthesizes Lury (1993) and Napoli's (2010) perspectives about conceptualizations of the audience as passive versus active. Jenkins argues, "On the one hand, new media technologies…enabled consumers to archive, annotate, appropriate and recirculate media content in powerful new ways; on the other hand, there has been an alarming concentration of the ownership of multinational media conglomerates dominating all sectors of the entertainment industry" (Jenkins, p. 33). Jenkin's initial suggestion is similar to what Napoli discusses in regards to the ability of audiences to share and create their own media content online. At the same time, Jenkins highlights the powerful role that media owners still play. Likewise, Altshuler states, "Websites such as YouTube, Google and eBay can function as two-way streets for brands: Brands discover who their consumers really are, and consumers let brands know what they want" (Altshuler, 2011, p. 1). In this way, despite the increase of power and control of the audience on social media platforms, Altshuler points out how this allows for brand owners to figure out who their consumers are based on tracking their searches for branded content and commercials on the Internet (Altshuler, p. 1). Both Jenkin's and Altshuler's ideas suggest that even though audiences have the power to

create and share their own media content and participate as active audiences, they are also monitored by powerful media conglomerates who then can use the information they gather from their audience online, to later drive their audiences towards certain consumption habits. Lury's (1993) argument about the audience being conceptualized as passive consumers is relevant in this case because of the producer's access to their own audience's preferences, while Napoli's argument is relevant because of the role of the audience as engaged and participatory Internet users.

It is evident that the audience has more options through new media for participating in the circulation of brands, by posting and re-using sonic logos or even creating their own advertising material and thus giving the brands new meanings. The rise of sonic logos can be seen to represent a response to de-institutionalization and it may even suggest that there are some problems with the de-institutionalization thesis. For instance, this theory does not take into account the power that advertising and branding institutions have over audience tracking and other strategies where they choose to attract the audience using sonic branding. In this way, the use of sonic logos reflects Lury's more traditional conception of the audience as passive in the sense that sonic logos are new mediated forms of interaction which allow more control over audiences by the producers of sonic logos. Yet, Napoli's argument is still relevant given the tremendous increase in the amount of user-generated content created and shared by the audience.

Theoretical Framework

According to Jenkins, there is a contradictory relationship between the audience and media producers where audiences have enormous control over the production and circulation of media content but there is a concentration of media conglomerates "dominating all sectors of the entertainment industry" making alternative views less prominent in the media (Jenkins, p. 33). As discussed in my literature review, Jenkins' approach combines arguments made by theorists like Lury, who view the audience as passive due to the power of media institutions, and arguments by new media theorists like Napoli, who emphasize the power of participatory media audiences. This relationship between the producer and the audience is important to my research as I explore the factors related to how changes in the audience have contributed to the need to use sonic logos in branding. Having an understanding of the way that the audience was conceptualized in the past compared to the present, assists with understanding why brand owners are increasingly using sound for their advertising campaigns. The main concepts that I draw from are conceptualizations of the audience as passive and/or as active.

In addition, the way that sound plays a unique role in targeting the audience subtlety through emotional, physiological and subconscious levels, as opposed to placing the audience in a production and distribution role via participation on the Internet, demonstrates the way new cultural forms such as sonic logos, are products of media institutions and are not a result of what Napoli calls the "de-institutionalization of mass communication" (Napoli, p. 510). In this way, the producers of sonic logos are utilizing a more subtle, adaptable, translatable, precise and modular approach through sound to control audience perception.

In order to analyze the way sonic logos extend producers' control, I use Lury's concept of "internalization". Despite the fact that it is not always realistic to know exactly what the consumer wants, as Lury suggests, we can instead "internalize" or develop a "consumer construct" of how the audience can be understood by the branding and advertising executives (Lury, 1993, p. 6). For instance, conducting an observation of what consumers share online would demonstrate to brand owners what type of content or brands their audiences prefer (Altshuler, p.1).

Overall, my conceptual framework for analyzing the role of the sonic logo and its role in mediating the relationship between producers and audiences is that in the case of sonic branding, audiences are targeted by the brand or advertising institution and are essentially participating through passive forms related to mental and subconscious reactions to sound. This framework differs from theories of the participatory audience since it does not assume that the audience is necessarily empowered by sharing and creating advertising content. In this way, I conceptualize sonic branding as a part of the process of institutionalization in the sense of ownership and legal control of sonic logos. It can also be in reference to a sense of using a greater range of sensory experience to sell branded products. However, theories of the participatory audience are helpful to the extent that they provide insight into the way that producers perceive of audience interaction with brands on social media platforms. The process by which I collected data and chose to analyze my interviews with advertising and branding professionals will be described in my Methodology section.

Methodology

Data Collection Method

The goal of my MRP is to improve my understanding of why sonic logos are an effective means of grabbing audience attention. Interviews are effective for meeting this objective. They will allow me to fill gaps in my literature review, specifically, what is it about sonic logos that effectively grabs the audience's attention in the current corporate and mass media landscape. This information will also provide me with an opportunity to discuss practical and recent information regarding their use of sonic logos.

The method of data collection that I chose was to record in-person interviews with branding and advertising executives either by telephone or at their office. These interviews are not completely confidential or anonymous, as after receiving permission from my interviewees, I have included the name of each company in which they belong. I also gave my interviewees the option to review their transcribed interview prior to incorporating it in my MRP. The interviews were conducted in a private setting, i.e. a separate office or boardroom or with me in a private room while conducting the phone interview, as opposed to in a cubicle office environment to make sure that the interviewee was comfortable answering my questions.

My goal was to discover their reasons for using sonic logos to attract audience attention and find out how these professionals perceive of their target audience. I chose to do three interviews mainly to convey a variety of perspectives within my MRP. Having three interviews provided me with at least two reliable perspectives to work with and leeway in case one of the interviews was not as helpful in addressing my interview questions. Fortunately, all three interviews were successful and together provided a

variety of perspectives from the different roles of the interviewees within their companies. In fact my goal was to interview brand and advertising executives who have different roles in order to gain a wider perspective as to why media producers believe sonic logos are effective in attracting and influencing the audience.

My interviews lasted between thirty minutes to one hour. This was to make sure that I had enough time to code and categorize the interview transcriptions and tie them into my research paper. I asked eleven prepared questions that the interviewees would take less than six minutes to answer to make sure that the interview did not exceed an hour. I had to tailor each interview question depending on the corporate position of the interviewee (see Appendix 2).

To get in touch with business professionals that were appropriate interviewees, I used two of my own contacts in the advertising industry to help me get in touch with those who work with sonic branding directly. In addition, I went through potential contacts on company websites that I was interested in using for my interviews. I used phone calls and email to contact the professionals and set up interviews. I interviewed Interviewee #1 from Steam Whistle, Interviewee #2 from the production company, Rocket Boys and Interviewee #3 from the advertising firm BBDO Proximity. Interviewee #1 from Steam Whistle actually helped develop and later register the Steam Whistle sound mark in the United States and is currently waiting for it to be registered in Canada[2]. Interviewee #2 worked with a number of companies such as Pizza Nova, which used sonic branding on commercial radio and television. Lastly Interviewee #3 from

---

[2] Steam Whistle (Sonic Logo Application 1586405 - Canadian Trade-Mark Data)

BBDO Proximity worked on the digital advertising campaigns for companies such as Gillette for their video commercials, which utilized music and sound in their TV spots.

Data Analysis Method

For my analysis of the interviews I used the *grounded theory approach* using the *open-coding* technique. I decided to use this approach based on my understanding that a thorough analysis of the interviews using codes and categories would allow me to group and compare each of the statements of my interviews and allow me to reflect on their answers, which could later be used to fill the gaps in my literature. I transcribed the recorded interview and then created categories and codes based on a textual analysis. I then created categories for my main themes and ideas found in these interviews (Lindlof & Taylor, 2011, p. 250).

My categories include the following:

1. *Advantages of Sonic Logo:* A discussion of traits belonging to sonic logos such as the ability to influence audience perception through sound.
2. *Primary Concerns:* The primary concerns when developing a marketing strategy for a brand in the context of a broader campaign.
3. *Interaction with Audience:* The ways that the producers of the marketing campaigns or brand owners interact with their audiences.
4. *Purpose of Sonic Branding:* The purposes behind the use of a particular brand logo, whether sonic or visual, and the interviewee's ideas about the aim of sonic branding and its impact on the audience.

5. *Placement of Sonic Logos to attract Audiences:* The reasons for circulating sonic logos on certain platforms and the types of platforms that allow for sonic branding to effectively target the audience.

6. *Examples of Effective Sonic Logos mentioned by interviewees:* This includes some of the sonic logos mentioned by the interviewees as the most effective and memorable sonic logos for audiences.

As I coded and categorized the transcriptions for each interview, I often refined the definitions of each of the categories based on types of codes that I found. Following my creation of categories and codes, I then compared each category. I saw where they were similar or related and then determined which codes fit under which category (Lindlof & Taylor, p. 250). Next I created a *codebook.* The codebook was created based on the notes that I made on the documents, which were then transferred into chart form. The chart includes categories, definitions of categories, examples of categories and codes (Lindlof & Taylor, p. 251). Finally, after following these steps my data reached *saturation* where the data was coded, organized and explained to the best of my ability (Lindlof & Taylor, p. 252).

Using these categories, I will discuss the implications of the findings and will explain how they may fill any gaps in my literature. Lury (1993) discusses the importance of intellectual property for shaping relations between the producer and audience in the cultural industries. Lury's theorization of audience-producer relations allows me to explain the high level of importance that brand producers place on audience reception as it is the audience that determines whether a brand is successful (Lury, 1993,

p. 6). The data collected in these interviews enables me to address my research questions regarding the characteristics of contemporary media audiences, effective strategies for targeting these audiences, and the responses of audience to sonic logos, as perceived by producers.

It is important to note that my analysis and findings are based on my own personal and subjective interpretation of the transcribed interviews. The three interviews are also not a representative sample of the advertising and branding industry in Canada. However, the perspectives offered by my interviewees resonate to a large extent with the trade literature, which I draw from to further support my interview findings.

The conceptual framework that I will apply to my analysis suggests that sonic logos reflect persistence of the centralization and institutionalization of media content since, according to Lury and Napoli, advertising and branding producers are essentially using the media to mediate and communicate with their audiences about their brand. Essentially, brand producers want to communicate with and impact audiences by shaping their perception of the brand.

Despite the fact that audiences are simultaneously given opportunities to participate on social media platforms and create and share their own user-generated content, sonic logos help shape the producer-audience relationship so that producers can maintain control over the brand's presentation to and reception by audiences.

Analysis

Findings

As previously mentioned, the first category in my interview data includes the *advantages of sonic logos*. This category includes discussion of the traits belonging to sonic logos such as the ability of a sonic logo to influence audience perception through sound. This category covers advantages of the use of sonic logos, such as the ability for them to be easily *recognizable* amongst audiences. As Interviewee #1 at Steam Whistle suggests, "We hope that what it does is breed familiarity" (Appendix 1). The Interviewee #2 from Rocket Boys also explains that unlike visuals, which need to be updated because they age over time, sonic logos do not age. He gives the example of the 20th Century Fox sonic logo sound which can be instantly recognized out of context given the frequency by which it is played prior to movie screenings (Appendix 1).

Under the same category of the advantages of sonic logos, each of my interviewees discusses how sonic logos either *enhance and/or replace a visual*. For instance, in regards to the simultaneous use of sonic and visuals logos, Interviewee #3 at BBDO states:

> I think they work together. I think the advantage of having a sonic brand you know would be if it comes to radio that's a clear advantage. A lot of the time brands struggle with how do we put a radio spot out there that is really reflective of our brand because we can't have our logo and a lot of the time that visual representation is key, so by having a sonic logo that sort of takes the place of having a traditional logo in a radio spot. I think by having it in TV commercials it lends itself well to using that same piece of audio. In radio spots you automatically have that association. (Appendix 1)

Another term used by both Interviewee #1 at Steam Whistle and Interviewee #2 at Rocket Boys, is how sonic logos essentially *breathe life* into a brand and give it a

personality (Appendix 1). This highlights the notion in the literature that a key function of sound is to generate emotional connections.

Both Interviewee #1 at Steam Whistle and Interviewee #3 at BBDO conceptualize sonic logos as part of a *holistic campaign*. At Steam Whistle for instance, Interviewee #1 states, "We have logo'd vehicles driving around with sales guys out there, we have signs in bars, we've sponsored hundreds of events, we have radio advertising, we have some print campaigns going. So it's difficult to know precisely which of those marketing activities have attracted audiences" (Appendix 1).

Interviewee #3 from BBDO explains the importance of reaching the audience through sound and visuals on a multitude of platforms, "I think that if a company then does use it on a website as well, it's part of that holistic campaign where you have the same visual logo and sonic logo in multiple points so you're really hitting the consumer at various destinations or various points. Obviously it elicits some kind of action or reaction or response from them" (Appendix 1). This demonstrates how the focus of a campaign is generally on all the marketing tools utilized, which include both the visuals and sound associated with the brand. According to these interviewees, one type of branding cannot replace the other. Also, the language used by Interviewee #3 from BBDO is rather suggestive ("hitting"). This also suggests that as a producer of the branded content, he conceives of the audience as passive.

In addition, Interviewee #2 at Rocket Boys and Interviewee #3 at BBDO note that sonic logos are beneficial because they use sound as a *universal language*. As Interviewee #2 at Rocket Boys suggests, "It allows you to connect in a more basic level with everybody, no matter the language the person speaks as their first mother

tongue…"(Appendix 1). In addition, Interviewee #3 at BBDO discusses the creation of the Gillette Campaign that was aired worldwide, noting that while the language of the messaging had to be "tweaked," the music "would stay the same because obviously it needed to be paired well with the brand and that's something you know we obviously chose very selectively" (Appendix 1). Furthermore, in regards to the use of a sonic logo, Interviewee #3 from BBDO states, "I think it works well across the world because everyone's going to hear that sound the same way. They don't have to understand any of the words…I think that piece of sound can be associated with a brand across the world and it's kind of easy to use globally across different markets, ethnicities you know languages that kind of thing" (Appendix 1).

The *primary concerns* when coming up with a marketing campaign for a brand is another category prevalent within my interview data. This category provided answers to my second research question, "What value does the audience provide to the conceptualization of the sonic logo"? The primary concern mentioned by all the interviewees included concerns about the importance of the audience in guiding the development of an advertising campaign. For instance, Interviewee #1 at Steam Whistle states, "we want to make sure that basically we're meeting customers needs. So we're understanding our consumer and meeting or exceeding their expectations in every element of the brand. That's our primary focus" (Appendix 1). Another point that Interviewee #3 from BBDO notes is that it is important to decide on the branding "insight" that would "make any kind of marketing for this product meaningful to that audience" (Appendix 1). In addition, Interviewee #2 states, "Well at the end of the day the reason that the brands are doing any advertising or doing anything at all is because

they want more consumers" (Appendix 1). Amongst the interviewees, there is a common assumption that brand communication addresses consumers and that people ought to be addressed as consumers.

Other primary concerns mentioned by Interviewee #2 at Rocket Boys and Interviewee #3 at BBDO, is the importance of keeping up with *trends* and *competition*. The advertising and communication executives in this interview made reference to how they would either do their own or hire outside marketing firms to conduct audience research. This audience research would for example, take place in focus groups to determine how audiences respond to certain products. The Interviewee #3 from BBDO explains that the audience is initially identified by an outside marketing firm and then it is his job to come up with a campaign that is suited for that audience (Appendix 1). The BBDO Interviewee #3 further states that once this information about the audience is available:

> If you're looking to create awareness for something and you're launching a new product for example, like a product launch, you're going to look at everything that the product is geared toward. So obviously the audience, the demographic, you'll do a lot of research into that. You'll look at what is that demographic like the psychographic do they care about. How do we best position this product within that audience what's the insight there, right?" (Appendix 1).

This indicates the importance of framing the brand in a way that attracts the audience to the product they desire. It also points to specific techniques that are used to develop and revise notions of the audience, and the degree to which brand communication is guided by those notions of the audience.

Audience research provides advertising executives with insight about the audience that they need to understand in order to create an effective advertising campaign. Sonic logos are a part of this holistic campaign as mentioned earlier by

Interviewee #3 from BBDO and Interviewee #1 from Steam Whistle. The audience research is thus not only for the audience of sonic logos, but also for the audience of the entire campaign. However, as Jackson discusses, the actual composition of sonic logos makes use of the sonic branding engine, which takes into account specific audience preferences for the sound linked to the brand (Jackson, p. 99). For example, producers use sounds that they believe the target audience would find appealing. Interviewee #3 from BBDO also explains that careful strategic placement of sounds would have to be used in order to avoid annoying the audience while they are on online social media platforms (Appendix 1). For instance, just as pop-up ads with sound often bother individuals while they are surfing the web for specific information, a sonic logo might also strike the audience as obtrusive advertising, and producers recognize the importance of avoiding this situation.

In addition, Interviewee #2 at Rocket Boys states, "We'll track informally, so we'll go to and read articles and see where people are going…I'll go on Facebook and the reason I spend time on Facebook is not to talk with friends, I do it to feel the *zai cai*. The *zai cai* is the collective unconscious what is the trends or the organism, the culture where it's moving. You can get a sense of it by looking at what people are talking about, what they're doing, what they're seeing, the music they like, how that changes" (Appendix 1). Sonic brand producers attempt to use their own subjective perception of the collective unconscious to predict audience interests and what type of brands, technology and media they are interested in interacting with online. Interviewee #3 from BBDO also discusses how another primary concern is to know what type of marketing strategies the competition is using for their own clients (Appendix 1).

The next category is *interaction with audience*, which refers to the discussion of the ways that the producers of the marketing campaigns or the brand owners themselves, interact with their audiences. For instance, Interviewee #3 from BBDO states, "across online platforms and digital, you can actually have, you know, interaction with consumers on a one-to-one level even" (Appendix 1). He gives an example and states:

> Let's say like your Facebook page, you know, you constantly interact with them by having updates and providing valuable information and content to them. But they can then comment on your post, or comment on a brand's page, that brand can always comment back to the individual consumers or fans (Appendix 1).

The evidence here appears to support the theory that new media alters the producer-audience relationship. There seems to be reciprocity again, contra Lury (1993) due to the ways in which the producers internalize and engage with audiences more directly than in the past.

There are forms of interacting with the audience other than on social media. Interviewee #3 from BBDO gives another example of how interaction can take place on a website. For instance he states, "So a level of interaction is like searching for a recipe. I want something chicken-related for dinner, just type in a search. You know it spits back chicken recipes and that's a form of interaction" (Appendix 1). Interviewee #1 from Steam Whistle explains how the company has representatives interacting with their customers in many different ways:

> So we have a full time community relations person that spends all day on Facebook and twitter emailing people and talking on the phone and so forth and then we have 35 people that work in events or they work by day as tour guides at the bar at the brewery and they work in the evening and weekends at community events. So we're very much involved in communicating and engaging with our customers. As well we have 24 sales reps across the country who would be dealing with the wholesale customers: the stores and the bars and restaurants (Appendix 1).

In addition, Interviewee #1 from Steam Whistle suggests, some products, like beer, seem to be "social products" (Appendix 1). Interviewee #1 explains:

> It's what I call a badge product where people chose a particular brand of beer to demonstrate their character or personality, their values and integrity to other people in a social setting. So by holding a particular brand of beer in their hand in a bar or whatever, it can identify their personality to others. And so as a result of that people are very interested to talk about beer. And they become quite attached to the brand (Appendix 1).

This demonstrates the link to a brand's function to embody a company's personality and generate emotional connection. Lastly, the Interviewee #2 from Rocket Boys speaks more specifically to sonic logos, "you're literally getting the listener to interact, to have to relate, or think, or to somehow interact and work with what they're hearing or experiencing…you create more of an engagement that way, more of a relationship" (Appendix 1).

The category, *audiences past versus present*, refers to the producers' perception of the changing audience and the factors that have led to these changes. This category addresses my second and third research question in regards to which developments in the corporate environment (i.e. technology, culture, etc.) have contributed to the need for sonic logos to engage with audiences and what changes in the audience have motivated the use of sonic logos to reflect a brand's image? In response to my first question, Interviewee #1 from Steam Whistle states, "economics plays into that because of that consumer trend people are willing to spend more for beer so as a result we have a slightly younger audience than what we might have had in the past" (Appendix 1).

In addition, developments in communication technology also made for popular discussion amongst all the interviewees. For instance, Interviewee #1 at Steam Whistle

states, "Well I don't think there are changes in the audience. I just think there's changes

in the ways of communicating. So of course media technology plays a huge part in

that…and those younger people do communicate differently than 65 year olds"

(Appendix 1). Although not directly stated by Interviewee #1 from Steam Whistle, sonic

logos are made to interact with a more sophisticated audience that are highly involved

with the use of social media technologies. In this way, Interviewee #1 did not seem to

think that the audience has changed; rather the technology that they use to communicate

has changed the way that Steam Whistle communicates with their audiences. This

demonstrates how companies need to stay on top of technological advancements due to

the way in which the audiences are also immersed in the same types of developments in

our society.

Interviewee #3 from BBDO discusses the expectations for instantaneous

information online stating:

> People don't have patience anymore to be like I'm going to look through 20
> websites to find an answer to find what I'm looking for. They go to Google, type
> something in, and expect it to be within the first couple links…They expect to be
> able to find something instantaneously, find answers, find valuable content and be
> able to have meaningful interactions with certain brands (Appendix 1).

Interviewee #2 from Rocket Boys suggests that the contemporary media

technologies do indeed allow brands to the target audiences more precisely (Altshuler, p.

1 & Appendix 1):

> The technology allows you to be more fine homed with who you're trying to
> speak with and connect with …like with television the 50s being two
> channels…now there's 900 channels…so you can identify some kind whether it's
> women or children or young males teenagers who's science fiction, you can
> identify and say okay I'm going to put my ad or I'm going to try to get to them
> this way…Through technology like social media, it allows us to know what
> people's passions and tastes are and what people are following, what people are
> interested in (Appendix 1)

The idea of distracted audiences was found to be relevant to this category of audiences in the present compared to the past. Interviewee #3 at BBDO suggests, "it's harder to grab their attention when it comes to anything digital, social, media and online because there's so much running for their attention at any one point" (Appendix 1). Interviewee #2 from Rocket Boys elaborated on this idea of distraction and highlighted a key challenge facing brand and advertising producers: grabbing the attention of their audiences who are preoccupied with other technologies, "We're not just sitting watching a television show or program. We're on our computers or we're on our smartphones, we're doing multiple things, which makes it even more important that you get their attention" (Appendix 1). This again demonstrates why sonic logos may prove to be effective for engaging with audiences who are so used to seeking out their own visual and digital content. The sonic logo essentially targets the ears in order to impact the audience through emotional and subconscious levels. However, my interviewees are suggesting that the overall multi-sensory experience that the audience has with a brand that will ensure a strong emotional connection. It is not the sonic logo alone that links a person to the brand, rather the overall interaction and engagement that will determine the relationship between the audience and the brand.

The next category covers the *purposes behind the use of a sonic logo*. According to Interviewee #1 at Steam Whistle, the purpose of a sonic logo can be explained in reference to it being a form of brand association, "Basically, it's the idea of connecting some kind of original or unique sound, sound bite to a brand" (Appendix 1). Similarly, Interviewee #3 at BBDO states, "Sonic branding means having some form of specific

audio or audio type associated with your brand. That's obviously as soon as you hear it

the goal is to associate that sound or that type of you know audio, to a brand and for it to

mean something just like a logo" (Appendix 1). Like the other elements part of the

holistic campaign, the sonic logo also creates a familiar and emotional connection

between the audience and the "personality" of the brand. In reference to a real-estate

campaign his company worked on, Interviewee #2 from Rocket Boys states:

> It's like a big skyscraper building but it doesn't have a personality, it's not a human, but the music gives it a personality. It gives it something that I want to be attached to it. I want to say that I lived down at the Ritz Carleton or I live at Maple Leaf Square. That it's not just I'm living down at 20 Bay, or you know whatever the address is. It's more than an address. It's a badge. It's something that I'm proud to be apart of (Appendix 1).

Clearly, these advertising and branding executives agree that sonic branding

communicates the "personality" of the brand and creates an emotional "mood" more

effectively than exclusively visual logos.

In addition, Interviewee #3 from BBDO gave his view on the characteristics of an

effective sonic logo:

> I think it should be instantly recognizable. I think that's an important feature, if there's a certain sound or within a couple seconds it's nice and short and succinct. If you know within a second or two 'oh that's that brand', I think that's an example of a sonic element doing its job well. At the same time it should when you hear that sound it should you know bring up images in the consumer's mind of what that brand stands for" (Appendix 1).

In addition Interviewee #3 from BBDO states, "I think it should basically like

elicit a certain image in people's minds. So just by hearing a sound it should

automatically bring up images of the brand and what the brand stands for" (Appendix 1).

Interviewee #3 from BBDO uses the example of the brand Mercedes and the upscale

image that should be reflected in the Mercedes sonic logo, as opposed to the sonic logo

that represents the Mazda brand, which is a midscale automobile (Appendix 1). In this way, sounds can actually become signifiers of class. It is clear that so many elements behind the sound and its association has to fit with the brand class and personality. The sonic logo is therefore a complex undertaking that must be carefully planned by its producers. In can therefore be assumed that audiences of a particular class will be more receptive to brands that reflect their social status. This is thus another factor based on the audience of a certain brand that must be taken into account when coming up with the sonic logo.

Interviewee #1 speaks of the Steam Whistle sound mark and explains exactly what it represents to the audience:

> People know that it signifies the end of their workday. So, it's a time when you're finished your hard labour and it's time for personal rewards. You get to go home, crack open a beer, enjoy you know sitting in your favourite chair, having a meal with your family or whatever it is that it signals a time for personal reward. And in our mind it really means the factory whistle and the end of the day. But for some people it also means a whistle going off on a steamship or a whistle going off on a steam train, both of which would be denoting the launch of a voyage (Appendix 1).

Lastly, the *placement of sonic logos to attract audiences* refers to reasons why sonic logos are aired on certain platforms and the types of platforms that allow for sonic branding. A number of the interviewees discuss how sonic logos are used on both radio and commercial television. Interviewee #3 from BBDO discusses the specific ways in which these sonic logos should be implemented on platforms that offer audio especially if it is done online:

> It has to be done very carefully so you don't have negative or bad associations with the brand since its seen as disruptive but I think if there's a way to do it so maybe subtly or in a way that doesn't piss people off you know maybe being disruptive could be a good thing (Appendix 1).

If a brand is disrupting the audience's online participation, the audience may develop a negative association with that brand and may not perceive of it in a favourable or desirable way that may have been achieved if the brand was strategically implemented.

In reference to the placement of sonic logos, the interviewees emphasize the importance of having consistency across all commercial advertising and audio platforms. This can be seen to relate to Lury's discussion of media as a form of one-way communication from the producer to the audience (p. 5). For instance, Interviewee #1 at Steam Whistle states:

> We aren't starting with words, but we begin every radio commercial with the sound-off of our whistle. And that we hope cuts through noise and the clutter and that they'll perk up and listen to our ad and recognize that it's a Steam Whistle ad. So the commercial also ends with the whistle sound as well. So we're framing everything that we talk about Steam Whistle with that pneumonic and we hope that it's creating brand awareness but we can't say specifically that it is (Appendix 1).

This idea implies that sonic logos can essentially stand out from the other types of clutter, such as jingles, which seem to be ignored by audiences due to the ubiquity of these more traditional types of campaigns (Jackson, p. 9). In addition, in relation to the media audience, it is clear that producers assume that the audience inhabits a very cluttered media environment and that the use of a sonic logo effectively captures audience attention.

Interviewee #2 at Rocket Boys discusses how Rogers Media and Rogers Communications use the same sonic logo across all of their commercial advertising. In regards to their sonic logo, he states:

> It brings some kind of connection and link between all the other things they do. That's why I think it's a very effective thing. You'll hear for example whenever they're doing any kind of TV ad campaigns for their Internet or new cell phones they're doing, but they'll also do it I've heard it on 680 News on the end of a half

hour segment when they say this is owned by Rogers Communications (Appendix 1).

This point suggests that control of a brand can be maintained very effectively if a sonic logo is consistently used in advertising for all of an organization's various products and services.

Discussion

As indicated earlier, my research explores advertising executives' perceptions of the audience for sonic brands. The goal of this section is to fill an important gap in the literature, namely, that we still know very little about why advertising and branding executives are increasingly using sonic logos in order to attract audience attention. In addition, there is a lack of critical perspectives that discuss how sonic logos impact the audience and why they are an effective means of communication. To address these gaps, I will apply the conceptual framework that I have derived from theorists such as Lury, Napoli and Jenkins, as discussed earlier in my literature review. The conceptual framework that I use to analyze my data highlights the way that advertising and branding executives attempt to control the media as well as act as the primary producers of branding content. My conceptual framework also allows me to analyze the data in terms of different conceptualizations of the audience, i.e. "passive", if the branding strategy works, the audience accepts the meaning of the brand as intended by producers; versus "active" in the sense of the audience having the ability to share and create content on social media platforms. These two conceptualizations of the audience act as tools for understanding whether the audience and/or advertising and branding producers have control over the media and brands.

If we suggest that the brand and advertising owners essentially create lasting sounds that can be recognized by the audience and remind them of that brand when it comes time to making purchasing decisions, the brand producers are influencing the audience in a one-way flow of information (Lury, 1993, p. 5). The audience is not interacting with the brand in an active manner, such as being able to share and create

their own content or having two-way communication with the social media brand managers; rather they engage with the brand through the memorable sound cues. If producers had internalized an active model of the audience, they would likely expect audiences to engage more actively with the branding content. However, given that sonic logos impact the audience in a passive way, e.g., the sound triggers an association developed through branding techniques, the passive model of the audience, as discussed by Lury (1993), appears to be articulated in my data findings. For instance, when audiences are exposed to certain sonic logos, for example, the 20th Century Fox sound prior to a movie, this doesn't require the audience to actively participate with these sounds, for example, on online social media platforms. Instead, the audience simply recognizes and can makes the connection that the sonic logo refers to the 20th Century Fox entertainment company as well as the visual animation linked to the music of the sonic logo[3].

The idea of how sonic logos essentially *breathe life* into a brand and give it a personality highlights the notion in the literature that a key function of sound is to generate emotional connections (Appendix 1). This reflects what theorists such as Darwin suggest that "the origins of music are ancient and tied up in passion, emotions and arousal" (Jackson, p. 31). Jackson, who also produces sonic logos in addition to writing about them, cites scientific studies that suggest that music creates physiological stimulation, which is received by the human subconscious. In these ways, producers suggest that sound, more than visual marks, fosters a deeper emotional connection between the audience and brand (Jackson, p. 32). The idea of sound breathing life into a

---

[3] 20th Century Fox Intro Full-HD

brand also relates to Chion's discussion on the way that sound impacts us directly through physiological mechanisms (Sterne, p. 53).

When discussing the way that sonic logos are part of a holistic campaign, it is clear that advertising and branding producers do not have any precise measure of what exact channels are affecting the audience. As stated by Interviewee #1 at Steam Whistle, not only are they engaging with audiences through media technology, but Steam Whistle is also marketing through traditional visual campaigns, events and even through fact-to-face interactions with their customers (Appendix 1). This also reinforces the importance of having conceptualizations of the audience, in lieu of direct and continuous connection with them.

This concept of a *holistic campaign* is reflective of my theoretical framework in that it suggests that advertising and branding executives work to create all-encompassing campaigns that aim to elicit certain responses from their target audiences. This is based on a one-way flow of information. The producers of content will only use social media content produced by audiences as a means of interacting with them in order to elicit certain responses. The advertising and branding executives are always exhibiting greater power by influencing audiences to respond positively to their brands.

In this way, Napoli and Jenkin's active audience theory is troubled by these responses given that these theorists claim that modern media audiences are actively participating in media and that there has been a de-institutionalization of mass media content (Napoli, p. 510 & Jenkins, p.33). However, my interview data from advertising and communication executives do not agree with this theory. It is clear that these executives agree that institutions are in control of the branding material that is targeted at

their audiences. It is also evident that these companies maintain control over social media platforms and interaction with their audiences by having members of their team manage these platforms and maintain relationships with their audiences in order to consistently provide their audiences with accurate and positive information about their brand.

It is evident that these advertising and branding executives clearly understand the usefulness of sonic logos as a means of attracting audiences at a global level when making reference to how sounds can be a *universal language*. The way that these executives adapt messages and understand the type of messaging that would be effective in different parts of the world demonstrates the power that marketing and branding institutions can exert over their audiences. According to the producers, the advantages that are associated with sonic logos, given the complexities of global branding and marketing, is that sonic logos can transcend language barriers and can therefore be used to generate consistent messages targeted at audiences, instead of having to translate meanings and words according to the understandings of people in unique cultures. For example, the way a joke or saying is phrased in a given language may not come across as funny or even make any sense in another language. Advertising and branding executives' appear to assume that audiences will respond in a positive way to sonic logos in a variety of locations and within a diverse array of cultures due to the effectiveness of the sound in communicating across cultures. It is as if sonic logo producers believe that these sounds should be almost commonsensical to their audiences around the world.

The importance of the audience in guiding the development of an advertising campaign as well as the audience as being addressed as consumers by my interviewees, further indicate what Lury and other theorist suggest in regards to the primary focus of

advertising being to attract audience attention (Lury, 1993 p. 6). This relates back to Lury's argument in regards to the role of the "audience-as-consumer" rather than the "audience-as-market" (Lury, 1993, p. 145). The audience of brand and advertising executives is consuming the information available to them over the Internet and on the media. Audiences have even more control over the creation and distribution of content and in this way their interactions with both media content and the branded content available to them online can be seen as a form of "consumption". In this way, Lury's understanding of the audience as consumer plays a role in the discourse of the producers of advertising content and sonic logos (Lury, 1993, p. 145).

In reference to *trends* and *competition* as being primary concerns for content producers, it seems as though social media and other tools that often are assumed to be empowering for audiences, function on the producer side as tools for more continuous surveillance of audiences (Appendix 1). While the audience formed through social media platforms may be interactive and participatory, this audience is also being scrutinized by media producers and advertising agencies, placing the audience in a more passive role. This suggests Lury's conceptualization of a passive audience is still relevant, and challenges Napoli's argument in regards to the de-institutionalization of mass media. The activities of the audience are becoming more complex, but so are the activities of media organizations like advertising agencies who seek to stay in control of their branded content.

Interviewee #3 from BBDO's suggestion about keeping up with the marketing strategies of the competition was quite interesting given that none of the literature I included suggested the importance of keeping up with trends of the audience on neither

social media or about what type of media and branding the competitors use. Again, as the competition and audiences are becoming more complex, the only way that agencies can maintain their control would be to be aware of the trends in technology and media.

The literature I found in cultural studies, in mass media or the industry literature does not focus on the importance of staying in tune with the audience and competitor trends online. This emphasis on the importance on keeping updated with trends in media and technology fills another gap in my literature in regards to how social media platforms benefit both the audiences and producers of branded content. The audience can interact with brands, while the brand managers on these social media platforms and on the Internet can study the audience to maintain control over their branding and media content.

This further suggests that sonic logos allow for these producers to stay ahead of the audiences and competitors by using branding that they control to guide the audience's perception of the brand. Interviewee #3 from BBDO's suggestion of staying on top on the competition also implies that the audience is not only the target audience for the brand since they are also indirectly targeting the competitors who may follow or use their ideas in their own marketing. I found this interesting given how this particular interviewee works in a worldwide advertising agency, which is clearly exposed to other corporate competitors, and what they offer to established brands, which makes it crucial for a company like BBDO to stay on top of advertising trends. This also relates to ideas of distinctiveness, which is especially important when it comes to registered sound marks (Alcock et al., p. 1). It is here that part of the actual function of branding seems to be to

adapt to the surrounding culture and thus it seems relevant for companies to protect their sonic logos from the competition, but also to use them to be attractive to the audience.

The ways that brand owners and advertising executives interact with the audience seems to conflict with my argument, drawn from Lury, that branding reinforces a one-way flow of communication from the producer to the audience (Lury, 1993, p. 5). My interviewees suggest that social media empowers the audience to interact with the brands they love, and brands such as Steam Whistle place high importance on their ability to interact with their audiences. This is not to say that the brands are using their interactions to exhibit further control, rather they may be doing this to gain further insight in order to allow their brands to be successful and popular amongst the public. However, the increased ability of audiences to interact with the brands opens up more opportunities for brands to persuade the audience to buy the product, for instance, Steam Whistle beer (Appendix, 1).

Interviewee #1 from Steam Whistle's suggestion that some products, like beer, seem to be "social products" and Interviewee #3 from Rocket Boy's reference to how with sonic logos, "you're literally getting the listener to interact, to have to relate, or think, or to somehow interact and work with what they're hearing or experiencing…you create more of an engagement that way, more of a relationship", explain how the relationship between brands and audiences develop (Appendix 1). Sonic logos may not necessarily generate the kind of engagement and interaction associated with social media platforms but they do enhance the relationship between the brand and audience to the extent that the sonic logo triggers interaction through the mind's engagement with the sound. The sonic logo may become more "interactive" once it becomes popular to the

point that audiences are socially repeating the sound when making reference to a brand or when they think of a brand and remember its sonic logo. The sonic logo alone allows for a unique type of branding which reaches the audience through their receptivity to certain types of sounds. The idea that sound facilitates an emotional connection with a brand, as indicated by Jackson and Darwin, is central to understanding how sonic logos communicate, according to my interviewees (Jackson, p. 31 & Appendix 1). These suggestions indicate a more reciprocal relationship between the producers and their audiences. It is clear that certain companies choose to accept the participatory power of the audience and attempt to win them over to their brand.

Changes in expectations of the audience thus require new ways of generating "meaningful interaction" with brands, and sonic logos help to quickly and subtly remind audiences of the brands available to them rather than targeting them through traditional visual campaigns and jingles. The characteristics of sonic logos – compressed/short, fast, memorable, subtle, modular, translatable and engaging – enable listening to work in collaboration with visual, face-to-face or online interactions and text-based communication and thus "fit" the brand according this conceptualization of the audience as impatient and expecting/seeking "meaningful experiences" from brand communication. It is thus clear that this type of savvy audience that sees advertising as the norm needs to be targeted in unique and specialized ways, which is why the sonic logo can be seen as a highly effective form of advertising when used appropriately. As discussed in my literature review, Altshuler suggests that brand owners can develop more detailed models of their audience by tracking users' searches for branded content and commercials on the Internet.

The Steam Whistle brand is clearly associated with a sound that encompasses much more than just a simple tune or musical note. The whistle sound is linked to the brand with a positive association of "personal reward" and the "the end of the day" (Appendix 1). Rather than it just being the visual logo of the Steam Whistle beer logo and design, the sound allows for the creation of meanings that transcend and amplify what the visual logos portray or the face-to-face interaction that their branding executives have with their audiences. The whistle sound mark has cultural meanings of its own which is associated with the brand itself, imbuing it with more meaning that simply "beer." It can also be seen to capture the attention of the audience in situations of reception where there is no visual logo or where audiences are inclined to ignore visual logos due as a form of "*clutter*" as described by Interviewee #1 at Steam Whistle (Appendix 1).

In regards to having sonic logo consistency across all platforms for a particular brand, the producers of advertising content for their brands may feel that with the increased role of a participatory audience on social media platforms, it becomes an even bigger concern to have more control over a brand and to keep it consistent. Having this type of consistency with sonic logos will enable increased brand differentiation by having a brand noticeably associated with a particular sound.

Thus, the concern with consistency and control over associations between sound and image is important right now during a time of increased audience control over online content. In fact, the producers' assumptions about the media environment as a place where audiences can actively engage with branded content, or share or replicate content that does not belong to them may suggest to producers that having distinct sounds to

represent their brands can allow their brands to stand apart within the current media landscape.

Overall, the interviewees provided both additional and similar insights to the ideas that I highlight in my literature review. Further suggestions in regards to the effectiveness and advantages of sonic logos over other forms of branding were discussed. In addition, changes in the technology and media available to the audiences suggest that Napoli and Jenkins' conceptualization of the audience as participatory is evident. Yet, with companies using sonic logos, these brands maintain a form of power over the audience in that they can control and elicit certain responses from their target audiences. This can be done if they use effective branding strategies, using sonic logos, which have proven to be effective for big name brands, such as Intel and Steam Whistle.

Conclusion

Prior to the creation of social media, audiences were passive in the sense that they rarely interacted with the producers of advertising and branding content. With the introduction of social media, Napoli, Jenkins and Altshuler explain how the audience has become more active and participatory. The audience has the ability to create and share their own content as well as engage with brands and advertising content created by companies through producer-audience reciprocated comments and feedback on these social media platforms.

In this study of sonic logos, I evaluated these claims about the active audience. My findings suggest that professional communicators in advertising and branding are attempting to maintain control over their media content and that sonic logos are key to this process in the advertising and branding industries. Also, given that there is now an acceptance of sound marks as trademarks in intellectual property law internationally, it is possible for branding and advertising agencies to extend their control over their branded content. Lastly, the growing awareness of the competitive advantage offered by sonic logos also encourages the registration of a brand's sound mark and hence reinforces the role of a brand and advertising institution in the generation of branded media content. As indicated by Interviewee #3 from BBDO, it is wise to use sonic logos strategically on social media platforms in order to maintain rather than disrupt the audience's sense of its active and participatory role (Napoli, p. 505 & Appendix 1). Contemporary audiences are perceived to be more distracted and sophisticated than they were in the past, which also helps to explain why advertising and branding producers want to use sonic logos to

attract this more complex audience and may also want to take back the control they once had over the media industry.

This MRP has addressed a number of gaps in the literature including the lack of critical theory in regards to the use of sonic logos to attract audience attention in the current corporate and mass media landscape. Despite the role of the audience as participatory on social media platforms, it has been demonstrated that sonic logos are intended to allow branding and advertising institutions to remain in control of the information provided to audiences. Based on the analysis of findings from interviews, it was suggested by the advertising and branding professionals that it is not that the audiences have changed per say, rather the technologies available to the audiences have impacted the ways in which producers target their audiences and the ways in which the audiences may have the option of interacting with the content producers on social media platforms.

In addition, it can be suggested that the use of sonic logos represents the persistence of the institutionalization of media, which conflicts with claims made by scholars like Napoli that there is currently a trend towards the "de-institutionalization of mass communication," despite the fact that audiences can interact with the media on social media platforms, my reading of the literature and my analysis of the interview data suggests that de-institutionalization may never have happened to the extent that Napoli has suggested. Rather, Lury's suggestion that the audience is passive and that the producer-audience relationship is mediated and non-reciprocal, in fact seems much more accurate in the case of sonic logos.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Themes: Categories & Codes

Please note that the interviewees' responses have been colour-coded (black, blue or light

blue) for ease of reference.

Category	Definition	Code	Steam Whistle
Advantages of Sonic Logo	This will discuss traits belonging to sonic logos such as the ability to influence audience perception through sound.	Recognizable	"We call it a pneumonic associative with our brand – our brand pneumonic. We hope that what it does is breed familiarity. When they're listening to the radio and there's all kind of garble, you know, various ads, that when one of our radio commercials comes on every single time" (Interviewee #1, Steam Whistle) "Another great thing about sonic branding, it doesn't age…Whereas visuals you got to update them and know it's old" (Interviewee #2, Rocket Boys)
		Enhance/Replace Visual	"Well, I think that it just adds another dimension to the advertising that often-sound cues bring up memories. They help to create in your own imagination a visual. But I don't know that that's any different than visual campaigns. What it does is enhance a traditional radio campaign" (Interviewee #1, Steam Whistle) "Where you can really create with your imagination with greater bigger things you could ever do with visuals…" (Interviewee #2 Rocket Boys) "Yeah I think they work together. I think the advantage of having a sonic brand you know would be if it comes to radio that's a clear advantage. A lot of the time brands struggle with how do we put a radio spot out there that is really reflective of our brand because we can't have our logo and a lot of the time that visual representation is key so by having a sonic logo that sort of takes the place of having a traditional logo in a radio spot. I think by having it in TV commercials it lends itself well to using that same

| | | Breathes Life/Personality | piece of audio. In radio spots you automatically have that association" (Interviewee #3, BBDO)

"It's what breathes life into whatever else you're going to create" (Interviewee #2, Rocket Boys)

"It allowed for an emotion and a personality to a building for the brand which was just a building. It's like a big skyscraper building but it doesn't have a personality, it's not a human, but the music gives it a personality…It's more than an address. It's a badge. It's something that I'm proud to be apart of, I'm proud to hang out here, to be part of this" (Interviewee #2, Rocket Boys)

"And it also brings to life you know an electronic brochure on a website…it does add another dimension and helps bring to life whatever the visuals are particularly, if there's animation involved at the same time as the as the pneumonic in terms of a visual campaign. But in terms of radio it just helps to create a visual when a visual doesn't exist on a radio or a commercial" (Interviewee #1, Steam Whistle) |
| | | Part of Holistic Campaign | "We have logo'd vehicles driving around with sales guys out there, we have signs in bars, we've sponsored hundreds of events, we have radio advertising, we have some print campaigns going. So it's difficult to know precisely which of those marketing activities have attracted audiences" (Interviewee #1, Steam Whistle)

"I think that if a company then does use it on a website as well, it's part of that holistic campaign where you have the same visual logo and sonic logo in multiple points so you're really hitting the consumer at various destinations or various points. Obviously it elicits some kind of action or reaction or response from them" (Interviewee #3, BBDO)

"It allows you to connect in a more basic level with everybody, no matter the language the person speaks as their first mother tongue to whatever…to also you |

		Universal Language	know ways that people are consuming" (Interviewee #2, Rocket Boys) "Yeah like the music would stay the same because obviously it needed to be paired well with the brand and that's something you know we obviously chose very selectively. The music would stay the same. The language would need to be changed or you know the sort of main messaging may need to be tweaked a little bit" (Interviewee #3, BBDO) "I think it works well across the world because everyone's going to hear that sound the same way. They don't have to understand any of the words…I think that piece of sound can be associated with a brand across the world and it's kind of easy to use globally across different markets, ethnicities you know languages that kind of thing" (Interviewee #3, BBDO) Example: Gillett Campaign used globally
Primary Concerns	Primary concerns when coming up with a marketing strategy for a brand that have to do with coming up with the entire campaign.	Audience	"Well, we want to make sure that basically we're meeting customer's needs. So we're understanding our consumer and meeting or exceeding their expectations in every element of the brand. That's our primary focus (Interviewee #1, Steam Whistle) "What's the insight that's going to make any kind of marketing for this product meaningful to that audience" (Interviewee #3, BBDO) "Yeah there's a lot of, but that's more at the creative level. So when you have a few creative ideas that you come up with initially that you're testing it would be there in research, in focus groups, watching focus group and see how they respond. But in terms of identifying an initial audience and sort of putting together that sort of information that's usually the marketing team, so a "Gillette" or a "Campbell's" you know the marketing teams that we work with would say this is what we're doing, this is their new product these are the audiences that we're, we want to hit with this new product launch…So they identify them for us. They do like obviously in depth research and analysis to see what kinds of people are best suited to this campaign or this product or this you know whatever they're building or whatever they're putting out there

			in the marketplace and then they hand that over to the agencies to develop an idea around that" (Interviewee #3, BBDO)
		Trends/Competition	"Well at the end of the day the reason that the brands are doing any advertising or doing anything at all is because they want more consumers" (Interviewee #2, Rocket Boys)
			"We'll track informally, so we'll go to and read articles and see where people are going. Frankly myself for example I'll go on Facebook and the reason I spend time on Facebook is not to talk with friends, I do it to feel the *zai cai*. The *zai cai* is the collective unconscious what is the trends or the organism, the culture where it's moving. You can get a sense of it by looking at what people are talking about, what they're doing, what they're seeing, the music they like, how that changes, that sort of thing" (Interviewee #2, Rocket Boys)
			"So if you're looking to create awareness for something and you're launching a new product for example, like a product launch, you're going to look at everything that the product is geared toward. So obviously the audience, the demographic, you'll do a lot of research into that. You'll look at what is that demographic like the psychographic do they care about. How do we best position this product within that audience what's the insight there, right?" (Interviewee #3, BBDO)
			"So one of the primary concerns when coming up with a marketing strategy is what the competitor is doing out there" (Interviewee #3, BBDO)

| Interaction with Audience | Ways that producers of the marketing campaigns or brand owners interact with their audiences. | Social Media/Traditional Interaction | "Whereas like across online platforms and digital you can actually have you know interaction with consumers on a one to one level even" (Interviewee #3, BBDO)

"Let's say like your Facebook page you know you constantly interact with them by having updates and providing valuable information and content to them" (Interviewee #3, BBDO)

"But they can then comment on your post, or comment on a brands page, that brand can always comment back to the individual consumers or fans" (Interviewee #3, BBDO)

"So a level of interaction is like searching for a recipe. I want something chicken related for dinner, just type in a search. You know it spits back chicken recipes and that's a form of interaction" (Interviewee #3, BBDO) |
| | | Engaging | "So we have a full time community relations person that spends all day on Facebook and twitter emailing people and talking on the phone and so forth and then we have 35 people that work in events uhh or they work by day as tour guides at the bar at the brewery and they work in the evening and weekends at community events. So we're very much involved in communicating and engaging with our customers. As well we have 24 sales reps across the country who would be dealing with the wholesale customers: the stores and the bars and restaurants" (Interviewee #1, Steam Whistle)

"It's what I call a badge product where people chose a particular brand of beer to demonstrate their character or personality, their values and integrity to other people in a social setting. So by holding a particular brand of beer in their hand in a bar or whatever, it can identify their personality to others" (Interviewee #1, Steam Whistle)

"Where you're literally getting the listener to interact to have to relate or think or to somehow interact and |

			work with what they're hearing or experiencing which then becomes more of an engaged…you create more of an engagement that way, more of a relationship" (Interviewee #2, Rocket Boys) "And so as a result of that people are very interested to talk about beer. And they become quite attached to the brand. They think of it as a friend or as they're part of a community. So they're very willing to communicate and converse with us. And in fact they are demanding it of us in a way that, and I mean that in a really positive way that they're constant dialogue" (Interviewee #1, Steam Whistle)
Audiences Past vs. Present	This refers to the changes in audiences from the past and present and the factors that have led to these changes in the audience.	Economics	"But I think economics play into that because of that consumer trend people are willing to spend more for beer so as a result we have a slightly younger audience than what we might have had in the past" (Interviewee #1, Steam Whistle)
		Developments in Communication Technology	"Well I don't think there are changes in the audience, I just think there's changes in the ways of communicating. So of course media technology plays a huge part in that" (Interviewee #1, Steam Whistle) "And those younger people do communicate differently than 65 year olds" (Interviewee #1, Steam Whistle) "People don't have patience anymore to be like I'm going to look through 20 websites to find an answer to find what I'm looking for. They go to google type something in and expect it to be within the first couple links (Interviewee #3, BBDO) "They expect to be able to find something instantaneously, find answers, find valuable content and be able to have meaningful interactions with certain brands" (Interviewee #3, BBDO) E.g. McDonalds Campaign

			"Media tied into culture tied into technological evolution you know…all of that. That changes the audiences and therefore changes the kind of advertising that needs to be done" (Interviewee #3, BBDO)
			"The technology allows you to be more fine homed with who you're trying to speak with and connect with …like with television the 50s being two channels…now there's 900 channels…so you can identify some kind whether it's women or children or young males teenagers who's science fiction, you can identify and say okay I'm going to put my ad or I'm going to try to get to them this way (Interviewee #2, Rocket Boys)
		Distracted	"Through technology like social media, it allows us to know what peoples passions and tastes are and what people are following, what people are interested in" (Interviewee #2, Rocket Boys)
			"Yeah it's harder to grab their attention when it comes to anything digital, social, media and online because there's so much running for their attention at any one point" (Interviewee #3, BBDO)
			"We're not just sitting watching a television show or program. We're on our computers or we're on our smartphones, we're doing multiple things, which makes it even more important that you get their attention" (Interviewee #2, Rocket Boys)

Purpose of a Sonic Brand	This refers to the purposes behind the use of a brand logo whether it is a sonic or visual logo and what is the idea of sonic branding in general.	Brand Association	"Basically, it's the idea of connecting some kind of original or unique sound, sound bite to a brand" (Interviewee #1, Steam Whistle) "Sonic branding means having some form of specific audio or audio type associated with your brand. That's obviously as soon as you hear it the goal is to associate that sound or that type of you know audio to a brand and for it to mean something just like a logo or anything else does" (Interviewee #3, BBDO)
		Familiar/Emotional Connection	"It's like a big skyscraper building but it doesn't have a personality, it's not a human, but the music gives it a personality. It gives it something that I want to be attached to it. I want to say that I lived down at the Ritz Carleton or I live at Maple Leaf Square. That it's not just I'm living down at 20 Bay, or you know whatever the address is. It's more than an address. It's a badge. It's something that I'm proud to be apart of, I'm proud to hang out here, to be part of this" (Interviewee #2, Rocket Boys) E.g. Gillette "In terms of the videos, you know you have these guys shaving needs to obviously be reflected in the brand. It needs to play well with everything else that's going on all the other campaigns out there and you know make the music, the sound effect that are in let's say TV commercials need to be the same or similar in terms of the online video's and anywhere else" (Interviewee #3, BBDO) "I think it should be instantly recognizable. I think that's an important feature, if there's a certain sound or within a couple seconds it's nice and short and succinct. If you know within a second or two "oh that's that brand" I think that's an example of a sonic element doing its job well. At the same time it should when you hear that sound it should you know bring up images in the consumer's mind of what that brand stands for." (BBDO, Interviewee #3, p. 2)

			"When you hear let's say Zoom Zoom you automatically think of Mazda. And then you think of what Mazda stands for right? So like everything that comes to mind whatever that is. So I think that association needs to be clear for a sonic element to be successful. You think of a brand but that brand also brings up images in your mind and the position of what that brand stands for in the marketplace" (Interviewee #3, BBDO) I think it should basically like elicit a certain image in people's minds. So just by hearing a sound it should automatically bring up images of the brand and what the brand stands for (Interviewee #3, BBDO) So if it's a brand that stands for hire and goods. You know like Mazda is a pretty like middle of the pack kind of brand I would say, but let's say there was a certain sound mark for an upscale car. Let's take Mercedes for example. It should automatically in your mind bring up images of Mercedes and that kind of lifestyle and that kind of class (Interviewee #3, BBDO) You know so I think for the audience that's what it should do. It should elicit a positive response with a certain kind of imagery in their mind so just by hearing that sound they should be thinking that sound equals you know these kind of images and that kind of lifestyle (Interviewee #3, BBDO) "People know that it signifies the end of their workday. So, it's a time when you're finished your hard labour and it's time for personal rewards. You get to go home, crack open a beer, enjoy you know sitting in your favourite chair, having a meal with your family or whatever it is that it signals a time for personal reward. And in our mind it really means the factory whistle and the end of the day. But for some people it also means a whistle going off on a steamship or a whistle going off on a steam train, both of which would be denoting the launch of a voyage" (Interviewee #1, Steam Whistle)

Placement of Sonic Logo	This refers to platforms and reasons why sonic logos are aired on certain platforms and the types of platforms that allow for sonic branding.	Radio Commercial	"Mainly used on the radio" (Interviewee #1, Steam Whistle)
		TV Commercial	"The final part of the commercial was the whistle sounding off" (Interviewee #1, Steam Whistle) "There was an animation of the whistle pictured at the same time as the logo sounding off…It was just something that the ad agency did for us for free and we ran a couple times so they could qualify for an advertising award" (Interviewee #1, Steam Whistle)
		Carefully	"It's hard and you really need to be smart about how you do it in order to get someone to go "hey there's something valuable there on your Facebook page, I'm going to click on your brand page to see what's going on". Alright (Interviewee #3, BBDO) "It has to be done very carefully so you don't have negative or bad associations with the brand since its seen as disruptive but I think if there's a way to do it so maybe subtly or in a way that doesn't piss people off you know maybe being disruptive could be a good thing" (Interviewee #3, BBDO)
		Consistency	"We aren't starting with words, but we begin every radio commercial with the sound off of our whistle. And that we hope cuts through noise and the clutter and that they'll perk up and listen to our ad and recognize that it's a Steamwhistle ad. So the commercial also ends with the whistle sound as well. So we're framing everything that we talk about Steamwhistle with that pneumonic and we hope that it's creating brand awareness but we can't say specifically that it is" (Interviewee #1, Steam Whistle) "It needs to play well with everything else that's going on all the other campaigns out there and you know make the music, the sound effect that are in let's say

			TV commercials need to be the same or similar in terms of the online video's and anywhere else" (Interviewee #3, BBDO) "Rogers has a very tough challenge because they do lots of different things and they have lots of different divisions doing different advertising campaigns all the time. So if you notice for example they have two major different businesses. They have Rogers Media and Rogers Communications. Rogers Media owns all the magazines, owns all the websites, owns all the TV networks, owns all the radio stations like 680 News whereas Rogers Communications has all the internet, home phone, cell phone and all that business. But many times you'll hear that mnemonic device across everything. It brings some kind of connection and link between all the other things they do. That's why I think it's a very effective thing. You'll hear for example whenever they're doing any kind of TV ad campaigns for their Internet or new cell phones they're doing, but they'll also do it I've heard it on 680 News on the end of a half hour segment when they say this is owned by Rogers Communications" (Interviewee #2, Rocket Boys)
Examples of Effective Sonic Logos mentioned by interviewees	This includes some of the sonic logos mentioned by the interviewees as the most effective and memorable sonic logos.		1. Steamwhistle's 2 tone whistle sound "whewww whewww" (Interviewee #1, Steam Whistle) 2. "I'm lovin it" – Mcdonalds (Interviewee #3 BBDO, Interviewee #2, Rocket Boys) 3. Campbell's has a tagline "Mmm mmm good" and audio (Interviewee #3, BBDO). 4. Maybelline – tagline (Interviewee #3, BBDO) 5. Pizza Nova # song "439-oh oh oh oh Pizza Nova" (Interviewee #2, Rocket Boys) 6. Intel (Interviewee #3, BBDO & Interviewee #2, Rocket Boys) 7. NBC, ABC, 20th Century Fox (Interviewee #2, Rocket Boys) 8. Mazda Zoom Zoom (Interviewee #3, BBDO & Interviewee #2, Rocket Boys)

Appendix 2: Interview questions for Interviewee #1 at Steam Whistle

1. What does the concept of sonic branding mean to you?

2. A) What sonic logos have been created or registered for your brand(s)?

    Or

    B) What sonic logos have you helped conceptualize for other brands?

3. Have the sonic logos proven to be effective in attracting audiences to the product? (In what ways?)

4. What is your primary concern when coming up with a marketing strategy for a brand? (Who else is involved in the process of creating and marketing a sonic logo?)

5. What steps does your company take to identify your audience? (Are there any challenges?)

6. How do you interact with the audience?

7. Are audiences today different from audiences in the past? In what way?

8. What kinds of factors (media technology, culture, demographic shifts, etc.) might be driving these changes in the audience?

9. How do sonic logos reflect the consumption habits of the audience?

10. In your opinion, what advantages does sound branding have over traditional visual campaigns?

11. Why did you register mark?

Appendix 3: Interview questions for Interviewee #2 at Rocket Boys and Interviewee #3

at BBDO

1. What is the primary type of work that you do?

2. What does the concept of sonic branding mean to you?

3. Have you helped conceptualize sonic logos for other brands? If yes, please specify which sonic logos you have dealt with.

4. A) What do you think an effective sonic logo should do for the brand, for the product, for the audience, etc.?
   B) Can you think of any good examples of effective sonic logos?

5. What is your primary concern when coming up with a marketing strategy for a brand?

6. What steps does your company go about in order to identify your audience?

7. How do you interact with the audience?

8. Are audiences today different from audiences in the past?

9. What kinds of factors (media technology, culture, demographic shifts, etc.) might be driving these changes in the audience?

10. Do you think that sonic logos affect the consumption habits of the audience? If so, how do they do this?

11. What advantages does sound branding have over traditional visual campaigns?

Works Cited

Alcock, Lucy, Hui Min Ch'ng, and Sarah Hodson. "Building Strong Brands." *Journal of Brand Management* 11.2 (2003): 115-18.

Altshuler, Marc. "Effective and Sustainable Branding Starts With Music." *Advertising Age CMO Strategy RSS*. N.p., 5 Nov. 2007. Web. 30 June 2013. <http://adage.com/article/cmo-strategy/effective-sustainable-branding-starts-music/121683/>.

Beebe, Barton. (2005). Search and Persuasion in Trademark Law. *Michigan Law Review, 103*(8), pp. 2020-2072.

Bertosa, Chantal, and Andrea Pasztor. "I Am a Trademark, Hear Me Roar! - An Appeal for Sound Marks in Canada." *An Appeal for Sound Marks in Canada*. N.p., 02 Jan. 2011. Web. 14 June 2013. <http://www.worldipreview.com/article/i-am-a-trademark-hear-me-roar-an-appeal-for-sound-marks-in-canada>.

Boxberg. "Press Release: Luxurious Sound from the Audi Brand." *Audi MediaServices*. N.p., 8 Aug. 2010. Web. 10 Apr. 2013. <https://www.audi-mediaservices.com/publish/ms/content/en/public/pressemitteilungen/2010/08/23/luxurious_sound_from.standard.gid-oeffentlichkeit.html>.

"Canadian Trade-marks – Access to Sound Marks." *Government of Canada, Industry Canada, National Capital Region, Office of the Deputy Minister, Canadian Intellectual Property Office*. N.p., 1 May 2013. Web. 17 July 2013. <http://www.cipo.ic.gc.ca/eic/site/cipointernet-internetopic.nsf/eng/wr03433.html>.

"Intel Corporation - Canadian Trade-Mark Data." *Canadian Intellectual Property Office*. N.p., 13 Aug. 2013. Web. 19 Aug. 2013. <http://www.ic.gc.ca/app/opic-cipo/trdmrks/srch/vwTrdmrk.do?lang=eng>.

"Steam Whistle - Canadian Trade-Mark Data." *Canadian Intellectual Property Office*. N.p., 13 Aug. 2013. Web. 19 Aug. 2013. <http://www.ic.gc.ca/app/opic-cipo/trdmrks/srch/vwTrdmrk.do?lang=eng>.

Danesi, Marcel. *Brands*. New York & London: Routledge: Taylor & Francis Group, 2006.

Jackson, Daniel M. *Sonic Branding: An Introduction*. Ed. Paul Fulberg. London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003.

Jenkins, Henry. "The Cultural Logic of Media Convergence." *International Journal of Cultural Studies* 7.1 (2004): 33-43.

Lindlof, Thomas R., and Bryan C. Taylor. *Qualitative Communication Research Methods*. London: SAGE, 2011. 217-81.

Lury, Celia. *Brands: The Logos of the Global Economy.* London: Routledge, 2004.

Lury, Celia. *Cultural Rights: Technology, Legality and Personality.* Routledge Chapman & Hall, 1993.

McCormick, Kevin K. ""Ding" You Are Now Free to Register That Sound." *The Trademark Reporter: Official Journal of the International Trademark Association*96.5 (n.d.): 1101-121. Sept.-Oct. 2006. Web. 7 Apr. 2013. <http://home.comcast.net/~jlw28129/07McCormick.pdf>.

Napoli, Philip M. "Revisiting Mass Communication and the Work of The Audience."*Media Culture Society* 32 (2010): 505-16.

Rubin, Josh. "The Trademark That Roared: How Sound Became Protected in Canada." *Thestar.com*. N.p., 11 Apr. 2012. Web. 10 Apr. 2013. <http://www.thestar.com/business/2012/04/11/the_trademark_that_roared_how_sound_became_protected_in_canada.html>.

Sterne, Jonathan. *The Sound Studies Reader*. New York: Routledge, 2012.

"Trade-mark Consisting of a Sound." *Government of Canada, Industry Canada, National Capital Region, Office of the Deputy Minister, Canadian Intellectual Property Office*. N.p., 28 Mar. 2012. Web. 20 May 2013. <http://www.cipo.ic.gc.ca/eic/site/cipointernet-internetopic.nsf/eng/wr03439.html>.

"20th Century Fox Intro Full-HD 1080p." *YouTube*. YouTube, 20 Sept. 2010. Web. 27 Aug. 2013. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0qDdYlyLRoI>.